

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2009-2010
GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 3**

**Questions Taken on Notice relating to the portfolios of Corrective Services,
Public Sector Reform and Special Minister of State**

Transcript page 3

Ms Sylvia Hale: In total numbers and as a proportion of the inmate population, has the number of inmates from Indigenous background increased or decreased over the last 5 years?

Ms Sylvia Hale: Will you take on notice the question that I asked in terms of specific numbers prepared with the last five years and the proportion of the prison population?

The Hon. John Robertson: Yes, I am happy to take that on notice.

Answer:

The Member is referred to the answer to Question No 4 (c) in the response to Questions on Notice supplied to the Committee.

Transcript page 5

Ms Sylvia Hale: Will you take on notice how much extra time is being spent in lockdown at Cessnock?

Mr Woodham: I can tell you that in the industry section there is hardly any difference; it is only the remands.

Ms Sylvia Hale: If you can give me the details.

The Hon. John Robertson: We will take it on notice.

Answer:

The Member is referred to the answer to Question No 5 (a) in the response to Questions on Notice supplied to the Committee.

Transcript page 6

Ms Sylvia Hale: You are certainly aware, I presume, that section 53 of the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2001* requires that each inmate is to be allowed at least two hours every day for exercise in the open air?

Mr Woodham: That is correct.

Ms Sylvia Hale: Could you provide me with data as to how often that regulation is not complied with?

The Hon. John Robertson: I want to make the point that it is not normal in any correctional facility for us to periodically restrict inmate routine, other than if we facilitate searches or other contingencies to maintain security within the centre. So I just do not accept that there is some sort of routine going on. That generally only occurs if there are specific security issues that we have to deal with, or if we have issues with sick leave and those sorts of things. But apart from that it is normal for the routines to be maintained and continued in all our correctional centres. I do not want anyone leaving here thinking that somehow there is some practice going on where we are locking people in for 24 or 36 hours, or extended periods, and we are not meeting our obligations, other than in extraordinary circumstances.

Ms Sylvia Hale: That is why I asked you if you could take my question on notice, so that you can get back to me with a definitive statement.

The Hon. John Robertson: We are happy to take it on notice, but I just want to make the point that it is not our normal practice, other than to maintain security and good order in our prisons or if there are issues associated with maintaining security because of sick leave.

Answer:

I am advised that the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2001* was replaced by the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2008* on 1 September 2008; and the relevant clause is now clause 50.

Clause 50(3) provides:

"An inmate's entitlement to exercise under this clause is subject to such practical limitations as may from time to time arise in connection with the administration of the correctional centre concerned."

As I explained to the Committee, inmate routine is not restricted except to facilitate searches or other contingencies, to maintain security within the centre or if the administration of the correctional centre is affected by staffing issues related to leave etc, and these exceptions are in compliance with the Regulation.

Transcript page 8:

The Hon. John Ajaka: Going back to Cessnock, after the change in attitude or backflip, if I can use that term, that Cessnock jail would remain in public hands, your Labor colleague, the Member for Cessnock, Kerry Hickey, indicated that he would ask you to rehire prison officers that were made redundant or transferred to other areas. You indicated that those officers should get in touch with the department and that the Commissioner had been kept informed and was happy with the decision. Can you explain to me what the current progress is in re-employing all of those redundant officers – breaking down how many were made redundant and how many have been re-employed?

The Hon. John Robertson: Everybody who took voluntary redundancy has been contacted in regards to re-employment. Obviously, anybody who comes back has to repay any redundancy payments they have received in line with government policy.

I think you would be familiar with the Government's policy on this matter. We have made contact with those people and a number of those people who have decided to come back are back.

The Hon. John Ajaka: Again, if I could find out exactly how many were made redundant, or took redundancy, and how many as at this stage have in fact come back?

The Hon John Robertson: I will take that on notice and come back to you.

Answer:

The Honourable Member is referred to the answer to Question No 11 in the response to Questions on Notice supplied to the Committee for the first part of his question.

Of those correctional officers who had taken voluntary redundancy, 2 have returned and Corrective Services NSW is in the process of arranging for a third correctional officer to re-enter on duty.

Transcript page 10 (1st extract)

The Hon. John Ajaka: The Hon. Roy Smith touched on the court escort security service and I noted your answers. We are now four months into the expected \$5 million savings. Can you give an indication how much has been saved in the four month period?

The Hon. John Robertson: No. I can tell you that those discussions are ongoing and they are making progress. I have not had a formal report from the Industrial Relations Commission, in particular, the vice-president. What I have heard informally is that the discussions are making progress. Frankly, I do not think it is appropriate to draw a line and say that at this stage we are here or there. It is making positive progress.

The Hon. John Ajaka: Would you take it on notice and supply us with the savings that have occurred to date, or have been shown could occur?

The Hon. John Robertson: I am happy to take it on notice and report back in terms of the progress that has been made, the issues that have been agreed to and the issues that are outstanding.

Answer:

I am advised that Corrective Services NSW and the Public Service Association have reached an agreed position which could produce savings of a significant portion of the amount required. Further savings required by the Government will be pursued in the next stages of the IRC process.

Transcript page 10 (second extract):

The Hon. John Ajaka: How many people are currently employed by the prisoner escort and court security unit?

Mr Woodham: About 460.

The Hon. John Ajaka: Can you indicate what amount of overtime is paid to the court escort and security unit?

Mr Woodham: Not offhand specifically, but it is significant.

The Hon. John Ajaka: Can you take the question on notice?

The Hon. John Robertson: We will take it on notice.

The Hon. John Ajaka: Is it over the budgeted amount?

The Hon. John Robertson: We will take it on notice.

The Hon. John Ajaka: Thank you – if you could indicate the budgeted amount and whether it has gone over budget.

Answer:

This question does not contain a specific period to allow it to be answered.

Transcript pages 15-16:

Ms Sylvia Hale: If I could return to the issue of drug and alcohol programs. Minister, you may wish to take this question on notice. How many inmates participated in an individual program in each of the past 5 years?

The Hon. John Robertson: We will take that on notice.

Ms Sylvia Hale: How many alcohol and other drug (AOD) positions currently exist in each New South Wales correctional centre?

The Hon. John Robertson: Are you talking about positions as in rehabilitation positions or people who provide the training?

Ms Sylvia Hale: People who work in the prisons and conduct sessions with prisoners.

The Hon. John Robertson: Mr Grant can answer.

Mr Grant: I do not have the data for every centre.

The Hon. John Robertson: We will take that on notice.

Answer:

For the first part of the question, the Member is referred to the answer to Question No 6 (b) in the response to Questions on Notice supplied to the Committee.

The following table indicates the number of AOD positions in each correctional centre as of 6 October 2009:

Correctional Centre	AOD positions
Bathurst Correctional Centre	4
Berrima Correctional Centre	1.5
Brewarrina (Yetta Dhinnakkal) Centre	2
(Counselling & Support Officers)	

Broken Hill Correctional Centre	1
Cessnock Correctional Centre	5.5
Compulsory Drug Treatment Correctional Centre	5
Cooma Correctional Centre	1
Dawn de Loas Correctional Centre	0.5
Dillwynia Correctional Centre	11 (Services & Programs officers)
Emu Plains Correctional Centre	4.5
Glen Innes Correctional Centre	1
Goulburn Correctional Centre	5
Grafton Correctional Centre	4
High Risk Management Correctional Centre	3 (Counselling & Support Officers)
Ivanhoe (Warakirri) Centre	1 (Counselling & Support Officer)
John Morony Correctional Centre + Outer Metropolitan Multi-Purpose Correctional Centre	4
Kariong Juvenile Correctional Centre	1
Kirkconnell Correctional Centre	1.5
Lithgow Correctional Centre	3.5
Long Bay Hospital	0.5
Mannus Correctional Centre	1
Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre	12
Metropolitan Special Programs Centre	14
Mid North Coast Correctional Centre	10 (Services & Programs Officers)
Oberon Correctional Centre	1
Parklea Correctional Centre	8
Parramatta Correctional Centre	2
Silverwater Correctional Centre	4
Silverwater Women's Correctional Centre	1
Special Purpose Centre	0.5
Statewide Disability Services	1
St Heliers Correctional Centre	2
Tamworth Correctional Centre	1
Wellington Correctional Centre	12 (Services & Programs Officers)

Transcript page 18 (1st extract):

Ms Sylvia Hale: Has the ratio of the total number of AOD and welfare positions, or whatever their equivalent will be, to inmates increased or decreased over the last five years?

Mr Grant: I have to take that on notice. I would suspect that it has increased if you add together all the different classifications.

Mr Woodham: And new jails opening.

Ms Sylvia Hale: What proportion of offenders with histories of violence undertake the Violent Offenders Therapeutic Program during the time they are in prison?

Mr Grant: I will have to get back to you on the exact proportion but I can tell you that the Violent Offender Treatment Program is only one of our avenues for treatment. There is an intensive program, a lower-risk program. There are a number of other programs that target aggression and violence, including the anger management program, a program that is called Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage it, or CALM. All these programs will contribute to that reduction. So it might be best if I answer on the proportion of people who need it.

Ms Sylvia Hale: Also, can you give me an answer in relation to the Behaviour Analysis and Therapy Program and data on various waiting lists for entry to that program, and also whether all offenders complete the program during their detention? If not all of them complete it, what proportion do?

Mr Woodham: I will add that we are just about to open a new violence prevention program at Parklea, which will double intake. Also, we are planning to, and will introduce, a further violence prevention program for violent offenders at Cessnock when the new 250 beds are completed.

Answer:

The Member is referred to the answer to Question No 6 (e) in the response to Questions on Notice supplied to the Committee for data on the numbers of AOD and welfare positions.

I am advised that there is no program called the Behaviour Analysis and Therapy Program.

Transcript pages 18-19:

Ms Sylvia Hale: Minister, would you take on notice how many full-time positions there will be at Cessnock and what the reduction in those full-time positions will be?

Mr Woodham: There will be no reductions.

....

The Hon. John Robertson: I just want to make the point that we are also, throughout the whole of our corrections system, rolling out casual prison officers. I do not want to just simply be saying we are going to tell you how many full-time officers there are going to be at Cessnock jail because we are also supplementing our existing workforce for a whole range of reasons with casual correctional officers..... When we get to this notion of staffing, we ought to be talking about full time equivalents. I do not want to get to this notion of permanents and what we are doing, because we are employing casuals and we are utilising them throughout the centres and the system to deal with issues like overtime, sick leave, providing flexibility and giving us the capacity to increase the number of women who are actually working as prison officers in our system.

Ms Sylvia Hale: Thank you, but I gather you will take my question on notice?

The Hon. John Robertson: No, let me be very clear about what I will come back to you on. We will come back to you on full-time equivalents.

Ms Sylvia Hale: That is not the question I have asked.

The Hon. John Robertson: But your question is based on the wrong premise.

Answer:

The Member is referred to the answer to Question No 7 in the response to the Questions on Notice supplied to the Committee.

Transcript page 28:

Chair: Are young people with disabilities include in the JumpSTART program?

The Hon. John Robertson: We have a process where we are dealing with disability employment and I am happy to answer that. In regard to JumpSTART, I will take that on notice.

Chair: Yes, in regard to JumpSTART?

The Hon. John Robertson: I will take that on notice.

Answer:

I am advised:

Yes.

People with a disability are targeted for participation in the JumpStart Cadetship Program by promoting it to disability networks and services. Applicants with a disability are offered assistance on a case by case basis.

John Robertson MLC
Minister for Corrective Services