

**Submission
No 6**

**EXAMINATION OF AUDITOR-GENERAL'S PERFORMANCE AUDIT
REPORTS FEBRUARY 2019 - JULY 2019**

Organisation: Department of Communities and Justice

Date Received: 1 July 2020

The Hon Greg Piper
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Assembly
Parliament of New South Wales
Parliament House
Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000

EAP20/8297

Dear Mr Piper

Auditor General's performance audit report – *Managing growth in the NSW prison population*

Thank you for your letter of 26 May 2020 in relation to the Auditor General's report – *Managing growth in the NSW prison population*.

Please find **enclosed** an update on the implementation of recommendations from this audit report, as at 25 June 2020 by Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW).

Six recommendations from the audit report were directed to the now Department of Communities and Justice and have been accepted. I can confirm that all six recommendations have been *completed* within the designated timeframe of 30 June 2020.

The Department of Communities and Justice is committed to strengthening accountability through continuous monitoring and reporting of operational performance, including the implementation of the agreed audit recommendations.

The *Managing Growth in NSW prison population report*, provided useful feedback for the Department on its response to the rise in the prison population that occurred between 2012 and 2015. The report's analysis and findings will continue to assist the Department in planning future responses to the prison population projections. The cost to the Department was reasonable for a report of this depth and quality.

Please do not hesitate to contact [REDACTED] if you have any questions in relation to this response.

Yours sincerely



Michael Coutts-Trotter
Secretary

30/06/2020

PERFORMANCE AUDIT – Managing growth in the NSW Prison Population

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

As at 25 June 2020

	Recommendation	Accepted or Rejected	Actions to be taken	Due Date	Status (completed, on-track, delayed) Comment	Responsibility
1	Advise the NSW Government on options to meet the urgent need for additional prison bed capacity within the metropolitan Sydney area, to meet its projected shortfall in fit for purpose beds from 2022	Accepted.	<p>a. Continue to review options for possible consideration by the NSW Government for the creation of additional bed capacity (either in new locations or otherwise) within the great Sydney metropolitan area, including reviewing existing operations.</p>	June 2020	<p>Completed (and ongoing). Corrective Services NSW has engaged NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment with a view to identifying suitable options for future correctional facilities in the greater Sydney area, as per the strategic business case endorsed by Government in 2018.</p>	Assistant Commissioner, Corrections Industry and Capacity. CSNSW
			<p>b. Continue to monitor demand for correctional services in the metropolitan region.</p>		<p>Completed (and ongoing). CSNSW is continuing to work with BOCSAR to monitor future demand for correctional services in the metropolitan region and this data will help inform options presented to Government. Monitoring of future demand for correctional services in the metropolitan region is ongoing.</p>	Assistant Commissioner, Corrections Industry and Capacity. CSNSW

2	Reassess and advise the NSW Government on whether the prison system has enough fit-for-purpose capacity to manage temporary fluctuations in the inmate population	Accepted	a. Continue to monitor and review existing bed stock in all centres to provide ongoing advice to Government about the amount of fit for purpose capacity and strategies to maximise its use.	June 2020	<p>Completed (and ongoing).</p> <p>As a result of investment in new infrastructure, CSNSW has commenced a program of works to decommission ageing and operationally obsolete infrastructure.</p> <p>CSNSW is assessing current and planned infrastructure needs to achieve the operational capacity to meet forecast inmate population growth. Inmate population and utilisation rates across the state are monitored on an ongoing basis.</p>	Assistant Commissioner, Corrections Industry and Capacity. CSNSW
3	Investigate and implement deliberate strategies that reduce the number and costs of inmate movements, for example through greater use of technology to alleviate inmate movements where possible and appropriate	Accepted	a. Expand the use and scope of AVL use in correctional centres, subject to available funding	June 2020	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Since September 2019, 107 new AVL suites have been installed in correctional centres across the state, with further AVL suites on track to be installed by mid-2021. This will provide an additional 67% capacity for AVL interviews conducted by professionals and an additional 65% capacity for AVL to be utilised for inmate appearances in court and before the State Parole Authority.</p>	Assistant Commissioner, Corrections Strategy & Policy. CSNSW

					It is noted that with advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent suspension of in-person visits, the AVL environment has been extremely beneficial and use has grown significantly. The increased number of available AVL suites has contributed to CSNSW facilitating over 45,000 family video visits since 23 March 2020. On weekly average, video visits now provide more contact to family and friends than in-person visits.	
4	Continue to use Justice Impact Assessments to advise the NSW Government of the impacts of policy changes on immediate and longer-term demand for prison beds and prisoner support services, including for specific inmate cohorts	Accepted	a. Conduct Justice Impact Assessments for policy proposals likely to have a material impact on the criminal justice system	June 2020	Completed (and ongoing). Justice Impact Assessments are continuing to be used to advise the NSW Government of the impacts of policy changes on immediate and longer-term demand for prison beds.	Executive Director, BOCSAR
			b. Continue to refine, improve update and maintain the Justice Impact Assessment model within the limitations of available data		Completed (and ongoing). Justice Impact Assessments are continuing to be used to advise the NSW Government of the impacts of policy	Executive Director, BOCSAR

					changes on immediate and longer-term demand for prison beds.	
5	Use findings from the DOJ asset management review to develop a benchmark for maintenance expenditure and include this in budget submissions	Accepted	a. This action is complete.	June 2020	Completed.	n/a
6	Continue to monitor and report on benefits as set out in the Prison Bed Capacity Program Benefits Realisation Management Plan including after the program ends in 2021	Accepted	a. Continue benefits realisation progress reporting in accordance with the Benefits Realisation Management Plan.	June 2020	Completed (and ongoing). Benefits realisation monitoring and reporting is ongoing and occurs on a quarterly basis. In addition to regular reports provided to the PBCP Advisory Board, PBCP benefits progress reporting is a regular component of the CSNSW Quarterly Performance Framework.	Director, Strategy & Governance, Prison Bed Capacity Program. CSNSW
			b. Transition the Benefits Realisation Management Plan and reporting framework from PBCP to BAU.	June 2021	On track to be completed by June 2021. Ongoing benefits realisation reporting following program completion (30 June 2021) will be transitioned to the CSNSW Governance and Continuous Improvement Branch.	Director, Strategy & Governance, Prison Bed Capacity Program. CSNSW