

MEDIA RELEASE

13 OCTOBER 2026

2026 Inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison

The Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services has tabled its latest inspection report on Bunbury Regional Prison, finding the prison continues to perform well despite increasing pressures from population growth, staffing shortages and ageing infrastructure. The report found many of the prison's longstanding strengths remain evident, supported by a committed workforce and a strong rehabilitative focus.

While Bunbury was operating effectively on a day-to-day basis, the report found staffing shortages were placing sustained pressure on operations, service delivery and staff wellbeing. Population growth had also increased demand on accommodation, healthcare, rehabilitation services and prison infrastructure.

The inspection found encouraging improvements in workplace culture and psychosocial safety since the previous inspection. Staff reported stronger teamwork, improved perceptions of safety and a more positive work environment.

Positive findings included strong levels of out-of-cell time, a well-regarded education program, the STEPS alcohol and other drugs program, and a peer support network that plays an important role in supporting vulnerable prisoners.

Lines attributable to the Acting Inspector of Custodial Services, Ms Jane Higgins:

"The prison retains many of the qualities that have historically made it a positive and progressive correctional environment, including a focus on rehabilitation, constructive engagement and preparing prisoners for their return to the community."

"Bunbury continues to perform well in challenging circumstances because of the commitment, professionalism and resilience of its staff, who consistently find ways to overcome obstacles and maintain services despite growing pressures."

"However, there is a limit to what can be achieved through local effort alone. Without adequate investment in staffing, infrastructure and support services, there is a risk that these strengths will become increasingly difficult to sustain."

Jane Higgins
Acting Inspector of Custodial Services

For further media information: The Acting Inspector, Ms Jane Higgins, will be available for comment from 1pm Tuesday 13 October 2026 via media@oics.wa.gov.au

The full report will be available on the Office's website: www.oics.wa.gov.au