



Scott Hennessy  
Secretary  
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

Via e-mail: [publicworks@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:publicworks@parliament.tas.gov.au)

Dear Mr Hennessy

## **Burnie Courts Complex Relocation Project – Matters on Notice**

Thank you for your letter of 23 February 2026, regarding matters taken on notice during the Public Works Committee hearing held for the Burnie Courts Complex Relocation Project on Tuesday, 3 February 2026.

Please find the responses to your requests below.

***Please provide data on the expected growth in demand for court services at the Burnie Court over the coming years.***

Demand for court services at Burnie is reflected across both the Magistrates Court and Supreme Court jurisdictions.

### Magistrates Court – Criminal Lodgements

Criminal lodgements to the Magistrates Court Burnie increased from 2,132 matters in 2014 to 3,087 matters in 2025 — an increase of 955 lodgements (44.8%) over the period.

Recent years have seen a marked increase in demand, with lodgements rising from 2,186 in 2023 to 2,850 in 2024 and to 3,087 in 2025. Population modelling projects a baseline planning range of approximately 2,555–3,090 lodgements per annum over 2026–2036, with higher-growth sensitivity modelling reaching approximately 4,470–4,757 lodgements by 2036, if recent growth trends continue.

The Department considers the population-based modelling to represent an appropriate baseline planning range, with growth-based modelling used for longer-term capacity sensitivity testing.

### Supreme Court – Criminal Matters

Burnie recorded a 6.8 per cent increase in criminal lodgements in 2024–25, representing 203 new criminal matters reported in the most recent Annual Report. This was the largest increase recorded statewide, exceeding Hobart (3.0 per cent) and Launceston (4.1 per cent).

Supreme Court criminal lodgements at Burnie increased from 152 matters in 2022–23, to 190 matters in 2023–24, and to 203 matters in 2024–25.

Across both jurisdictions, the data demonstrates sustained demand growth and recent acceleration in activity at Burnie.

***Please provide data and any other relevant information on the current case backlog for the Burnie Court.***

Supreme Court – Criminal Backlog

Burnie reported a criminal backlog of 193 matters in 2022–23, 206 matters in 2023–24, and 235 matters in 2024–25. This represents a continuing upward trend.

In comparison, Hobart experienced only a marginal increase (to 420 matters from 419), and Launceston recorded a slight reduction (to 257 matters from 260). The overall statewide increase in criminal backlog in the most recent reporting period was largely driven by the rise in Burnie’s pending matters.

Magistrates Court

Magistrates Court workload at Burnie has increased over the past five years, reflected in both rising lodgements and the growing number of matters pending before the Court. Annual lodgements increased from 2,491 matters in 2021 to 3,079 matters in 2025, while pending matters increased from 3,295 to 4,828 over the same period.

The difference between annual lodgements and the total number of matters pending at the end of each year provides an indication of the volume of matters carried forward within the court system. This gap increased from 804 matters in 2021 to 1,749 matters in 2025, demonstrating a growing accumulation of matters awaiting finalisation.

Taken together, the data indicates increasing demand for Magistrates Court services at Burnie and a corresponding rise in matters remaining before the Court, which can be considered indicative of growing backlog pressures over the period.

Annual totals do not capture courtroom utilisation, listing pressures, adjournments or matter duration. However, sustained increases in lodgements are a key driver of registry and courtroom workload.

***Please confirm whether there has been consultation with Aboriginal legal services on the design for the new Burnie Court Complex.***

The Burnie Court Complex Relocation Project has included comprehensive stakeholder engagement throughout planning and design, including an extensive consultation program during the Detailed Design phase. This engagement involved multiple structured meetings and workshops with a broad cross-section of end users and justice sector stakeholders, including consultation with Justice Support Services, Tasmania Legal Aid, the Tasmanian Bar, and the Law Society of Tasmania, in addition to regular engagement with court users and operational staff. The Project Team has also maintained a public facing website to provide updates on the progress of the Burnie Court project.

Upon review of consultation records, there was no specific invitation provided to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Legal Service to seek specific input, however, in my role as Deputy Secretary, Justice and Reform, I have provided Burnie Court project updates to Law Link Tasmania: The Tasmanian Legal Assistance Collaborative Service Planning Forum (LLT), at which the Tasmanian Aboriginal Legal Service is represented, as well as the community legal sector, Law Society and other stakeholders.

Through the overall structured and sector-wide consultation process it has undertaken, the Department is reassured that the perspectives of legal assistance providers including court users have been considered in the development of the new Burnie Court Complex. However, I acknowledge that for future infrastructure projects managed by the Department of Justice, direct engagement, in addition to other mechanisms of consultation, with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Legal Service is desirable and necessary.

***Please provide data on the physical and psychological injuries reported by staff of the Supreme Court, Magistrates Court and Tasmanian Prison Service at the Burnie Court, and the nature of these injuries from a work health and safety perspective.***

The Department reviewed all reports lodged in the Department of Justice WHS system (iVanti) between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2025 across the Supreme Court, Magistrates Court and Tasmania Prison Service operating within the Burnie Court Complex.

Over this five-year period, 55 reports were recorded, comprising:

- 25 Hazards, 6 Injuries,
- 4 Illness reports,
- 14 Near Miss reports and,
- 6 Property Damage reports.

Six reports contained psychosocial hazard elements, including incidents involving violence and aggression, environmental conditions, harassment and one traumatic event classified as an actual mental health injury.

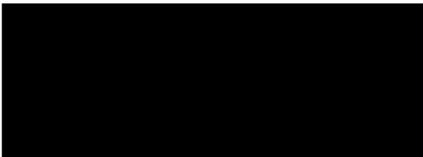
Five physical injuries were recorded during the review period, comprising slips, trips and falls, a strain injury and an impact injury. No injury report identified building design as contributing to the injury.

There were no workers compensation claims arising from injuries reported at the Burnie Court Complex between 2021 and 2025.

The new Burnie Court Complex incorporates contemporary safe-design principles, improved separation, security controls and staff amenities to further mitigate operational and psychosocial risks.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, if there are any further queries.

Yours sincerely



Pauline van Adrichem  
**Deputy Secretary, Justice and Reform**

5 March 2026