

Tasmanian Government Submission to the Legislative Council Sessional Committee Government Administration 'B'

Inquiry into Adult Imprisonment and Youth Detention Matters

Introduction

On 27 October 2022, in accordance with the Legislative Council Sessional Order 5(14), Government Administration Committee 'B' resolved to form a committee to conduct an Inquiry on the following Terms of Reference:

To inquire into and report upon Tasmanian corrective services and justice system matters related to adult imprisonment and youth detention including:

- 1. Factors influencing increases in Tasmania's prisoner population and associated costs;*
- 2. The use of evidence-based strategies to reduce contact with the justice system and recidivism;*
- 3. The provision of, and participation in, services for people in prison and leaving prison (health housing and legal services);*
- 4. Training and support initiatives for corrective service staff related to increasing individual well-being, professionalism, resilience and reduced absenteeism;*
- 5. Innovations and improvements to the management and delivery of corrective services that may be applied in Tasmania, including to future prison/detention centre design; and*
- 6. Any other incidental matters.*

As the Committee's Inquiry relates to both adult corrective services operations and youth detention matters, the submission is a collaborative effort by the Department of Justice (DoJ) and Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP). The submission is structured in two parts:

- Part A: Adult Imprisonment – Department of Justice
- Part B: Youth Justice – Department for Education, Children and Young People

Part A and B both respond to the Terms of Reference in sequential order.

The submission contains observations, consultation insights, and factual information on relevant matters, in response to the Terms of Reference. The submission broadly outlines existing practice, programs, and services, with throughlines to evidence-based opportunities, within adult imprisonment and youth detention settings. The opportunities outlined within the submission are aligned with the soon to be released Corrections Strategic Plan and Youth Justice Blueprint respectively. Further, the submission highlights notable parallels between Youth Justice's objective of a more therapeutically aligned approach, and Tasmania Prison Service's greater focus on rehabilitative practices moving forward. Both are designed with the mutual purpose of producing safer communities.

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Part A: Adult Imprisonment – Department of Justice

Factors influencing increases in Tasmania's inmate population and associated costs

Overview

The management of custodial facilities always attracts a high level of public interest and scrutiny – as it should.

This brief overview of the system is designed to place some of the operations of Tasmania's Corrections system in a broader national (and, in a few instances) international context, because often system approaches are difficult to understand and other elements are commonly misunderstood.

In saying that, the Department of Justice acknowledges that there are always aspects of the operation of correctional facilities that can – and should – improve, and it will continue to strive for that continuous improvement in all areas of its performance.

Imprisonment should clearly be used as a last resort, and where people have been sent to a correctional facility – either under sentence or remanded awaiting trial – the Department of Justice and the Tasmania Prison Service (TPS) are very conscious to manage those people in accordance with the guidelines set out in section 4 of the *Corrections Act 1997*. These guidelines provide a very sound basis for the operation of the TPS, including that 'individuals are capable of change' - a principle at the heart of the need to provide opportunities for rehabilitation to offenders.

There are five correctional facilities in Tasmania, the first three of which are located at Risdon Vale. The total capacity is around 900. Those five correctional facilities are the:

- **Risdon Prison Complex (RPC)** – opened in 2006 and comprising distinct maximum and medium-security precincts and the new Southern Remand Centre (SRC). It can hold around 455 male inmates, with up to 103 in maximum units, 196 in medium units, and a capacity of 156 in the SRC.
- **Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison (MHWP)** – the only custodial facility exclusively for women, it can hold 63 inmates. It was opened in 2006 but utilises some of the infrastructure of the earlier Risdon Women's Prison which opened in 1963. It includes the Vanessa Goodwin units which are minimum-security self-contained units within the facility's secure perimeter and the Mother and Baby Unit.
- **Ron Barwick Prison (RBP)** – capable of holding 299 male largely minimum-security inmates, the RBP utilises the infrastructure of the original maximum-security Risdon Prison, built in 1960, with a more relaxed regime. The facility, which first operated in 2007, includes the pre-release O'Hara Independent Living Units, commissioned in 2013, which can accommodate 32 men in low security conditions outside the walls of the main facility.
- **Hobart Reception Prison (HRP)** – a five-level reception prison, opened in 1999, adjacent to the Hobart Magistrates Court and catering for newly received male and female inmates. It can accommodate 36 and has another 10 separate watch-house cells that are managed on behalf of Tasmania Police.

- **Launceston Reception Prison (LRP)** – opened in 1977, the LRP has a capacity of 26 and a separate 6-bed watch-house. Like the HRP, it can accommodate male and female inmates and is connected to the adjacent Magistrates Court. The LRP is set to close once the new Northern Correctional Facility is built in the State's north and becomes operational.

As at 13 January 2023, the TPS had 461 correctional officers and 136 non-custodial staff. The non-custodial staff are non-uniformed staff and include people who work in administration roles, therapists, industry staff, policy and a range of other areas.

Table 1: Tasmania Prison Service staff as at 13 January 2023						
	Correctional staff			Non-custodial		
	Number	EFT	EFT %	Number	EFT	EFT %
Male	337	335.7	73.2	47	45.8	35.4
Female	124	123.1	26.8	88	83.7	64.6

Given the absence of staff on leave, workers compensation, secondments and other factors, not all of the above staff are available for duty at the one time.

Health services

The provision of health services to inmates is undertaken by the Correctional Primary Health Service (CPHS), Department of Health. The CPHS is a critical partner to the TP in the operation of the Corrections system.

The Custodial Inspector has recently undertaken reviews of the delivery of both mental health and physical health services in correctional facilities; these reports are expected to be issued in the coming months.

COVID-19 pandemic impacts

The operation of correctional facilities can be challenging, and their operation during the period in which the pandemic was at its most virulent proved to be particularly so. While the demand for beds eased off during this period, the unavailability of staff, and the exclusion from correctional facilities of some service providers to reduce the risks of transmitting COVID-19 (in environments recognised worldwide as being particularly vulnerable to the spread of the virus), had a number of negative consequences.

Amongst these was an increase in the number of lockdowns, with as many as 40 TPS staff unable to report for duty at any one time due to COVID-19 mandates, and the necessary isolation of inmates to contain the spread. While this was effective from a health perspective, there were undeniable impacts on the inmate population through reduced association with others, reduced time out of cell, reduced access to work, education and programs – and increased frustration. It must be said though, the Tasmanian community also experienced social isolation during this period.

Costs of operating the system necessarily rose during that period, as dedicated teams were set up to oversee the response to the pandemic; a fully staffed isolation unit was established, and the use of overtime to cover staff who were required to stay at home increased substantially – despite successful recruitment drives which delivered record numbers of new recruits.

At the same time, the new 156-bed Southern Remand Centre (SRC) was being readied for operation, and it accepted its first remandees in July 2022. For the first time the new remand centre built and gave Tasmania the option of keeping male unconvicted inmates separate from those who have been convicted and this has placed the Corrections system in a much stronger position to accommodate the growth in inmate numbers that has occurred since mid-2022. The SRC has added operational costs to the overall operation of the system.

Inmate numbers

There appears to be a presumption in many quarters that there has been a large and steady increase in Tasmania's inmate population over recent years.

This is not the case; from record highs¹ in 2019-20, the average inmate population actually reduced slightly over the next two years – again, largely due to COVID-19 related factors. The more recent increase has been driven by an upsurge in male remand inmates over recent months.

It would appear that some of the current growth amounts to a realignment with the projections that existed before the impact of the pandemic as a result of easing of restrictions and Tasmania's growing population.

Table 2: Number of inmates ²										
	Males				Females				Total	Overall Change %
	Sentenced	Remand	Total	Change %	Sentenced	Remand	Total	Change %		
06.03.23	404	276	680	16.8	24	22	46	4.5	726	16.0
30.06.22	386	196	582	-0.2	32	12	44	-20.0	626	-1.9
30.06.21	399	184	583	-4.4	39	16	55	-5.4	638	-4.5

The trend, in both the male and female populations, has been a reduction over time in the sentenced population. In 2018-19 the number of sentenced males peaked at 450, with current sentenced numbers representing a 10 per cent drop from that figure. The highest tally of female inmates (64) was registered in 2016-17, when sentenced inmate numbers were over 40 per cent higher than they are today.

As at 6 March 2023, unconvicted inmates made up 40.5 per cent of the male population and 47.8 per cent of female inmates (with as many as 55 per cent of the female inmate population being unconvicted on several days in February 2023).

¹ In the modern era; the convict population was clearly higher. These are the highest returns since the 1860s.

² There may be slight differences in this data to that in other published data (e.g. the Report on Government Services). Some of those differences are attributable to things such as data drift (changes to the data in the source system over time like small system variations and records being updated, clarified or corrected) and the extraction method (RoGS is a static point in time submission where data is specially treated for that submission, and manual adjustments that vary year to year can impact the submission file).

Table 3: Average daily inmate numbers, Tasmania, 2012-13 to 2021-22						
	Males		Females		Total	
	Total	Change %	Total	Change %	Total	Change %
2021-22	589	0.2	53	0.0	642	0.3
2020-21	588	-3.8	53	0.0	640	-3.6
2019-20	611	0.8	53	12.8	664	1.7
2018-19	606	6.5	47	6.8	653	6.5
2017-18	569	8.0	44	-6.4	613	6.6
2016-17	527	9.8	47	4.4	575	9.7
2015-16	480	9.1	45	60.7	524	12.0
2014-15	440	0.0	28	-12.5	468	-0.8
2013-14	440	2.1	32	-22.0	472	-0.2
2012-13	431	-8.3	41	7.9	473	-7.3

Who is in correctional facilities?

It is critical for any jurisdiction that the people who are in correctional facilities are those who actually should be, as appropriate and necessary and in some cases as a last resort.

; to have large numbers of people in facilities who would be better managed outside the custodial system is of course costlier, but more importantly increases the risk that they will become entrenched more deeply in the criminal justice system.

National data (see Table 4) suggests that the broad demographics of defendants in Tasmania is not dissimilar to other states, and that those who then find their way into correctional facilities are there for relatively short periods.

Short custodial sentences have some benefit in terms of reducing institutionalisation, but can also result in disruptions to protective factors (such as jobs, housing, relationships) and are often not long enough for meaningful interventions in custodial settings.

Table 4: Court defendants 2021-22								
	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT
Median age	35	35	33	34	36	34	34	32
Proportion male	76	76	75	73	78	75	72	78
% of those guilty sentenced to correctional institution	8	7	11	6	18	10	10	45 ³
Median length prison term	10m	4m	12m	9m	5m	4m	5m	4m

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics – Criminal Courts, Australia, 2021-22; released 3 March 2023

Of the 709 persons in prison custody in Tasmania on 20 February 2023, the most serious offence categories (i.e. a person may be charged with a range of offences, but this categorisation counts only the most serious) were as follows:

³ The published data put this figure at 86%, but the number of cases suggests that the true figure is 45%

Table 5: Most serious offence categories, 20 February 2023			
Most serious offence	Includes ⁴	Number	%
Drug offences	Deal or traffic (commercial quantity 27, non-commercial quantity 20), manufacture 2, cultivate 4, import 6	59	8.3
Traffic offences	Exceed PCA 14, drive disqualified, cancelled or suspended 4, unlicensed 1	19	2.7
Fraud		15	2.1
Offences against property	Burglary 41, theft 23, property damage 18	82	11.6
Offences against the person	Homicide 79, sex offences 112, acts intended to cause injury 195, robbery 39, dangerous acts endangering persons 19	445	62.7
Other	Weapons 36, justice procedures 34, public order 5	89	12.6
Total		709	100.0

It's clear that people imprisoned for 'fraud, theft, drugs, public order and traffic violations' do not comprise anywhere near half of Tasmania's custodial population. The vast majority of Tasmania's custodial population is made up of people:

- who have harmed other people;
- who have been convicted of or charged with weapons offences;
- who have breached Family Violence orders;
- commercial drug traffickers; and
- violent offenders who have breached their parole or bail conditions.

Of the people with a most serious offence of fraud, or a drug or traffic offence, 68 per cent (n=59) had at least one previous instance of incarceration, and 31 per cent (n=27) had five or more previous episodes of incarceration – suggesting that in many cases fewer viable sentencing options might have been seen to be available to the Courts in dealing with repeat offending.

Regional differences

Work undertaken in 2022 as part of the planning for the new Northern Correctional Facility found that just over half of the custodial population came from the North or North-West of the State.

As with other states and territories, the vast majority of people in custodial facilities come from postcodes in which high levels of socio-economic disadvantage are experienced.

Features of small jurisdictions

Tasmania is the second smallest correctional jurisdiction in Australia, larger only to the ACT.

While the comparative small size of the Corrections system makes some aspects of custodial management easier, in many respects the smaller size makes achieving positive correctional outcomes more complex. Small jurisdictions share some common features. These include:

⁴ These are broad, indicative categories only. For example, 'homicide' includes related offences, 'robbery' includes extortion and related offences, 'burglary' includes unlawful entry with intent and break and enter, 'fraud' includes deception etc...

- *Lack of economies of scale.* Due to Tasmania's size, it currently has one principal custodial site (excluding the reception prisons), which holds male and female inmates of all security classifications. This is due to the relatively low numbers of sentenced inmates and remandees, but unlike larger jurisdictions, the small numbers make it impractical to have specialised facilities. Correctional and non-correctional staff are required to have broader skill sets (to manage sentenced inmates and remandees of all classifications and genders) and deliver more generalised services. Any investments made in improving service delivery have longer payback periods (e.g. IT systems) and provide less value for money than larger jurisdictions. Furthermore, because individual facilities are not large, the staffing complements required to operate those facilities are less efficient (i.e. higher cost per inmate) than a larger dedicated facility would be (e.g. it is more efficient to staff a 400 bed unit than a 40 bed unit).
- *Greater difficulty in achieving cost-efficiencies.* Larger systems are better placed to realise cost savings as a result of their purchasing power or by instituting arrangements to be more self-sufficient. They can, for example, enter into contracts for computers, inmate uniforms, food deliveries or maintenance services where the higher volumes can achieve better discounts. Some States have been able to realise major savings by buying kitchen or inmate canteen items in bulk and breaking them down.
- *Smaller inmate cohorts, making dedicated responses to those cohorts more complex.* Relative to most of the mainland jurisdictions, the reduced number of inmates who require a particular intervention can make it easier to deliver a program to all those who need it. It can also be more difficult; in the larger jurisdictions there might be a large pool of offenders with similar responsivity issues - intellectually disabled sex offenders, for example – sufficient to run a group to address that offending. In a smaller jurisdiction, there might be so few in that cohort that the cognitively impaired inmate is squeezed into a group where he or she is the only cognitively impaired participant (and then is disruptive or struggles to keep up). Running a group for a very small number of maximum-security-rated inmates is not as practicable.
- *Smaller inmate cohorts, influencing throughcare outcomes.* The smaller number of inmates has also required the centralisation of correctional facilities, mainly in the South. As approximately half of all inmates come from the North and North-West, this distance impacts on the ability to link inmates with local, community of origin services and supports on their release. The relative distance and lack of public transport options means that inmates from out of region are less likely to receive visits from family and close contacts to maintain a connection to community while incarcerated. Tasmania utilises a range of information and communications technology options to address this issue, but this cannot fully address the challenges inmates face in being separated from their children, partners and other external, community and family supports.
- *Fewer placement options to manage inmate conflict.* As noted previously, there are only five custodial facilities in Tasmania, and while conflicts between inmates can often be successfully managed within the one facility, this is proving increasingly difficult. Even at the two Reception Prisons, where the primary focus is on receiving, assessing and inducting people into the system, larger numbers of inmates who are unable to be safely located at the RPC are being housed long-term at those locations, which are not designed or intended for long stays.
- *Capacity to rapidly deploy staff and resources to address emerging issues.* Fortunately, the larger Australasian jurisdictions are very generous with sharing policy work done in their custodial systems, and Tasmania has benefitted from that work when working up its own responses to emerging issues. Larger Australasian jurisdictions will have policy or procedural teams available to respond to trends or emerging issues, whereas Tasmania may only have one or two individuals. The small size of Tasmania's State Service means that it is sometimes constrained in its capacity to respond quickly to new issues.

- *Overhead costs.* The overhead costs of maintaining the TPS is reduced by including it within the Department of Justice (shared finance, IT, HR, ministerial support, strategic oversight). However, the overhead component is still greater than a larger jurisdiction as those costs are attributed over fewer direct costs (e.g. the cost of overheads is not 10 times higher for a \$1 billion budget, compared with a \$100 million budget).

Imprisonment Rates

The impact of imprisonment rates is often overlooked when looking at correctional outcomes.

Table 6: Imprisonment rates per 100,000 adults, Australia									
	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	AUST
2021-22	195.4	129.2	236.0	307.5	216.7	148.9	116.2	1009.6	204.5
2020-21	203.1	136.4	236.6	323.6	217.6	149.2	122.7	944.7	210.1

Tasmania has a relatively low imprisonment rate – the third lowest nationally, behind only the ACT and Victoria.

This could, of course, be a result of Tasmanians being relatively more law abiding, rather than a reticence on the part of the courts to imprison offenders. Indeed, offender rates for 2021-22 published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics⁵ suggest that Tasmania's offender rate is the fourth lowest per 100,000 in the country (behind the ACT, Victoria and WA).

Tasmania's imprisonment rate dropped marginally in 2021-22, which would appear in large part to be attributable to the effects of COVID-19. Many of the jurisdictions that had more protracted or more stringent COVID restrictions gained an unexpected benefit from the pandemic – critically, drug availability dropped due to state and national border closures, the scheduling of court cases slowed, police were diverted onto COVID-19 activities, pubs and clubs were closed or subject to density restrictions, and curfews and travel restrictions were put in place, and as a result, overall crime rates and imprisonment rates dropped.

One impact of Tasmania's relatively low imprisonment rate is in the cost of Corrective services to the Tasmanian taxpayer. RoGS 2023 places the daily cost per prisoner at the high end nationally,⁶ but because of the low imprisonment rate the annual cost per head of population was slightly lower than the national average (Tasmania \$222, Australia \$224).

A sample of worldwide imprisonment rates (noting that these are calculated per 100,000 head of population, as opposed to 100,000 adults – as the above rates are expressed) shows significant difference across the world.

⁵ ABS, Recorded Crime – Offenders, released 9 February 2023

⁶ It was the second most expensive per day at \$432.27 (the ACT was at \$522.73) in 2021-22, with the national average at \$294.90.

Table 7: Selected imprisonment rates, per 100,000 population, 2023⁷

United States	629	Malaysia	212	Italy	91
Rwanda	580	Australia	167	Afghanistan	77
Thailand	445	Tonga	166	Ireland	75
Brazil	381	New Zealand	164	Germany	70
Türkiye	347	England and Wales	159 ⁸	Netherlands	60
Russia	326	Philippines	151	Norway	56
South Africa	248	China	119	Pakistan	37
Israel	234	France	119	Japan	37
Iran	228	Canada	104	India	35

Tasmania's current imprisonment rate per 100,000 population, rather than per 100,000 adults, is estimated to be in the vicinity of 81.

Remand

The growth in remand numbers has led the overall growth in inmate numbers since the end of the last financial year.

On 30 June 2022, there were 196 males and 12 females on remand – comprising 33.2 per cent of the total custodial population. By 6 March 2023, the proportion of the inmate population on remand had grown to 41.0 per cent (to 276 males and 22 females – increases of 40.8 per cent for males and 83.3 per cent for females) in just over 8 months.

Of the system's 100 additional inmates between 30 June 2022 and 6 March 2023, remandees accounted for 90 and sentenced inmates just 10.

Over that same period – 30 June 2022 to 6 March 2023 – the number of sentenced inmates clearly remained relatively stable, rising marginally from 418 to 428 (male numbers rose from 386 to 404 while females dropped from 32 to 24).

There is no firm data around the reasons for the increase in remand numbers, but the rise would appear to be a combination of factors, including:

- the easing of COVID-19 restrictions;
- more police; and
- an increase in repeat offenders (often linked, seemingly, to drug use and family violence offending, amongst other causes).

Remand populations are often difficult to manage in custodial settings; many unconvicted inmates have significant stressors in their lives – such as drug or alcohol withdrawal, guilt, mental health issues, uncertainty about whether their jobs, housing and relationships will survive their imprisonment, as well as being unsure about their safety and how long they will be in custody - and they have less investment in contributing to a stable custodial environment (many of them knowing they will be re-entering the community within a short time).

⁷ <https://worldpopulationreview.com>, accessed 16 February 2023

⁸ England is not in the above list; UK data is from <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk>, October 2022

The opening of the SRC has provided a more calm environment in which is much better suited to allowing these issues to be worked through effectively, in a safe and secure environment.

Recidivism

As a small state, Tasmania's figures are based on small numbers and therefore can vary more from year to year than other states.

Table 8: Recidivism rates (return to prison within two years)									
	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	AUST
2021-22	49.1	37.0	42.4	30.8	33.9	51.1	37.2	56.6	42.7
2020-21	51.5	38.2	42.6	35.4	33.2	50.4	38.5	58.9	44.4

Source: Report on Government Services 2023

It is notable that a number of the mainland jurisdictions that were subject to stricter COVID-19 related restrictions have had improved return-to-prison results.

There are a number of key factors which are believed to contribute to high levels of recidivism, including (but not confined to) –

- the relatively low imprisonment rate, which suggests that there are fewer low risk people in custodial facilities in Tasmania than some other jurisdictions;
- access to stable housing, which has been something of a perennial issue, more enduring than cost of living pressures;
- access to services and supports from their community of origin that will assist in providing dedicated support and engagement for the transition from custody, prior to release, through to supervision in the community, and then to the point of exiting the criminal justice system. Clearly, this is a bigger issue for inmates held in the South of the State who are returning to their homes in the North and North-West;
- sometimes lengthy periods of remand, exacerbated by COVID-19 related backlogs in the courts, leading to shorter global sentences on the finalisation of matters. If bail is not granted due to a lack of housing, a lack of access to necessary services or a continuing community risk, these factors will remain unaddressed when the person is released - unless there is sufficient time during a custodial period to support them manage the risks; and
- many (particularly short-term) inmates not being ordered to be supervised upon release. In 2021-22 the return-to-prison rate for inmates under supervision by Community Corrections was 38.7 per cent, and for unsupervised inmates was 56.7 per cent.

As previously noted, shorter custodial terms have some benefit in terms of limiting the negative aspects of prolonged exposure to the custodial system, but inmates who are at high risk of reoffending are often not in custody long enough to be able to undertake, and derive benefit from, criminogenic intervention programs, or other programs aimed at developing their skills or reducing their disadvantage.

This applies also to inmates who have spent lengthy periods on remand, and then have little time remaining to serve after sentencing. Short sentences for some offenders can have a positive impact, while for others even a short time removed from the community is sufficient to cause disruption to the

things in their lives that act as protective factors (notably the things that encourage stability, such as employment, housing, and supportive relationships).

It is expected that the Northern Correctional Facility will have a positive impact on the recidivism rate. The new custodial facility will allow inmates from the North and North-West to maintain closer family ties while they are in custody, and the connections between inmates and community agencies which may provide them with support upon release will also be improved. In addition, the design of the new custodial facility will provide an environment much more conducive to rehabilitative outcomes and program availability.

Prior imprisonment

Tasmania has the fourth highest rate of inmates in custody nationally who have had a previous episode of imprisonment.

Recidivism, as measured by the Report on Government Services, counts sentenced inmates who return to prison with another sentence within two years of release. The prior imprisonment data includes all of those who have been in custody before – including those on remand and those whose previous episode(s) of imprisonment might have been decades earlier.

In Tasmania's case, the gap between those two figures is considerably smaller than most other jurisdictions.

Table 9: Proportion of prisoners with prior imprisonment episodes									
	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	AUST
2021	53.8	52.8	68.3	55.9	63.3	66.8	73.8	77.6	59.9

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Prisoners in Australia 2021, Table 29

Recidivism data from Table 8:

2021-22	49.1	37.0	42.4	30.8	33.9	51.1	37.2	56.6	42.7
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Of the drivers of this, two of the major ones are –

- the recidivism rate, which is high; and
- Tasmania's low imprisonment rate, which tends to show that there are fewer new, lower risk offenders who are brought into the system. This view is supported by the high ratio of Community Corrections offenders to inmates (Table 19).

All of this data suggests a smaller pool of offenders in Tasmania who are more frequently in and out of custody, as opposed to a system which casts a wider net - including lower risk inmate who have just one contact with the custodial system.

One alternative explanation – that other jurisdictions are better at rehabilitating higher risk inmates after just one contact with the custodial system – is less likely to be true as most inmates' first contact with the system generally involves relatively short sentences for relatively minor crimes (during which few interventions are possible).

Women

In 2021-22 female inmates made up just over 8 per cent of the total inmate population. That figure represents substantial growth from 50 years ago, when drugs were less prevalent and women generally comprised between just 1 and 2 per cent of the total inmate population.

Since 2005-06 female inmates have accounted for between 6.0 and 8.6 per cent of the total inmate population, with the 8.3 per cent figure registered in 2021-22 lower than 2012-13 and 2015-16, when the proportions were 8.6 and 8.5 per cent respectively. Only Queensland and WA have higher proportions of women in their systems.

Despite this, the imprisonment rate of women in Tasmania is at the lower end of the scale nationally – well below the national average and the third lowest behind Victoria and the ACT.

Table 10: Women inmates - Daily average number, proportion of total custodial population, and rate per 100,000 adult females 2021-22									
	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	AUST
Daily ave.	829	367	880	593	217	53	30	114	3082
% Pop'n	6.6	5.4	9.2	9.3	7.1	8.3	7.7	6.1	7.5
Rate	25.5	13.7	42.3	56.5	30.1	24.1	17.5	125.7	30.0

Women have traditionally returned to custody at a substantially lesser rate than men, although in the past two years this gap has narrowed.

Table 11: Return to custodial rates, male and female comparison				
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Males	50.1	49.4	51.5	52.2
Females	30.2	30.4	42.6	43.3

It appears that the increased recidivism rate for women is, to a substantial degree linked, to breaches of bail and bail conditions, and to offending against property (which is very commonly linked to drug use).

Of the 31 sentenced women released in 2017-18 who returned to custody (a total of 34 times) within two years, there were 58 sentences for bail offences, and 130 for stealing, with the consequences of that offending contributing to the recidivism statistics released in 2019-20.

For the corresponding 2021-22 recidivism data (relating to the 40 sentenced women released in 2019-20 who returned – 52 times - to prison within two years), 114 new breach of bail or bail condition sentences were recorded (a huge increase of 97 per cent from two years previously), as were 225 sentences for stealing (a significant uplift of 73 per cent compared with those who returned to custody after release in 2019-20).

Table 12: Sentenced female inmates, length of time to serve, 4 March 2023 (n=24)							
< 1m	1m - 3m	4m - 6m	7m - 12m	1y – 2y	3y – 5y	> 5y	Indefinite
4	7	0	1	4	5	3	0

The short-term nature of the women's sentenced population makes it harder to engage them in treatment. As seen by Table 12, above, almost half of the small sentenced population has less than four months to serve.

Young people

The TPS manages an adult inmate population, but also manages the watch-houses at the Reception Prisons in Hobart and Launceston on behalf of Tasmania Police. Accordingly, young people who are placed in custody in those watch-houses (e.g. until they sober up, or pending court appearances or transfer to the Ashley Youth Detention Centre [AYDC]), are briefly supervised by TPS staff.

Up until 2000, 17-year-olds in Tasmania were considered to be adults, and 17-year-olds who offended were routinely placed in adult correctional facilities. That is no longer the case.

The last young person *under* the age of 18 to be held in an adult facility (i.e. outside of the watch-houses) was in May 2022.

Such instances are rare, but it is possible – with the agreement of both the Department of Justice and the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) - to transfer a young person from (AYDC) to adult custody should, for example, they are seen to pose a high risk of escape or an unacceptable threat to the safety of other young people or staff. Alternatively, the Secretary, DECYP can determine under s.25(2)(b) of the *Youth Justice Act 1997* that a young person be detained in custody should it be seen to be not practicable to detain him or her in a detention centre.

Just under 12 per cent of the inmate population in Tasmania is aged under 25:

Table 13: Age of inmates, Tasmania, 20 February 2023 (n=709, 661 males, 48 females)			
Age	Number	%	
18-19	14	1.97	11.8 per cent < 25
20-24	70	9.87	
25-29	96	13.54	71.7 per cent over 25 but under 50 48.9 per cent over 30 but under 45
30-34	124	17.49	
35-39	121	17.07	
40-44	102	14.39	
45-49	65	9.17	
50-54	38	5.36	16.5 per cent > 50
55-59	21	2.96	
60-64	19	2.68	
65-69	15	2.12	
70+	24	3.39	

The Department of Justice and DECYP have had preliminary discussions around a program response to younger adults in custody (some of whom may have previously been AYDC residents) and will continue to explore these options.

Older inmates

At the other end of the scale, the number of older inmates invites greater consideration of how the system prepares elderly inmates – particularly the large proportion who are in custody for recent or historic sex offences – for transition back into the community.

Many of the system's older inmates are accommodated in Division 7 of the Ron Barwick Prison – an area that is in many respects removed from the rest of the facility. On 15 March 2023 the 29 inmates in that Division had an average age of 72.7, with the oldest 88. All but six of those inmates were in custody for a sexual offence.

Older inmates are generally easily managed in custody, but clearly have different safety needs to younger inmates due to their frailty, more prevalent health needs, vulnerability to extortion in the general population, having different interests to younger inmates and, in many cases, due to the nature of their offending. They can also pose different challenges if they are suffering from any level of dementia, reduced mobility or certain health conditions, such as incontinence. Personal alarms are issued to a number of aged inmates in the event of falls or other medical emergencies during the night.

Upon release, older inmates regularly face particular challenges in terms of finding suitable housing, often because their families have disowned them or don't want them having access to children, and they are frequently unable to work.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inmates

Tasmania has by far the lowest imprisonment rate and over-representation of Aboriginal people in custodial facilities than any other jurisdiction in Australia.

Additionally, in 2021-22 the rate of Aboriginal inmates returning to custody dropped from 65 per cent in 2020-21 to 56.6 per cent.

Aboriginal inmates comprised around 24 per cent of the total inmate population in 2022-22 – a proportion that had doubled over the past 16 years.

Table 14: Aboriginal prisoner and offender numbers, Tasmania, 2012-13 to 2021-22								
	Prisoners (daily average)			Imprisonment Rates		Offenders (daily average)		
	Males	Females	Total	Crude	Age standardised ⁹	Males	Females	Total
2012-13	63	11	73	473.7	411.3	195	76	271
2013-14	64	7	71	448.8	389.2	198	82	279
2014-15	68	6	74	454.3	392.2	191	69	260
2015-16	79	9	88	525.5	451.0	209	68	277
2016-17	94	15	109	632.3	541.8	216	71	287
2017-18	108	10	118	667.4	572.5	243	80	323
2018-19	116	10	127	699.7	601.1	250	82	332
2019-20	124	12	136	733.3	630.7	258	95	353
2020-21	130	14	144	761.0	655.3	283	87	370
2021-22	139	15	154	796.9	686.7	316	98	414

Data source: Reports on Government Services

As can be seen from Table 14 above, from 2012-13 to 2021-22 there was an increase in the daily average number of Aboriginal inmates of 111 per cent, while over the same period non-Indigenous inmate numbers grew by just 20 per cent. There would appear to be a number of key drivers of this growth in Aboriginal numbers and higher imprisonment rates, including:

- disadvantage;
- higher rates of psychological disability (mental illness, PTSD and cognitive impairment), particularly amongst Aboriginal women¹⁰; and
- an increase in the number of people identifying as Aboriginal.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data suggests that from 2016 to 2021 the increase in Tasmanian people identifying as Aboriginal increased by 28.8 per cent, which is greater than, but not so different to, the national increase of 25.2 per cent. The growth in the number of Aboriginal members in the broader community was the third highest in the country (behind Victoria and the ACT) in that same period.

Nonetheless, in the three years after 1 July 2016, the rate of growth in the Aboriginal custodial population more than doubled. In the three years up to that date the Aboriginal inmate population rose 20.5 per cent to 88, and in the three years after that date it rose 44.3 per cent to 127.

⁹ Age standardised rates enhance the comparability of event rates from different populations by making adjustments for the confounding effects of differences in age structure between the populations being compared. The Aboriginal population (amongst others) is a younger population than the broader population, which – given that offending is more likely to be undertaken by young people – skews the data in such a way as to mean that crude rates might not give an accurate picture of what is occurring.

¹⁰ Australian Law Reform Commission Report 133, Pathways to Justice – An Inquiry into the Incarceration Rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples; 11.28 Mental health and cognitive impairment; Rates of psychological disability for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are more than double that for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. This includes higher rates of hospitalisation for psychiatric issues, as well as higher rates of mental illness, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and cognitive impairment. One Victorian study revealed that more than nine in ten (92%) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female prisoners surveyed had received a lifetime diagnosis of a recognised mental illness, and almost half met the criteria for PTSD (p.354).

The ABS – using indexed data from 2016 to 2021 – notes that in that period the Tasmanian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inmate numbers and imprisonment rates showed the highest increases nationally.¹¹ The increases, as shown in Table 15 below, occurred in two waves.

Table 15: Indexed count of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inmates 2016-2021									
	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	AUST
2016	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
2017	105.3	114.0	110.7	104.6	123.6	127.2	90.5	96.8	106.7
2018	110.1	129.2	111.5	112.8	115.8	125.0	104.8	106.0	111.8
2019	113.1	157.0	116.7	111.5	119.3	152.2	99.0	103.6	115.1
2020	109.8	135.0	123.4	110.9	122.8	157.6	110.5	98.4	114.1
2021	118.4	143.6	141.4	110.9	130.3	165.2	93.3	110.6	123.1
Increase	18	44	41	11	30	65	-7	11	23
Indexed imprisonment rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples 2016-2021									
	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	AUST
2016	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
2017	102.5	110.2	107.3	101.9	120.4	124.1	86.6	95.4	103.8
2018	104.6	120.8	104.8	107.0	109.7	118.9	96.3	102.2	105.9
2019	104.7	142.1	110.3	103.1	110.3	141.3	87.9	98.0	107.1
2020	99.2	118.3	113.2	99.9	110.8	142.8	94.7	91.4	103.5
2021	104.5	122.0	125.9	97.5	114.9	146.7	77.4	101.0	108.8
Increase	5	22	26	-3	15	47	-23	1	9

It is worth noting that in 1991, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody found that the fundamental causes for over-representation of Aboriginal people in custody were not located within the criminal justice system.¹² Based on various inquiries, a range of social determinants and disadvantage impact on incarceration rates including education, employment, health, disability, housing and homelessness, child safety and youth justice. The range of social determinants contributing to the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in custody highlights the complexity, the historical context and issues of intersectionality that need to be addressed and overcome in order to achieve reductions in the incarceration rate, with early intervention critical.

There several other key indicators where Tasmania's performance compares very favourably with the rest of the country:

- The gap between the proportions of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations who fall into the most disadvantaged quintile is (or has been) by some measure the smallest in the country. In Tasmania, the proportion of Indigenous people in this most disadvantaged quintile is around 1.5 times that of the non-Indigenous population (against a national average of 2.7 times). However, the proportion of the Aboriginal population that falls into this quintile (53.7 per cent) compares unfavourably with the national average of 46.7 per cent, and the gap is small principally because Tasmania has (or at least had, in 2016) by far the largest proportion of

¹¹ It is noted, however, that indexed data from 2006 to 2021 reveals an overall increase in the Aboriginal prisoner population that is more in line with other states and territories.

¹² Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC), National Report Volume 1, Section 1.7.1

non-Indigenous people in this most disadvantaged quintile (35.8 per cent, compared with a national average of 17.5 per cent);¹³

- Tasmania has by far the lowest crude imprisonment rate for Aboriginal people, at 797 per 100,000 adults in 2021-22, against a national average of 2,335; and
- The over-representation of Aboriginal people in custody in Tasmania has been determined to be 4.7 times in 2021-22, against a national average of 12.2 (age standardised).

Table 16: Crude imprisonment rate of Aboriginal people									
	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	AUST
2021-22	1963.3	1745.5	2288.9	3671.8	2538.3	796.9	1770.3	3027.5	2335.1

Table 17: Age-standardised imprisonment rate of Aboriginal people									
2021-22	1590.0	1380.6	1847.5	2959.3	2038.4	686.7	1345.8	2474.7	1897.1

Table 18: Over-representation of Aboriginal people in custody (Age-standardised ratio)									
	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	AUST
2021-22	10.1	11.7	10.6	14.1	10.8	4.7	15.4	12.8	12.2

Tasmania is also the only Australian jurisdiction without an unnatural causes Aboriginal death in custody in the past ten years. The last suicide of an Aboriginal inmate in a Tasmanian facility was in August 1991. Since then there have been two deaths of Aboriginal persons in custody, both from natural causes.

Under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, Tasmania - like every other jurisdiction in Australia, has committed to achieving Outcomes 10 and 11 of that Agreement – specifically, by 2031:

- achieving a 15 per cent reduction in the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in prison (Outcome 10); and
- a 30 per cent reduction in the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people being held in detention (Outcome 11).

Current projections suggest that significant and coordinated intervention is required for this Outcome 10 target to be achieved.

¹³ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework – summary report 2020. Data from Population distribution by SEIFA advantage/disadvantage quintiles, by Indigenous status and jurisdiction, 2016. SEIFA 2016 - the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas - is the most recent version of this product.

Community based orders

The data tends to support the view that the courts in Tasmania see Community Corrections as a viable alternative to imprisonment.

Table 19: Number and ratio of daily averages of inmates and offenders, 2021-22									
	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	AUST
Inmates	12491	6765	9589	6386	3049	642	389	1866	41176
Offenders	34788	9187	19572	5764	6605	2085	931	1213	80144
Ratio	2.79	1.36	2.04	0.90	2.17	3.25	2.39	0.65	1.95

In 2021-22 the proportion of all offenders under corrective services supervision who were managed by Community Corrections rose marginally from 75.3 per cent in 2020-21 to 76.5 per cent.

The increase in the proportion under community supervision has occurred despite a steady decline in the numbers of parolees – from 178 in December 2021 to 131 in March 2023.

The courts now have more sentencing options available especially since the introduction of home detention order.

Family Violence

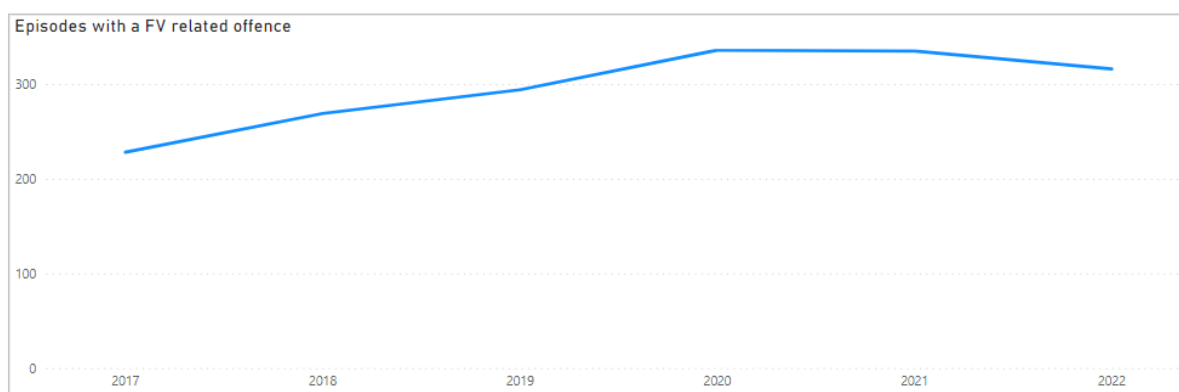
The substantial growth in inmate numbers over the past decade is, in part, due to changing societal attitudes towards Family Violence events and the way the criminal justice system treats them.

Years ago, police nationally would attend scenes involving domestic violence and, on being assured by victims that all was well, would not pursue charges against the perpetrator. That approach has changed across the country, and Tasmania has taken a lead role in the development of its integrated criminal justice response to family violence, Safe at Home.

The new approach has also led to increasing numbers of family violence perpetrators – and particularly persistent offenders – being imprisoned. How many of the custodial population are incarcerated on FV-related charges is not easily calculated, as assault charges, for example, that are FV-related will not normally be identifiable in inmates' warrants of imprisonment.

The graph below gives some indication of the increase in a limited range of FV offences in the past five years. The data graphed relates only to offences that are readily identifiable on warrants as FV-related – such as breaches (or attempted breaches) of FVOs and interim FVOs, and persistent family violence - and does not represent the full growth in all FV-related charges.

Graph 1: Episodes of imprisonment, family violence-related charges, where known, 2017-22



Data recently released by the ABS (see Table 18) suggests that 51 per cent of Tasmania's Family Violence offences which are tried in courts are assaults, and so it is likely that the growth in inmates with Family Violence offences is much greater than the trend suggested by the above graph – particularly as the proportion of such offenders who are imprisoned upon conviction is at the higher end of the national scale.

The Recorded Crime – Offenders statistics for 2021-22 issued by the Australian Bureau of Statistics places Tasmania fourth lowest nationally (behind the ACT, SA and WA) in FV offenders per 100,000. The ABS notes that Family Violence offenders comprise 19 per cent of all offenders in Tasmania.

	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT
Most common FV offence %								
▪ Assault	48	46			71	51	50	61
▪ Breach FV order			75	53				
Penalties %								
▪ Monetary	19	26	33	60	8	28	19	60
▪ Prison	14	15	26	11	73	22	23	11
▪ Community work / supervision	26	13	19	17	1	12		17

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics – Criminal Courts, Australia, 2021-22; released 3 March 2023

Unpublished data also suggests that Family Violence offenders in Tasmania are the highest recidivists of any offence category. In an attempt to arrest reoffending rates of this group, the TPS is extending its range of Family Violence programs, and will be able to roll out a range of such programs to unconvicted inmates as well as those who are convicted and sentenced.

An alternative to imprisonment is being electronically monitored and is being used by the courts to better manage this cohort.

Lockdowns

One common criticism of the TPS in recent years has been the frequency of lockdowns – inmates being confined to their unites at times when they should be working, engaging in education and programs, attending visits, planning for release, associating with others or involved in other activities. It is an issue about which the Department is acutely aware and is working hard to address. It is well understood that

confinement and boredom lead to frustration and makes the custodial environment less safe for inmates and staff and impedes rehabilitative endeavours.

Each year, the TPS reports inmates' time out of cells through the Department of Justice Annual Report and the Productivity Commission's Report on Government Services (RoGS). The total average out of cell hours (per inmate per day) for the TPS for 2021-22 was 7.7 hours, down marginally from 8.0 hours in 2020-21.

Unfortunately, during 2021-22 there were higher than usual numbers of lockdowns due to staff shortages and absences, many related to COVID-19, and this ultimately impacted the overall average out of cell hours across the service.

Lockdowns are, however, an essential operational tool of just about every custodial system, utilised to ensure a safe and secure custodial environment for inmates, staff and visitors. They vary in length and may affect an entire facility, or be limited to a single unit that houses a number of inmates.

They may also occur for a broad range of reasons. Lockdowns can be necessary where there is an operational requirement to safely and effectively manage inmate behaviour and conduct, to address actual or potential security breaches, or where staff shortages and absences affect the normal operation of the facility. They can facilitate standard security operations (such as targeted searches), emergency responses, medical escorts, staff training, and facility maintenance. Some of these reasons are obviously beyond the control of TPS staff.

Some common examples of the need for lockdowns include:

- when an incident occurs in one unit of the facility which requires staff from another unit to respond to assist. Because there is a finite level of staff available in each unit/facility, if staff respond to an incident in another unit, their unit may need to be locked down while they respond as there may not be sufficient staff to ensure safety in their unit at that time;
- due to technical difficulties associated with alarms or CCTV cameras – as a result of either faults or planned upgrades/maintenance. It may compromise safety and security if technicians are working with tools and equipment with inmates out of their cells;
- minimum staffing arrangements are in place across each facility which provide the safe number of staffing required to fully unlock the facility. Where these minimum staffing arrangements are not able to be met (through staff absences or where staff are urgently redeployed – for example to facilitate an unplanned medical escort), and additional staff cannot be sourced (through recalling staff to overtime or moving staff around from one facility to another) then a facility or unit may need to be locked down to ensure the safety of all involved;
- from time to time if inmate behaviour becomes too heightened the behaviour may need to be managed through the use of lockdowns to prevent further escalation. Such a strategy is not designed to be punitive, but about creating a safe environment for inmates and staff.

The TPS management and staff take a planned and structured approach to the use of lockdowns. Managers continue to explore a variety of strategies to minimise the likelihood of lockdowns in Tasmanian correctional facilities.

It is also important to note that when lockdowns occur, essential services and inmate supports are still maintained where it is safe to do so. The majority of inmates continue to have access to televisions, in-cell radios, books, educational materials and other activities.

It is often not fully understood that in most instances inmates (other than maximum security inmates) will not be confined to their cells during a lockdown, but are restricted to staying within their accommodation units or divisions.

Where unavoidable situations occur and lockdowns happen over consecutive days, the TPS takes an active approach to dealing with these so that as many inmates and remandees as possible get as much time out of cell as possible. This may mean that one unit is locked down in the morning while another unit is unlocked and then staff rotate to allow the unit locked down in the morning to be unlocked during the afternoon.

In addition, the TPS continues to have a strong focus on recruitment to ensure that there is an adequate pool of correctional officers available to fill all posts. In 2022 record numbers of recruit courses were run and record numbers of new correctional officers were recruited.

The use of evidence-based strategies to reduce contact with the justice system and recidivism

The TPS's approach to addressing inmates' offending behaviour is centred on evidence-based strategies which are accepted as world's best practice.

Most interventions are intensified as inmates approach their release date so that they might take the learnings from the treatment programs with them into the community, rather than have the gains that they have made through treatment eroded by ongoing contact with others who have not been treated.

The Risk-Need-Responsivity Model of Offender Rehabilitation

The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) approach used in Tasmania (and worldwide) dictates that treatment should target those presenting with highest levels of re-offending risk and focus on addressing the risk factors (needs) associated with their criminal behaviour. In addition, any intervention should be modified for responsivity factors (treatment-related barriers, e.g. cognition, mental health or literacy).

It is generally the case that criminogenic programs that adhere to the RNR principles result in reductions of re-offending.

The TPS's criminogenic programming and assessment framework adhere to the RNR model. Another complementary model that underpins the offender rehabilitation work at the TPS is the Good Lives Model. This is a strengths-based approach that promotes positive interventions and interactions that drive desistance and promote self-efficacy in the inmate. These two approaches point to addressing risk factors while connecting to the lived experience of the inmate and the self-narratives they construct around these factors.

In line with the Good Lives Model, the TPS is committed to exploring the way the custodial environment can enhance or hinder the outcomes of criminogenic programs.

Risk Assessments

According to current synthesis of the evidence, the best established risk factors for generalised recidivism are referred to as the 'Central Eight' risk factors. These are broken down into:

The Big Four (highly predictive of risk of reoffending)

- History of criminal behaviour
- Criminal and/or antisocial attitudes
- The presence of criminal/antisocial associations
- Antisocial personality and cognitions; and

The Moderate Four (moderately predictive of risk of reoffending)

- Substance use
- Family circumstances
- Employment/education
- Use of leisure time.

Risk assessment tools

There are risk assessment tools that measure these risk factors as well as more comprehensive risk assessment tools that encompass more offence-specific dynamic risk factors. In line with most Australian jurisdictions and standard practice and consistent with the RNR model, the TPS determines the highest risk cohort by using static risk screening tools. Some screeners are generic and some are offence specific.

The **Static-99R** risk assessment tool is intended to position sexual offenders in terms of their relative degree of risk for sexual recidivism based on commonly available demographic and criminal history information that has been found to correlate with sexual recidivism in adult male sex offenders. Static-99R has moderate accuracy in ranking offenders according to their relative risk for sexual recidivism, and is widely accepted by the scientific community and by applied evaluators.

The **Violence Risk Scale** (VRS) is a dynamic 26-item actuarial instrument comprised of six static and 20 dynamic items empirically or theoretically linked to violence and general recidivism. The tool is designed to assess changes in the level of risk pre- and post-treatment intervention. The total score can be translated into one of five risk categories: well below average, below average, average, above average and well above average risk of violent offending.

The **VRS:SO** is a dynamic 24-item actuarial instrument comprised of seven static and 17 dynamic items empirically or theoretically linked to sexual recidivism. The tool is designed to assess changes in the level of risk pre- and post-treatment intervention and is structured around three factors: sexual deviance, criminality and treatment responsivity. The total score on the tool can be translated into one of five risk categories: Very Low, Below Average, Average, Above Average, Well Above Average.

Both the violence and sex offending tools contain alcohol and other drug use as an assessed risk factor for re-offending.

AOD assessment

While risk assessments represent best practice, it should be acknowledged that they have limitations. Although they consistently demonstrate that they improve the accuracy of risk prediction (over clinical

opinion alone), an individual's future risk cannot be predicted with total certainty. This risk assessment is dynamic and is based on an inmate's current circumstances and the available information.

In addition, they do not reduce recidivism on their own. They need to be combined with effective interventions which target criminogenic need (criminogenic treatment programs) and comprehensive case planning.

Criminogenic treatment programs

The Violence Prevention Program (VPP) is an evidence-based treatment program which targets both instrumental and expressive forms of violence. The program utilises a range of treatment methods shown to be effective in reducing recidivism, including offence mapping, relapse prevention planning, problem solving, safety planning, emotional regulation techniques and cognitive behavioural restructuring methods. Throughout the program, relapse prevention and safety planning is taught and self-management plans are developed. By the end of the program participants should be able to recognise what internal factors contribute to their offending behaviour, what external situations act as high-risk for them, and have alternative strategies in place to manage effective decision making.

The **New Directions** treatment program is a treatment program that draws its theoretical underpinnings from cognitive behavioural therapy, the Risk-Need-Responsivity Model, The Good Lives Model and the Self-Regulation Model. This means that there is a significant emphasis throughout treatment on participants gaining insight and understanding into their individual cognitive, emotional and behavioural responses to environmental factors, particularly those linked to their offending behaviour. In conjunction with this, participants have the opportunity to practise skills to improve their capacity to self-regulate and meet their needs adaptively. This program is currently delivered in Ron Barwick Prison to inmates with sexual offences who are identified as high to moderate risk with substantial needs. Those closest to parole eligibility dates are prioritised.

Community Corrections is currently working to recruit a specialist practitioner to develop, procure and deliver sex offender programs and interventions in the community, and it is anticipated that this officer will work closely with TPS staff in ensuring throughcare engagement is a priority consideration in any strategies implemented.

The **Family Violence Offender Intervention Program** is an evidence-based treatment program which targets all aspects of abusive behaviours which are considered family violence. The program utilises a range of treatment methods shown to be effective in reducing recidivism, including offence mapping, relapse prevention planning, problem solving, safety planning, mood management techniques and the use of cognitive behavioural methods. Towards the end of the program relapse prevention and safety planning is taught and self-management plans are developed. By the end of the program the offender should be able to recognise what contributes to their offending behaviour and have alternative strategies in place to deal with high-risk situations. This program is currently delivered in the Risdon Prison Complex to inmates with family violence offences who are identified as high to moderate risk with substantial needs. Those closest to parole eligibility dates are prioritised.

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) is a comprehensive, evidence-based program that has been shown to be effective in treating many psychological problems such as mood disorders and substance abuse problems. It is a form of cognitive-behavioural therapy that aims to balance acceptance-oriented skills and change-oriented skills. DBT covers four modules: mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotional regulation and interpersonal effectiveness. Participants in the program attend a weekly skills development group session, engage in individual therapy, and complete weekly homework tasks. It is a rolling, year-round program with flexible commencement and completion dates. This program is

currently delivered in the Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison to women who have identified emotional regulation needs and who are rated Medium or Minimum placement. Plans are currently in place to explore how the program can be delivered to inmates in the Maximum rated units.

All the TPS's treatment programs utilise *cognitive behavioural therapy* (CBT) as the main treatment modality (i.e. they specifically target unhelpful thinking styles and behaviours). CBT has been found to be effective in reducing recidivism among offenders in custody, as it is for offenders in the community.

Other assessments

Cognitive assessments are undertaken by staff at the TPS predominately in the disability area. These can include IQ testing, functional capacity assessments, and a screener for Acquired Brain Injuries called the Care and Needs Scale.

Functional literacy assessments are undertaken by both Libraries Tasmania and TasTAFE. These assessments provide a baseline understanding to assist in the one-to-one literacy tutoring of inmates. Increasing literacy skills has many benefits, such as assisting inmates to reintegrate back into the community by improving their employability, to participate in criminogenic group programs, and to parent more effectively. Literacy gains impact positively on self-efficacy.

Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Treatment

A review of the literature on effective custodial alcohol and drug treatment programs for offenders highlighted the efficacy of CBT in custody. All the TPS's criminogenic programs have a module that focuses on AOD use.

Individual counselling significantly improves the impact of CBT group-based rehabilitation programs on recidivism outcomes among the general custodial population. This finding is applicable to AOD programs and the TPS has two AOD counsellors to provide this service to the inmate population.

AOD needs are assessed by the AOD counsellors via an initial intake assessment to establish health needs, a pathway for continued service provision and counselling requirements. Between 12 and six months out from parole/release, inmates will be able to access monthly appointments. From six months to two months from parole/release inmates will be seen on a fortnightly basis. From two months until release, appointments will increase to weekly sessions with the view to support their transition into the community.

Clinical judgment will be applied to cases where an individual may require a higher frequency of service provision - such as where the inmate has low cognitive ability, and additional rapport building required. Where this is required, all appointment scheduling will be at the discretion of the individual AOD counsellor on an individual and as-needs basis.

Comprehensive case planning

The TPS has a team of case managers who plan an integrated and coordinated approach to services that help offenders address their offending behaviour. This case planning involves developing a sentence plan that provides a meaningful guideline to progressing through the custodial system by addressing identified risk and need.

Case planning has a strong emphasis on providing offenders with a range of skills and supports that enable them to reintegrate back into the community, thereby minimising their likelihood of reoffending.

This includes identifying and meeting their social and welfare needs as well as assisting them in acquiring useful educational and employment skills and qualifications.

A core focus is the provision of basic numeracy, literacy and education services to inmates.

Vocational Education and Training, Literacy and Library

The TPS has a Service Level Agreement with TasTAFE to deliver an annual schedule of VET courses to assist inmates in gaining meaningful employment on release from custody. A variety of courses are delivered across all facilities.

The TPS and Libraries Tasmania have partnership agreements in place to provide a library service that meets the learning and literacy needs of inmates. The Adult Literacy Service is aimed at improving functional literacy skills via 1:1 tutoring and literacy and numeracy support.

This current literacy pilot being delivered by Libraries Tasmania involves an expansion of the current Adult Literacy Service in the facility.

This project aims to offer more inmates the opportunity to improve their functional literacy skills. Specifically, the project aims to:

- improve inmates' literacy skills;
- obtain better data on literacy levels to allow a more targeted approach to addressing literacy deficits;
- increase the number of inmates engaging in the literacy program;
- improve delivery to facilities with lesser access to education;
- provide options for inmates to engage in literacy practices between tutoring sessions; and
- promote reading and use of the library in custodial facility.

This project will extend the one-to-one tutoring offered to inmates and will focus on facilities that would benefit from more education offerings, such as the Southern Remand Centre, the Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison and the Risdon Prison Complex.

Resources for this project include two well-established programs specifically designed for adults with low literacy:

- **Turning Pages** was developed in the UK specifically for the custodial environment. It is designed as a program that can be delivered by peers; and
- **MultiLit** is a well-regarded Australian company with two programs suitable for tutoring adults one-to-one (lower level and higher level).

The pilot will monitor and evaluate how these two different programs perform. Inmates will undergo an Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) or alternative literacy needs assessment upon entry of the pilot and then again, every 6 months. This involves an interview with the learner which includes identifying and/or reviewing learner goals.

Delivery will be a combination of face-to-face and online tutoring via Zoom and involve engagement strategies such as resume writing, structured literacy programming, reading challenges and technology to build digital literacy skills.

The provision of, and participation in, services for people in custody and leaving custody (health, housing and legal services)

Health

General

Physical health services are provided within the TPS by the Correctional Primary Health Service (CPHS), Department of Health, which is principally responsible for the delivery of these services.

The TPS supports provision of health services through ensuring a safe and secure environment exists for CPHS staff to work in and inmates live in, and that inmates are able to access CPHS appointments and information as required.

The TPS works closely with the CPHS to ensure streamlined service delivery and to ensure that any barriers that may exist in health care provision are removed in a timely manner. For example, TPS Senior Managers have a monthly meeting with Senior CPHS staff to review arrangements and work through any issues that arise.

Where medical services are unable to be facilitated in house by CPHS the TPS is responsible for transporting and maintaining custody of individuals in local hospitals.

COVID-19 response

A significant health challenge for the TPS has been dealing with the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and in protecting the vulnerable custodial population.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic the Tasmanian Prison Service (TPS) took a cautious and highly planned approach to dealing with the risks presented to the vulnerable custodial population.

The TPS was very well placed to deal with COVID-19 and implemented a range of fixed and dynamic measures to manage the pandemic and its potential impact on the health and wellbeing of inmates and staff.

These measures, together with low community transmission, kept COVID-19 substantially out of the State's correctional facilities.

In April 2022, an outbreak occurred within our correctional facilities. The TPS responded quickly, working with Correctional Primary Health Services and Public Health Emergency Operations Centre to sweep test inmates and take measures to stop the spread of the virus. Due to the work by the TPS, the outbreak was effectively contained within a very short period of time.

Mental Health and Supports

On initial reception to custody, inmates and remandees are reviewed by a Registered Nurse for triage purposes, and separately by a correctional officer. The health reviews screen for current medication needs, specific diagnoses, any mental health concerns, or cognitive impairment concerns, as well as any risk of suicide or self-harming behaviour. Referrals are generated at this point to relevant service providers for follow-up, and in preparation for their medical officer appointment which is scheduled within four weeks of incarceration for non-urgent matters. The correctional screening tool 'Tier 1' assesses basic psycho-social coping and logistics with which the individual may need immediate support.

Following on from that initial assessment work, the TPS's Intervention and Reintegration Services department has a number of core teams which provide dedicated support services to support inmates and detainees as they enter the custodial system, during their incarceration, and in providing through-care to the community on release.

The Therapeutic Services Unit (TSU) is a team of counsellors and psychologists who perform a number core business actions. The primary focus of the team is suicide and self-harm risk assessment of inmates and detainees, as well as crisis response counselling to assist with coping and adjustment to the custodial environment. The TSU team also works in partnership with the CPHS's psychiatric team to identify and support inmates who are experiencing or at risk of developing a major mental illness.

The TSU has a dedicated Disability Counsellor who works to identify and support inmates who have a diagnosis, or suspected diagnosis, of cognitive impairment or acquired brain injury. This can lead to referrals to the NDIS program for through-care support post-release. The TSU also has two Alcohol and Other Drug counsellors who provide specific AOD focused counselling to sentenced inmates, and brief intervention support to remandees. The team also provides regular training to correctional officers and other non-uniformed staff members regarding suicide and self-harm policies and procedures, common mental illnesses and personality disorders found in the custodial population, and working with neuro-diverse presentations.

The TSU has a staff member who supports inmates in Division 7 at Ron Barwick Prison which, as previously noted, accommodates elderly or very unwell inmates.

Mental health support is provided in collaboration with the CPHS Psychiatric and General Medical staff. Two multi-disciplinary meetings take place each week, one internal to the TPS to support correctional staff managing inmates who are experiencing mental illness or SASH related behaviour in their unit, and a broader community meeting which includes Wilfred Lopes Centre clinical staff, TPS Therapeutic Services Staff, CPHS Psychiatric Clinic staff, Forensic Mental Health Services, Community Mental Health Services, and Court Liaison Officers. This is to ensure those coming into custody, or who are being released, are able to be captured and through-care organised in a timely manner.

Referrals to the Wilfred Lopes Centre are undertaken by the CPHS Psychiatric Clinic Psychiatrist.

Dedicated spaces within the custodial facility allow for the TPS to assist inmates to have access to support staff, protection needs, and other safety considerations in the following ways:

- The Mersey Needs Assessment Unit is a 15-bed unit which accommodates inmates who are identified as being at risk of, or experiencing, major mental illness, cognitive impairment or ABI, vulnerabilities, suicide and self-harm risk, and those requiring further observation prior to transitioning into mainstream environments.

- In addition, there is a 4-bed Crisis Support Unit which accommodates people identified as being at imminent risk of self-harm or suicide. Placement in and out of this unit is through the Risk Intervention Team program which is a collaboration between CPHS Psychiatric Liaison Nurse, Correctional Supervisors, and Therapeutic Services.
- The SRC has four safe cells which can accommodate remanded inmates who need additional support in coping and adjusting to custody, or who may be at increased risk of self-harming behaviour in the initial phase of their incarceration.
- Both reception prisons, the HRP and LRP, have dedicated cells to accommodate inmates who are at risk on entering the custodial environment.
- The MHWP also has a safe cell for managing at risk female inmates and remandees.

Each facility also has double-up cells which can be used to support inmates through the presence of their peers and by providing companionship.

The TPS also has its own Chaplaincy service which provides holistic spiritual support to inmates as required. This team conducts regular supportive contacts, and religious services. Chaplains also play a significant part in working with the inmates in Division 7 of Ron Barwick Prison regarding end-of-life care.

Transition

The Planning and Reintegration (P&R) team's primary goal is to assist inmates to improve their lives and to decrease their risk of re-offending by obtaining skills and accessing services. The team largely works one on one with inmates serving a sentence of greater than 6 months - addressing areas of concern regarding their offending behaviour through assessments, sentence planning, and identifying requirements for their release. This team also supports inmates to stay connected to their families in challenging circumstances through the use of family engagement workers.

For those inmates who transition to community based orders, Community Corrections delivers a similar suite of criminogenic programs. Programs focus on addressing alcohol and drug addiction, aggression and family violence related issues. For those who have completed a program in custody, there is an opportunity to re-engage with the program material and apply key learnings in the community setting if subject to post release orders

Additional drug and alcohol supports

As well as program interventions the TPS employs two full time dedicated drug and alcohol counsellors to provide one on one counselling and intervention.

The TPS ensures that throughcare arrangements are in place for inmates receiving support for drug and alcohol addiction. Community Corrections employs an Alcohol and Drug Counsellor and Educator to provide direct client counselling as well as support to staff working with those managing drug and alcohol dependence issues. This position works closely with the Court Mandated Diversion program and provides an additional layer of throughcare support for those managing the transition to the community.

Throughcare support and interventions

The TPS also works with external stakeholders to deliver drug and alcohol intervention supports within the facility. Support from external stakeholders allows specialist programs to be delivered to inmates and also provides greater links to community support networks that inmates can rely on upon their release.

With a view to continuity of support for those exiting custody onto community based orders, the TPS and Community Corrections have established a range of partnerships with external service providers that ensure a referral for a person can continue to be actioned throughout their engagement with each of the services. Two examples of success include:

- The Sexual Assault Support Service engages victims of sexual assault whilst in custody, and continues this care once they have been released on supervision orders. This ensures that victims have continuity of care in managing issues related to their abuse.
- Holyoake provides a group program, Gottawanna, which runs across a number of sessions with multiple entry and exit pathways into engagement. The same facilitators deliver this program and provide one on one counselling in both the community and custodial settings. Inmates and offenders who commence either the program or counselling while engaged with either Community Corrections or the TPS, are afforded the opportunity to continue the engagement if they transition between services.

When an inmate seeks to commence or continue working with an external service provider during their incarceration, their Planning Officer will make contact with the service to ascertain whether it will be possible to provide support during their incarceration. Where this is not possible, contact will be made again closer to the individual's release. Optimally this will include a Zoom or phone call from the service provider to the inmate, to ensure a warm handover occurs. Where appropriate, an appointment will be made for the inmate to attend upon release.

Planning Officers do preliminary work with individuals which begins to develop the inmate's understanding of their risks and needs, and informs the detailed referral/ handover that Planning Officers are able to provide to external service providers. This includes information about the individual's needs, challenges, and strengths.

The exchange of information noted above is grounded in strong cross-sector professional relationships. Among the services frequently contacted are Alcohol and Drug Services, Youth & Family Community Connections, Holyoake, the Salvation Army Bridge Program, and Missiondale Residential Rehabilitation. Collaboration between Planning Officers is instrumental in the exchange of contacts and information regarding external services, which in turn, leads to better through-care for inmates being released to the community.

Post release partnerships

Inmates are unable to access Medicare while in custody. This means that they are unable to work in consultation with a General Practitioner to develop a Mental Health Care Plan until they are released to the community. Engaging a GP can be difficult for some inmates upon release, as their circumstances generally dictate that they need to find a bulk billing practice, and they may not have an existing relationship with a doctor. Work is often required to locate a practice in their local area that is open to accepting new patients, which can result in delays to inmates accessing appropriate assistance on release - at a time of increased vulnerability. The TPS works to locate services and establish therapeutic relationships between inmates and services where possible, where these are not able to be established

Community Corrections (where applicable) will work with the offender to support them to engage with a relevant service.

Forensic Mental Health Services suitability criteria often mean that a number of inmates and offenders are unable to be accepted as clients. Community Corrections has established a partnership with Forensic Mental Health Services, which has seen probation officers engaged in case consultations and regular training from a senior forensic psychiatrist. This assists officers in developing and delivering case management planning, but is not a genuine substitute for an offender's engagement with a clinical professional in the field.

As well as seeking supports for inmates from external stakeholders on their exit from custody, the TPS also works with external stakeholders to deliver drug and alcohol intervention supports within the custodial environment. Support from external stakeholders allows specialist programs to be delivered to inmates and also provides greater links to community support networks that inmates can rely on upon their release.

Support for those living with a disability

The National Disability Insurance Agency has appointed a number of Justice Liaison Officers, including one for Tasmania. Both the TPS and Community Corrections have worked actively to support the engagement of this position into the existing case management processes, to streamline assessment and referrals to the service.

For instance, Community Corrections has made space available for the Justice Liaison Officer in various offices across the state. This officer has become a key point of contact for Probation Officers to access on a regular basis, increasing the visibility of the NDIS and breaking down some of the barriers to accessing support through that service.

The Justice Liaison Officer is also provided space to work from TPS facilities. This provides access to inmates prior to release to commence engagement with the NDIS that is then supported in continuity of care and engagement for those released to orders supervised by Community Corrections.

This and other initiatives of collaborative partnership with both government and non-government services that corrective services has established helps to drive stronger collaboration in ensuring holistic support for people in custody and those in subject to community based orders.

Housing

The Government continues to prioritise and explore ways to improve access to housing for people returning to the community following a period of imprisonment, and has recently underscored its commitment in this area by providing extended funding for two linked programs that provide transitional support and assistance with accommodation.

Beyond the Wire

In March 2022, the Department of Justice and the Salvation Army finalised a new agreement for the delivery of a Specialist Throughcare Reintegration Program – Beyond the Wire.

Beyond the Wire offers a multi-partner throughcare service for high and complex needs individuals who are exiting custody and who have chronic accommodation and support needs.

This cohort is likely to have a history of prior convictions and relapse, often returning to custody following release into the community without appropriate accommodation and specialist support.

Beyond the Wire provides those exiting custody with access to case management, service coordination and planning commencing pre-release.

Through this program, the Salvation Army offers pre and post release support for people at risk of homelessness exiting the Justice system. This will include supported lease arrangements through properties on a dedicated portfolio (under the Prisoner Rapid Rehousing Program), as well as support in furnishing the property. Salvation Army workers will undertake case management and practical support with inmates following their release.

From its initial commencement in January 2018 to 30 December 2022, 155 participants were accepted onto the program.

Prisoner Rapid Rehousing Program

As part of its funding commitment, the Government continues to provide funding for accommodation through the Prisoner Rapid Rehousing Program. This initiative provides those exiting the TPS with transitional accommodation. Tenants are provided with support through Beyond the Wire to transition back into the community, to access and maintain stable accommodation, and to address issues which may contribute to reoffending.

This program has resulted from a collaboration between a number of non-government organisations to provide state-wide access to the services provided by each organisation (Anglicare Tasmania, CatholicCare, Colony 47, Hobart City Mission and Salvation Army Tasmania).

Housing Connect

Ex-inmates leaving custody and requiring housing assistance also continue to receive support through Housing Connect, a one stop shop for all Tasmanians in need of housing assistance.

Specifically, all inmates may now request a housing needs assessment through Housing Connect up to 30 weeks before their estimated release date.

Inmates coming towards their release dates receive support from TPS Interventions and Reintegration Services staff to assist them to make appointments and applications to the relevant housing providers prior to their release.

Other housing options

Corrective Services has actively worked to take advantage of a range of alternative housing pathways to support inmates on release.

- Community Corrections has established a partnership with Homes Tasmania whereby specialist housing is provided to those offenders who are deemed significant and high risk. This pathway is offered through the established Specialist Assistance Support Team, a team mostly dedicated to supporting people living with a disability to find appropriate accommodation to meet their needs. The benefit of a specialist, targeted pathway ensures that an individual's specific risk factors and needs are considered in the search for appropriate accommodation options.

- Bethlehem House has played a crucial role in supporting some inmates exiting custody through offering a place to stay and coordinated support. Bethlehem House provides short, medium and long term accommodation for men, with a number of beds that can be used for inmates on exiting the custodial environment as well as those on other types of community based orders.
- Shelters such as Hobart Women's Shelter can take women on release from custody. There are no dedicated beds to support inmates on their return to the community, but these services can provide a valuable transition pathway for a number of women and their families.
- Alcohol and Drug Services can take inmates into detoxification units upon release, however positions are limited.

Legal Services

The TPS strongly supports inmates and remandees to have timely access to legal practitioners.

The TPS runs a professional visits process where legal representatives are able to book in to meet with inmates and remandees face to face to seek instructions and discuss matters related to cases.

Risdon Prison currently offers a total of 235 professional/legal Zoom/face-to-face visits per week and 429 phone call time slots per week for professional/legal calls.

The SRC, which opened in July 2022, is a state of the art, purpose-built facility designed specifically to hold remandees prior to sentencing. Thus it is important that this group receives easy access to legal representatives to assist in preparing their cases.

The opening of the SRC has improved legal representatives' access to their clients, with increased telephone, in-person, Zoom and videoconferencing services offered to all remandees in the facility.

The SRC offers all remandees telephone access to professional and legal services from 8:45am to 4:00pm daily; in-person visits for all services in the Risdon Prison Complex (RPC) Visits Centre in line with the RPC Visits Schedule; Zoom visits on Mondays and Thursdays; and access to four video link rooms, which can be used for professional and court contact with remandees.

In addition to this increased access, every cell in the SRC has a telephone which can be used by the remandee throughout the day to make contact with their legal representatives (as well as family and other contacts). This unrestricted access is providing significantly increased access to legal representatives (particularly those who may be in court during the day) to remandees.

The SRC also has a legal resources centre which remandees can access which has access to various legal resources to help prepare their case including offline access to relevant legislation.

The Videoconferencing Upgrade (VCU) Project continues to provide increased capabilities for courts and professional contact with inmates, with additional fixed video links installed across all TPS facilities in June 2022. All the physical upgrade work within the TPS as part of the VCU Project is now complete, with updates to the scheduling and booking system now underway.

A number of these video links are already in use in the Hobart Reception Prison, Launceston Reception Prison, Ron Barwick Prison, Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison and the Risdon Prison Complex Maximum and Minimum Security precincts.

In addition to the SRC's four active video link rooms, an additional two fixed videoconferencing end points for courts and professional visits are in the process of being installed in the Risdon Prison Complex Maximum Derwent units' interview room, and the Huon/Mersey interview room.

TPS senior managers regularly meet with a legal stakeholders reference group which includes the Registrar of the Supreme Court, Administrator of the Magistrates Court, Director of Legal Aid Tasmania, President of the Law Society and Chair of the Prisoners Legal Service.

Through these meetings any barriers to legal access or issues relevant to legal matters are able to be raised and resolved.

The TPS also supports external stakeholders providing legal advice and supports to inmates and remandees. For example, the Prisoners Legal Service recently received funding from the Government to run a Preventative Lawyering Program which is soon to commence.

This program will work with inmates in the last few months prior to their release to provide them with a 'legal health check' to ensure that inmates are able to be released unencumbered with outstanding legal matters such as warrants, unpaid fines, and outstanding court matters.

The aim of the program is to reduce the risk of inmates having to deal with legal matters as soon as they are released and risk being returned to custody.

Training and support initiatives for corrective service staff related to increasing individual well-being, professionalism, resilience and reduced absenteeism

Training and Development

The TPS operates a professional Training and Development Unit which provides both training to new recruits as well as ongoing and refresher training to all staff of the TPS.

The Training Unit has recently undergone a restructure, with additional resources provided by the Department, allowing the unit to be able to better deliver effective training to staff. In addition to its trainers who are attached to the unit, trainers regularly draw on existing staff within the TPS who are subject matter experts to assist in training on specific topics as required.

This unit restructure places the training unit in a strong position to provide increasingly robust training moving forward. There are currently vacancies across a number of the substantive positions which are in the process of being filled.

New Recruits Training

The course delivered to new recruits runs over a 10-week period and is comprehensive in its coverage of both the theory and practical skills required by Correctional Officers. The course is adjusted as needed over time to ensure it remains contemporary and incorporates new policy, procedures and practices.

Some of the units covered in the recruit training that support individual well-being, professionalism, resilience and reduced absenteeism include:

- Introduction of MATES (peer support) and Employee Assistance Program
- Expected behaviours – which incorporates the TPS and Department of Justice values
- Role of a Correctional Officer
- Workplace behaviour, including code of conduct
- Pro-social modelling
- Professional boundaries in corrections
- First Aid and CPR
- Roles of the Integrity Commission, Ombudsman, Custodial Inspector
- Change Management
- Resilience – Vicarious Trauma
- Stress Management
- Injury Management
- WHS – Prisoners and staff
- Wellbeing Unit

New recruits who complete the recruit school are given the option to be supported to earn a Certificate III in Correctional Practice through on the job assessment over the 12 months following their graduation. This includes regular face to face training and assessment sessions with the training and development unit. There is no mandatory requirement for new recruits to complete the Certificate III, other than they must complete the recruit training school which makes up a component of that certificate.

Ongoing and Refresher Training

As well as training provided to new recruits, the TPS also provides regular refresher training to all staff.

Correctional staff undertake various mandatory face to face training on an annual basis including units such as control and restraint, breathing apparatus, fire, CPR/first aid and manual handling. In addition to face to face training, all TPS staff undertake mandatory annual e-learning which covers topics including professional behaviour, values, crime scene preservation, suicide and self-harm (SASH) and trauma informed practice.

Courses such as mental health first aid are also offered to all staff on a regular basis.

All of these training functions support staff in their well-being, professionalism and resilience, and help the TPS to provide a professional service to the community.

Well-being, professionalism, resilience and reduced absenteeism

Due to the at times challenging nature of their work environments, employees within Corrective Services are susceptible to both physical and psychological injuries, in particular post-traumatic stress disorders, stress, anxiety and soft tissue injuries.

Wellbeing Support Unit

The Department of Justice established a dedicated and stand-alone Wellbeing Support Unit on 16 September 2021 to provide a range of online and face-to-face services. Services provided by the unit include physical and wellbeing health checks, functional health checks, mental health wellness checks, incident support, case management services and education and training programs.

The Wellbeing Support Unit uses the resources offered by My Pulse, a program developed specifically for the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management with the difference being that the Department of Justice in-sources case management, coaching and counselling services.

The Wellbeing Support Unit builds on the Department's skills and capability to manage staff wellbeing, and provide staff with an in-house, direct contact to assist individuals with strategies and support to manage their wellbeing. Whilst individual information is confidential, the Department now has access to timely and accurate data about staff wellbeing, which in turn can be used to build mitigation strategies, and prevent escalation. The unit employs a team of specialists with skills in psychology and case management. The team has been fully staffed since 21 February 2022. The team is located in a separate facility within the Bellerive Quay, to enable staff to access services confidentially and offsite, if needed. The location is accessible for clients and is also viewed as the best option for TPS staff working at Risdon and Hobart.

Accessing the Wellbeing Support Unit is confidential and optional for staff and from October 2021 to December 2022 the unit has received 84 individual referrals from staff within Corrective Services (including Community Corrections staff). The unit has also conducted Mental Health First Aid courses, responded to incidents within the TPS, worked with the TPS to review critical incident management policies and provided a session on resilience to a team within the TPS.

Employees can also access the Employee Assistance Program, as well as external counselling and coaching services if requested. These are independent to the Wellbeing Support Unit.

The preventative nature of the Wellbeing Support Unit is expected to deliver savings in the long term, with an expected reduction in lost time injuries and workers compensation claims overall. Importantly, the overall benefit of the program is that employees will be supported during difficult times and better equipped to make informed decisions regarding their health and wellbeing which will benefit the individual, the Department and the broader community.

Injury Management

The Department of Justice is committed to preventing work related injury and illness and supporting employees who sustain a work related injury or illness to recover and return to work in a safe and sustainable manner. Workers compensation continues to be a significant contributor to staff absences in the TPS. Staff absences contribute to staff shortages, high overtime costs, fatigue, lack of continuity and a range of other outcomes.

The Department of Justice has a Safety and Injury Management Unit which is part of the agency's Human Resources Branch. The Department has increased the injury management resources from five

to seven staff within the unit. The unit works closely with TPS and the agency's Workplace Health and Safety Teams to identify risks and implement controls to reduce work related injuries. The agency is starting to see some improved outcomes. Although the number of claims is still high -

- the average time lost per claim is reducing;
- the average cost per claim is reducing; and
- more people are being returned to suitable work earlier.

The Injury Management Unit has a strategy to prevent injury and illness and return injured workers to work sooner with a focus on early intervention and regular communication with injured employees, their supervisors and treating medical practitioners. A number of projects within the Injury Management Unit's Project Plan address staff well-being, professionalism, resilience and absenteeism.

Projects of particular relevance to TPS include the following project streams:

- *Workplace injury prevention*: Hazard identification and investigation, Functional Job Demands identification; Pre-Employment medical review, Correctional Officer footwear review.
- *Vicarious Trauma risk assessment and training*: training for employees and managers, and training on Conflict Resolution/Respectful Relationships.
- *Improving capacity to meet legislative obligations*: Training for employees and managers, updated Injury Management Program.
- *Improved governance structures*: Policies and procedures; Case Management System; Replacement of WHS reporting system, new workers compensation leave codes, claim reconciliations, settlement strategy.
- *Improved administrative processes*: New templates, forms, training and development of Injury Management Coordinators (IMC), IMC debriefing.
- *Early intervention and enhanced claims management*: Dedicated Return To Work (RTW) placements, Vocational pathways identified, Training and development for employees and supervisors, RTW barriers identified.

The Department is also a participant in the Improving Injury Outcomes Project being run by WorkSafe.

Innovations and improvements to the management and delivery of corrective services that may be applied in Tasmania, including future custodial facility design

Forward focus and opportunities

The TPS's focus in the coming years is to make the community safer by:

- working towards achieving the goals set out in the soon-to-be-released Corrections Strategic Plan;
- improving rehabilitative outcomes for inmates by targeting and addressing inmates' offending behaviour;
- better equipping inmates to desist from crime, with particular attention on improving literacy and education levels, linking those with disabilities to the NDIS, promoting respectful

relationships, seeking better health outcomes, and encouraging inmates to acquire vocational skills;

- addressing substance abuse issues, particularly in relation to methamphetamine use;
- improving the transition from custody to the community and working more closely with Community Corrections and community agencies to achieve this;
- reducing lockdowns; and
- ensuring that the Northern Correctional Facility is well designed and focused on rehabilitation.

In doing this, it will also seek to -

- improve the safety and skills of correctional staff;
- ensure that recruitment, rostering and other measures allow the full staffing of facilities; and
- provide a more efficient TPS by reducing overtime expenditure and workers compensation claims.

Future custodial facility design

The Department's next major correctional infrastructure projects are the Northern Correctional Facility, a new kitchen on the Risdon site, and an additional 50-bed maximum-security unit in the RPC.

It is widely accepted that good physical design of correctional facilities not only facilitates their good management, but plays a significant role in the wellbeing of offenders and in reducing inmates' risk of re-offending. Good design that focuses more on rehabilitation also contributes to a better working environment for staff, and one in which their interactions with inmates are more positive. The Department has accordingly adopted a design philosophy for custodial facilities, developed in part through the recent SRC project, that promotes a positive environmental experience and cultural change.

One of the challenges that the TPS must address is how its infrastructure can better reflect and complement the newer trauma-informed approaches to working with offenders – finding the right balance between necessary security, functionality, utility and a non-institutional feel. In order to do this, the design and development principles that underpin the development of new correctional infrastructure broadly include:

- promoting safety and security, with all areas having good natural surveillance from officers' posts, with hidden areas or blind corners not permitted. The requirement is for line-of-sight observation and improved opportunities for safe staff and offender interaction;
- designing of unit layouts is to optimise the safe, efficient and effective use of staff resources;
- opportunities for optimising natural light within the designs are to be considered and incorporated where possible. This not only helps reduce ongoing lighting requirements but also improves the overall experience of space and create a calm relaxing environment where inside spaces have a close connection to the outside;
- similarly, opportunities for colour, both internally and externally are to be harnessed. A sophisticated selection of colours, materials and patterns can be used to create a visually interesting and calming environment with a domestic/village aesthetic, rather than a sterile, institutional one;
- carefully designed landscaping, greenery and gardens in areas readily accessible by offenders, as well as in areas that offenders do not have access to but are visible from buildings or transition areas, are to be used. Trees and low maintenance bushes and shrubs are to be included, where possible;

- consideration is to be given to good acoustic design in all areas. This allows for noise attenuation in areas where large gatherings will occur and where privacy is of most importance – such as interview rooms and videoconferencing facilities;
- where possible and appropriate, ease of movement of offenders is to be encouraged through use of electronic cards or large open unfenced areas. Operational efficiency and ease of access between and within functional zones is to be a primary design goal, particularly as it relates to the movement of offenders and the placement of staff;
- the use of razor wire is to be avoided or kept to an absolute minimum;
- use of technology is to be encouraged to help increase offender daily activities and interaction. For example, accommodation units will contain video conferencing technology for offender use and offender service kiosks will be included to provide them with a degree of flexibility and ownership in booking medical appointments, meetings or ordering items from the canteen/shop;
- sustainable design principles are to be adopted, encouraging the use of low energy fittings and including opportunities for water harvesting or energy production;
- consideration is to be given to lifetime costs in the selection of construction materials and building services;
- the ethnic and demographic diversity of the offender profile is also to be taken into account. External spaces of spiritual reflection or areas acknowledging Tasmanian Aboriginal heritage of the site are to be encouraged;
- spaces are, wherever possible, to be able to be used flexibly. This allows facilities to be used for different purposes in order to respond effectively to and manage changes to the inmate population. Where appropriate, spaces are to be multipurpose;
- where possible, the facility design for potential future internal and external functional expansion is an advantage; and
- building design, particularly the fit-out and furnishings arrangements, is to be such as to optimise workplace health and safety in every area and for every activity.

These principles will be used to inform the design of all new facilities. The Northern Correctional Facility and the 50-bed unit will both feature a variety of spaces to provide for education, training, program and work to provide inmates with opportunities to improve their skills address issues related to their offending and promote rehabilitation opportunities.

Rehabilitation agenda

Reducing reoffending is a critical goal, not just for the Corrections system but for the Tasmanian community. There are many things that the Corrections Strategic Plan will set out which are aimed at improving inmates' capacity to desist from crime. These include commitments to adopt more trauma-informed practices within our custodial facilities, to a range of projects and interventions targeting high risk or special needs groups, such as –

(i) *Disability*

Increasingly, the links between disability and contact with the criminal justice system are being discerned and understood. Better prevalence data is, however, a must, and work with the NDIA and other organisations is imperative. Work to address responsivity issues in the delivery of programs and services will be key in the coming years.

(ii) *Closing the Gap*

Tasmania has committed to Outcomes 10 and 11 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap – the targets of which are a reduction of at least 15 per cent in the imprisonment rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults, and a 30 per cent reduction in the detention rate of Aboriginal young people (aged 10-17), by 2031.

In order to achieve this, and consistent with the Closing the Gap commitments, the Department is keen to develop a framework with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community to reduce current rates of incarceration, and to directly involve Aboriginal people in assisting the justice system to develop programs and interventions targeted at Aboriginal inmates and offenders.

(iii) *Specialised High Risk Behavioural Units*

Over time, the TPS will seek to implement modified and enhanced therapeutic community models to replace the RPC's behavioural units (i.e. Tamar and Franklin) that currently house inmates with complex, challenging and violent behaviours.

The overarching aim of the units would be to enhance engagement with complex inmates, improve staff safety and reduce the incidence of violence within the custodial facility. Inmates will be provided with daily activity and intervention tailored to the inmates risks and needs identified in upon assessment and induction into the unit. The premise of a therapeutic community model would be to create a 'living-learning' situation in which everything that happens in the units, between staff and inmates is used as a learning opportunity.

Management of the units would include multidisciplinary teams including officers, counsellors and psychologists as well as health staff who all work together daily in the units. Staff would be identified as having specific skillsets in working with challenging behaviours and require ongoing specialised training in behavioural management as well as intensive supervision support.

(iv) *Remand inmates*

In response to the burgeoning numbers of remandees, it has become more crucial that the TPS puts in place an enhanced suite of programs and interventions that are able to be accessed by unconvicted inmates. While these cannot be criminogenic programs, and there are practical difficulties associated with delivering programs where the participants' length of stay is uncertain, some programs – and in particular family violence programs, values-based programs, and some short-term education and psycho-educational courses - can be effectively delivered to this cohort.

(v) *Youth Offenders*

The TPS recognises that with the new Youth Justice Blueprint's focus on therapeutic approaches, there are opportunities to carry over some of those approaches to young people imprisoned in the adult system.

Many younger inmates between the ages of 18 and 25 could benefit from a changed approach, and developmentally require a different type and level of support to older offenders. There are opportunities to leverage off Youth Justice expertise and work intensively with this cohort to help them engage in supports and individualised programs.

(vi) Family Violence Offenders

Dedicated family violence teams within the TPS and Community Corrections could provide more widespread (and some targeted) interventions to family violence offenders. This could be a combination of group and individual work. Currently family violence offenders in the community are supervised by Probation Officers and, if eligible, are referred for group program. The dosage of program is not always sufficient enough to target the needs to the individual. Having specialised teams would ensure that continuity of care from group program to individual case management would occur and that 'dosage' was achieved.

(vii) Housing

Consideration of further housing opportunities; including establishment of integrated housing program such as Integrated Housing Exit Program (IHEP) available in South Australia. This program offers accommodation and support to young people with a history of offending.

NSW has established residential and transitional centres for men and women. Miruma, was opened on the grounds of a correctional complex in NSW and provides a residential community based diversionary program for females with co-occurring disorders. Balunda-a is the male equivalent. Victoria and Queensland have similar schemes.

Housing is a critical part of an offenders success leaving custody, not having access to a place to stay, or returning to pro-criminal support systems make it difficult for an offender to sustain any changes they may have made. Having accommodation available that supports their transition into the community and assists them to re-establish themselves is essential for reducing recidivism.

(viii) Throughcare

An integrated model of throughcare that offers targeted, individualised transitional support to offenders to manage their journey through the justice system is key to successful outcomes being achieved through the criminal justice system. More resourcing in this space could be used to strengthen community/service relationships.

Part B: Youth Justice – Department for Education, Children and Young People

A range of service areas within the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) contributed to the content of this submission including:

- Youth Justice Reform
- Community Youth Justice
- Ashley Youth Detention Centre
- Libraries Tasmania
- Interagency Student Support (including the Safe Homes Safe Families Programme, the Student Wellbeing Team, and Youth Court Officers).

1. Factors influencing increases in Tasmania's prisoner population and associated costs

The most cost-effective way to stop increases in the Tasmanian prison population, and therefore any associated costs, is to reduce the number of young people entering the criminal justice system. Factors which contribute to increases in young people entering the youth justice system in Tasmania are outlined under the Terms of Reference 2 below, where the significance of prevention, early intervention, and diversion are explored.

2. The use of evidence-based strategies to reduce contact with the justice system and recidivism

Early intervention, targeted intervention, diversion, a therapeutic service system and interagency collaboration will contribute to reducing contact with the justice system and recidivism for young people. Tasmania's *Youth Justice Blueprint 2022-2032* sets out a ten-year plan for reforming Tasmania's Youth Justice system to create a connected, responsive, contemporary, integrated, and therapeutic youth justice system.

2.1 What we heard through the Youth Justice Blueprint Consultation

- In December 2021, the *Reforming Tasmania's Youth Justice System: Discussion Paper* was released, providing the foundation for the consultation process to inform the development of the ten-year Blueprint including the build of new youth justice facilities.
- An extensive consultation process was undertaken that involved meeting with over 100 stakeholders, 43 written submissions, workshops and several rounds of consultation.
- Key stakeholders provided input to the Blueprint including government agencies, the Commissioner for Children and Young People (CCYP), the Custodial Inspector, representatives from Tasmania's Aboriginal communities and non-government organisations. Consultation was also undertaken with young people, and their families with experience of the youth justice system, either under community-based supervision or in detention.
- Overall, the Blueprint consultation indicated broad support for reform and particularly strong support for a public health approach with a focus on prevention and early intervention, diversion and a therapeutic approach to youth justice.
- Relevant themes expressed were:

2.1.1 Prevention and Early Intervention

- Stakeholders identified the need for appropriate accommodation options for young people at risk of entering, or engaged with, the youth justice system from the early intervention stage through to supported accommodation options as part of transition from detention.. A lack of suitable accommodation increases the risk of offending with young people often committing offences out of necessity, as a result of poverty or housing insecurity. Stakeholders indicated that often other needs cannot be addressed for families and young people until suitable housing security is found.
- Many stakeholders highlighted the need for mental health supports and drug and alcohol services, including inpatient facilities available to young people.. It was noted that substance misuse is a key issue for young people who offend and that some young people are required to detox while remanded or detained.
- Education was recognised as both a protective factor in prevention and early intervention and as a circuit breaker in diversion. Young people in the youth justice system often experience fragmented and problematic contact with the education system and disengagement from education is an early potential risk factor for future contact with the justice system.
- Stakeholders indicated that there is a need for alternative education programs for young people who fall out of mainstream schooling and reported that there needs to be a range of flexible learning models to suit the needs of young people.
- Stakeholders proposed that government, non-government and community workforces all needed to be skilled in meeting the needs of children, young people, families and carers across the service continuum of the public health model. They noted that the youth sector would benefit from upskilling in trauma-informed practice. It was suggested that there be greater availability of trauma-informed and therapeutic intervention training for professionals in the child safety, community conferencing, education, court, youth justice and police systems so they are better able to meet the needs of young people at risk of entering or in the youth justice system.
- Several stakeholders highlighted the need for continuous and effective throughcare along the service continuum for the child and young person. Feedback noted that any future programs need to incorporate throughcare supports that model good case management, referral and collaboration across government and service providers to ensure young people and families experience continuity and services that meets their needs.
- Stakeholders identified successful programs supporting at risk youth such as those that have been run in collaboration between DECYP and the Tasmanian Youth Crime prevention unit. This program, which has been running since 2018, ran at 10 Northern Schools including a collaboration between Prospect and Summerdale Primary. This program involved a police officer working closely with a staff member for these schools.
- Evidence of the success of this type of positive support programs can be seen in data collated around a trial program run in Northern Tasmania in 2018 in May to July. Ongoing data showed that 90% students involved in this program successfully transitioned to high school.

2.1.2 Diversion and targeted intervention

- Stakeholders cited evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of intervention and diversionary programs at reducing recidivism and preventing long-term involvement with the criminal justice system. Diversion was strongly supported, to be used whenever appropriate, to redirect as many young people as possible away from the criminal justice system, as well as diverting young people who were already in the formal criminal justice system. Many ideas for intervention options and diversionary programs were provided. Stakeholders advocated for increasing the number of intervention options and diversionary programs throughout the state.
- A number of responses touched on the topic of bail. Stakeholders noted that there should always be a presumption in favour of bail in respect of a young person charged with any criminal offence and indicated that this should be considered in legislation. It was noted that denial of bail increases the likelihood of incarceration and is a major contributing factor in causing children to become further entrenched in the criminal justice system. Remand was only viewed as appropriate when the young person posed a genuine risk to the community. Many stakeholders noted that young people in Tasmania are often refused bail because of accommodation issues that are outside their control, including family breakdown, being under the care of child safety and without effective supervision, or because of mental health or drug problems. Stakeholders noted that more appropriate bail support programs are required to ensure that youth have appropriate accommodation, access to transportation and to other services that provide the best opportunity to both meet bail requirements and be eligible for bail instead of being held in detention whilst on remand.
- Stakeholders indicated that bail conditions should be focused primarily on the welfare and rehabilitation of the young person and should not overwhelm a young person or set them up to fail, while still providing structure to a young person's life. Further they should also take account of cultural factors and be able to be reasonably met by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

2.1.3 Therapeutic Service System

- Stakeholders identified that effective throughcare support should be available to assist all young people transitioning into and from detention and throughcare should be incorporated into the development and implementation of a therapeutic, trauma informed model of care for detention. To enable throughcare to occur, it was suggested that service providers be granted greater access to detention centres during a young person's period of detention to provide continuity of service provision or to build trust and planning for sustainability as early as possible where the young person is exiting detention. Stakeholders highlighted that strong referral pathways to specialist service providers should be streamlined and made a priority for all young people in detention who need them, when they need them. These should include step-up and step-down throughcare supports in collaboration with community organisations.
- Stakeholders also proposed that intensive support through comprehensive case management and coordination across community and custodial youth justice services and other, government and non-government service providers was important for young people transitioning in and out of detention, putting the young person and their needs at the centre of the system.
- Stakeholders also identified that young people would benefit from offence specific programs for youth, noting that their needs and approach needs to be different from those delivered to adults.

- There was agreement across stakeholders that custodial facilities should be built for purpose and provide the supports based on personal needs and abilities including education, physical and mental health care, and that young people be free to communicate with others who are important to their wellbeing and treated in a way that recognises their dignity. Young people need to be supported to maintain family relationships and links to the community through personal and professional visits and there needs to be additional investment by staff to establish rapport and trust with individuals as well as identifying appropriate complementary wrap around services. Feedback from stakeholders indicated that the new custodial centre must be designed with substantial input by Aboriginal communities including how they look, the programs and the outcomes they are seeking to achieve.
- Stakeholders also recommended that in accordance with the findings of the Royal Commission, the facilities also need to be Child Safe and reflect implementation of child safe standards.
- Stakeholders noted that the physical environment of a custodial centre is a significant factor in facilitating relationships between staff and young people and providing a space for rehabilitation. Key features proposed as best practice facility design included:
 - small scale facilities, located in the local community;
 - close to the young person's home and family;
 - non prison like with security features limited and invisible where possible;
 - homelike interior and young people have their own clothes and belongings;
 - have the capacity for a range of adaptable and relational security levels; and
 - therapeutic and support young people to feel safe secure and calm.
- Stakeholders also proposed therapeutic models for custodial settings and a common theme was the relational approach to treatment and security based on building relationships between staff and young people. In particular, the Missouri and Diagrama models were cited as internationally regarded models.
- To support these models and ensure a therapeutic approach, stakeholders highlighted the importance of ongoing workforce capacity development, requiring a highly qualified and trained workforce that is committed to supporting children and young people in and out of detention, using trauma informed practice.
- Stakeholders noted that continuing, and extensive engagement in learning while in a custodial setting is important in rehabilitation. Substantial education options need to be available to those in detention including academic education and vocational opportunities for hands on learning. Stakeholders highlighted the importance of the continuation of this engagement post release and the need for support to ensure this occurs.
- Stakeholders also identified of the importance of system integration between youth and adult systems to enable visibility of young people on youth and adult orders in Risdon Prison.
- Stakeholders noted that offending peaks in late adolescence, when young people are aged eighteen (18) to nineteen (19) years and are no longer legally defined as "youth" but their brains are still developing. Stakeholders queried whether the adult system sufficiently differentiates between late adolescence and the adult population and queried whether there could be an enhanced focus on education and training for late adolescents. Stakeholders indicated that this is an area that would benefit from joint planning between adult / youth systems and could impact on future centre design.

2.2 Youth Justice Blueprint 2022-2032

- In November 2022 the government publicly released the final draft Youth Justice Blueprint 2022-2032 (Blueprint) for targeted consultation.
- The Blueprint responds to extensive feedback from stakeholders as described above and outlines the strategic direction for Tasmania's youth justice system for the next ten years. The Blueprint aims to improve the wellbeing of children, young people and their families while addressing the underlying drivers of offending behaviours, reducing offending and improving community safety.
- In line with a public health approach, the Blueprint has a focus on prevention, early intervention, and diversion, through to services for repeat and high-risk offenders; changing the pathways for children and young people at risk of, or who are engaged in offending behaviours.
- Over its ten-year lifespan the Blueprint's key objectives are to create a contemporary, integrated and therapeutic youth justice system that:
 - supports children, young people and families to prevent contact with the youth justice system.
 - addresses offending behaviour by children and young people.
 - addresses the overrepresentation of Aboriginal children and young people.
 - keeps children and young people in youth justice facilities safe.
 - supports children and young people to re-enter the community through prosocial pathways.
 - improves community and staff safety.
- To achieve this, the Blueprint focuses on five key strategies to deliver a connected and responsive youth justice service system:
 1. Prioritise prevention and early intervention to reduce engagement with the youth justice system.
 2. Ensure diversion from the justice system is early and lasting.
 3. Establish a therapeutically based criminal justice response for children and young people.
 4. Integrate and connect whole of government and community service systems.
 5. Provide an appropriately trained and supported therapeutic workforce
- Investing in these strategies will enable Tasmania to provide improved services, reducing risk factors and increasing protective measures to support children, young people, and their families. They will ensure that the government and community is appropriately resourced and developed to provide support in a tailored, client centred and culturally sensitive way.
- The strategies will reduce offending through an increase in early intervention and diversionary services and deliver a therapeutic response for those children and young people already engaged in offending behaviours to decrease recidivism. This will improve community safety and place children and young people and their needs at the centre of the system.

- The Blueprint will be supported by a series of Action Plans over its 10-year life span.
- Further details relevant to the Youth Justice Blueprint can be found on the Department for Education, Children and Young People webpages here:
<https://www.decyp.tas.gov.au/children/youth-justice-services/youth-justice-reform/>

3. The provision of, and participation in, services for people in prison and leaving prison (health housing and legal services)

Stakeholders highlighted the importance of provision of appropriate accommodation, effective throughcare supports, and comprehensive case management for young people in detention and leaving detention.

Libraries Tasmania provided advice on the library, literacy and other prison-based services that are delivered in accordance with the Libraries Act 1984. These services support lifelong learning and contribute towards rehabilitation, recreation, and reducing recidivism.

3.1 What we heard through the Youth Justice Blueprint Consultation

- Relevant themes expressed through the Youth Justice Blueprint consultation in relation to the provision of, and participation in, services for people in prison and leaving prison included:

3.1.1 Prevention and Early Intervention (Appropriate Accommodation)

- As previously noted in 2.1.1, stakeholders identified the need for appropriate supported accommodation options as part of transition from detention as a well-known challenge for young people at risk of entering or engaged with the youth justice system.

3.1.2 Therapeutic Service System (Effective Throughcare Support & Comprehensive Case Management)

- As noted in 2.1.1, several stakeholders highlighted the need for continuous and effective throughcare along the service continuum for the child and young person. Feedback noted that any future programs need to incorporate throughcare supports that model good case management, referral and collaboration across government and service providers to ensure young people and families experience continuity and services that meets their needs.
- As noted in 2.1.3, stakeholders identified that effective throughcare support should be available to assist all young people transitioning into and from detention and throughcare should be incorporated into the development and implementation of a therapeutic, trauma informed model of care for detention. To enable throughcare to occur, as previously noted it was suggested that service providers be granted greater access to detention centres during a young person's period of detention to provide continuity of service provision or to build trust and planning for sustainability as early as possible where the young person is exiting detention. Stakeholders highlighted that strong referral pathways to specialist service providers should be streamlined and made a priority for all young people in detention who need them, when they need them. These should include step-up and step-down throughcare supports in collaboration with community organisations.

As previously highlighted, it was also proposed that intensive support through comprehensive case management and coordination across community and custodial youth justice services and other, government and non-government service providers was required for young people

transitioning in and out of detention, putting the young person and their needs at the centre of the system.

3.2 Services provided by Libraries Tasmania

- Libraries Tasmania is part of the Department for Education Children and Young People.
- In accordance with the Libraries Act 1984, Libraries Tasmania is responsible for delivering library and information services to Tasmanians, including adults in the prison system.

3.2.1 Library Services

- The delivery of library services in the prison system is informed by professional best practice standards for Prison Libraries which aim to provide access to information, study spaces and support for further study, adult literacy and numeracy support and encourage lifelong learning to contribute to prisoner rehabilitation, recreation and reduce recidivism.
- Prison libraries support a literate culture within the prison and help embed pro-social behaviour through access to and sharing of library resources.
- Libraries Tasmania, in collaboration with the Department of Justice, delivers a library and information service to the Tasmanian Prison Service facilities (TPS).
- A Prison library service improvement plan has been progressively implemented since 2020.
- Between 60 and 70 per cent of the prison population are clients of the library service, with loans from the library averaging 1 500 items per month.
- The Prison based library programs delivered to Tasmanians in custody, include:
 - Books to CD program involving library staff recording prisoners reading a story book, to share with their families. Approximately 15 books a month are recorded. This program aims to support adult and family literacy as well as building meaningful connection between prisoners and their families.
 - Learner Licence Assistance Program (LLAP) - Library staff run the Learner License Assistance Program supporting prisoners to pass their road rule test. There is an average of six sessions held every month.
 - Book Groups, library staff support the implementation of the groups which provide the opportunity for participation and engagement.

3.2.2 Literacy services provided by Libraries Tasmania

- Prison education provides an opportunity for prisoners to improve their literacy and numeracy skills as well as develop pro-social skills and rethink their identity – factors that have been shown to reduce recidivism and increase the chances of post-release employment
- Libraries Tasmania has delivered onsite Literacy services to the Tasmanian prison population since 2011. The service offers one-to-one literacy tutoring and small group courses to prisoners wanting to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.
- A pilot to extend the literacy service began in early 2023 and will deliver intensive, evidence-based literacy programs, with funding from the Department of Justice.

4. Training and support initiatives for corrective service staff related to increasing individual well-being, professionalism, resilience and reduced absenteeism

4.1 What we heard through the Youth Justice Blueprint consultation

- As previously noted, stakeholders proposed therapeutic models for custodial settings and a common theme was the relational approach to treatment and security based on building relationships between staff and young people. In particular, the Missouri and Diagrama models were cited as internationally regarded models.
- To support these models and to ensure a therapeutic approach, stakeholders highlighted the importance of ongoing workforce capacity development, to ensure a highly qualified and trained workforce that is committed to supporting children and young people in and out of detention, using trauma informed practice.

4.2 Keeping Kids Safe – a plan for Ashley Youth Detention Centre until its intended closure

- In November 2022, the Government released *Keeping Kids Safe – a plan to keep children and young people at Ashley Youth Detention Centre safe until its closure*.
- This plan is a direct response to the Commission of Inquiry public hearings and evidence from witnesses relating to past harm for children and young people detained at AYDC.
- The Plan recognises that the workforce is a crucial element for the successful operational of the Ashley Youth Detention Centre. Actions in relation to maintaining an appropriate level of staff with the right experience and competencies (Objective 2) include:
 - Development and implementation of Youth Justice Services Workforce Strategy
 - Appointment of Director, Custodial Operations
 - Staff appointments to supplement AYDC staff
 - AYDC Youth Worker recruitment
 - Retired Police Officer recruitment
 - AYDC Workforce Restructure
 - Additional leadership implementation
- The Keeping Kids Safe Plan can be found on the Department for Education, Children and Young People webpages here: <https://www.decyp.tas.gov.au/children/youth-justice-services/youth-justice-reform/>

5. Innovations and improvements to the management and delivery of corrective services that may be applied in Tasmania, including to future prison/detention centre design

Through the Youth Justice Blueprint consultation, stakeholders indicated the need for innovations and improvements to the management and delivery of corrective services in Tasmania. This includes purpose built custodial facilities, supports based on personal needs and abilities, therapeutic models for custodial settings, and greater integration between youth and adult systems.

5.1 What we heard through the Youth Justice Blueprint Consultation

5.1.1 Therapeutic Service System

- There was agreement across stakeholders that custodial facilities should be purpose built and provide the supports based on personal needs and abilities including education, physical and mental health care, and that young people be free to communicate with others who are important to their wellbeing and treated in a way that recognises their dignity. Young people need to be supported to maintain family relationships and links to the community through personal and professional visits and there needs to be additional investment by staff to establish rapport and trust with individuals as well as identifying appropriate complementary wrap around services. It was also noted that the new custodial centres must be designed with substantial input by Aboriginal communities including how they look, the programs and the outcomes they are seeking to achieve.
- Stakeholders also noted that in accordance with the findings of the Royal Commission, the facilities also need to be Child Safe and reflect implementation of child safe standards.
- Stakeholders noted that the physical environment of a custodial centre is a significant factor in facilitating relationships between staff and young people and providing a space for rehabilitation. Key features proposed as best practice facility design included:
 - small scale facilities, located in the local community;
 - close to the young person's home and family;
 - non prison like with security features limited and invisible where possible;
 - homelike interior and young people have their own clothes and belongings;
 - have the capacity for a range of adaptable and relational security levels; and
 - therapeutic and support young people to feel safe secure and calm.
- As noted in 4.1, stakeholders also proposed therapeutic models for custodial settings and a common theme was the relational approach to treatment and security based on building relationships between staff and young people. In particular, the Missouri and Diagrama models were cited as internationally regarded models.
- It was noted that continuing, and extensive engagement in learning while in a custodial setting is important in rehabilitation. Substantial education options need to be available to those in detention including academic education and vocational opportunities for hands on learning. Stakeholders highlighted the importance of the continuation of this engagement post release and the need for support to ensure this occurs.

- Stakeholders noted the importance of system integration between youth and adult systems to ensure visibility on young people on youth and adult orders in Risdon.

5.2 Restrictive Practices

- Restrictive practice is only implemented at AYDC when staffing numbers are at critical shortages and when assessed against the risk profile of the young people within the centre. Restrictive Practice is only utilised for the shortest amount of time and as a last resort when all other options to increase staffing numbers have been exhausted.
- Generally, Restrictive Practice will operate on a rotational basis, allowing limited numbers of young people out of their rooms for equal amounts of time within numbers that staff can safely manage.
- Ashley Youth Detention Centre has maintained sufficient staffing numbers since mid-December 2022 that has allowed the centre to move away from the previous occurrence of restrictive practices.

5.3 Youth Justice Facilities Model

- In November 2022, the Government released the proposed Youth Justice Facilities Model to key stakeholders in a targeted consultation for finalisation.
- The Facilities Model consists of the following new youth justice facilities:
 - One detention/remand centre in the South which will provide a state-wide facility for children and young people sentenced to detention or on remand providing the opportunity for intensive intervention and rehabilitation through a therapeutic model of care.
 - Two support centres, one in the North/North West and one in the South which will provide young people with skills and support for a successful transition from detention to independence and aim to reduce the number of young people reoffending.
 - Two Assisted bail facilities, one in the North/North West and one in the South which will provide safe stable accommodation for young people as well as assistance in managing their bail conditions and support to address underlying issues that are contributing towards harmful, antisocial or offending behaviours. Assisted bail facilities aim to reduce the number of children and young people remanded to a detention centre by supporting those children and young people on bail who, if not supported, may breach bail or re-offend and end up on remand or detention.
- This model provides for a greater opportunity to reduce the number of children and young people entering detention and to support those exiting detention.
- A detention centre is only one element of an integrated youth justice system and will be most successful if it is part of a planned program of supports in the community upon a young person's release. Without this support, children and young people can easily fall back into past patterns of behaviour, both increasing their risk of returning to detention and undoing any progress made while in detention.
- Further details regarding the Youth Justice Facilities Model can be found on the Department for Education, Children and Young People webpages here:
<https://www.decyp.tas.gov.au/children/youth-justice-services/youth-justice-reform/>