

Minister for Children and Youth  
Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing  
Minister for Community Services  
Minister for Finance

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31 MAR 2025

Ms Ella Haddad  
Member for Clark  
Via Clerk of the House of Assembly  
Email: [laura.ross@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:laura.ross@parliament.tas.gov.au)

Dear Ms Haddad

I write in response to your constituent question on 12 March 2025 regarding the current plans to ensure young people in Ashley Youth Detention Centre are kept safe from harm.

The Tasmanian Government is progressing our plan to close Ashley Youth Detention Centre and transition to a new youth justice facility as soon as possible.

Until then, enhancing safety and oversight at the Centre and ensuring there is a full complement of trained staff to deliver a therapeutic model of care is the best way to ensure young people are made to feel safe and supported. The Tasmanian Government is also committed to implementing each of the recommendations made by the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings.

Many of the tangible actions being taken to increase the safety and wellbeing of young people in detention as we transition to a new facility are outlined in the *Keeping Kids Safe in Detention Action Plan 2024-2026*, released in December 2024. This is a proactive plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at AYDC until its closure.

Some of these practical safety initiatives include:

- Enhanced CCTV technology and coverage to increase accountability and safety for both young people and staff.
- Body Worn Cameras to ensure transparency of incidents and safety of children and young people. An independent evaluation has pointed towards significant decreases in serious and minor incidents since they had been introduced in December 2023.
- A new Control Room for monitoring CCTV surveillance and an upgraded secure entry way to manage everything and everyone who enters the Centre are close to being completed.

- A body scanner – introduced at the Centre in May 2024 – ensures the safety of young people by negating the need for more intrusive search types to detect items that may pose a safety threat.

The Ashley Youth Detention Centre is also increasing transparency and accessibility to daily operations and facilitates regular visits from key external and/or independent stakeholders.

The Advocate for Young People in Detention, who represents the Commissioner for Children and Young People, is onsite and available to young people at least 2 days each week. The Commissioner also visits regularly. The intent is that the Advocate visits are not scheduled.

The Custodial Inspector also has unrestricted access and conducts both announced and unannounced visits.

Young people at the Centre now have more independent avenues to raise complaints or concerns, including through the Ombudsman's Office.

The Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) remains on site to provide therapeutic evaluation of all young people and their support needs and also guide Centre staff.

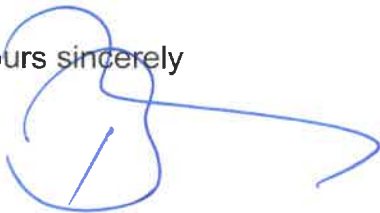
An independent Chair heads the Centre's Incident Review Committee, which meets weekly to review incidents involving use of force, assault and damage.

The new Control Room and secure entry way at the Centre will be monitored by new staff, who will work independently of the Operations team to monitor Centre activities.

Additionally, a new Cultural Change Lead, who is responsible for influencing positive cultural change at the Centre, started working at the site in February 2025.

Thank you for raising this matter in Parliament, I trust this information is helpful for your constituent.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'R' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Hon Roger Jaensch MP  
**Minister for Children and Youth**

Cc Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP, Premier of Tasmania