

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 2: Indigenous
Topic: Prison to Work COAG initiative

Senator: Sterle, Glenn

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Type of question:

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Number of pages: 2.

Question:

Can you confirm and detail how the Government is investing in transforming the lives of inmates, in juvenile detention and adult prisons?

Answer:

The provision of corrective services is a matter for the states and territories, with each managing their own prisons and juvenile justice facilities. This includes the provision of programmes and services to inmates in state and territory prisons.

The Commonwealth Government's focus is on investing in activities at the local level that will prevent crime, reduce victimisation and reduce offending and re-offending by tackling the drivers of crime, including alcohol and drug misuse, poor educational outcomes and unemployment, in order to reduce incarceration and improve community safety. Through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy's Safety and Wellbeing Programme, the Government is providing over \$1 billion over four years (to 2020) in local, place-based activities such as youth crime prevention and diversion, prisoner through care services, community night patrols and family safety activities. This includes working with existing prisoner through care providers, states and territories, and relevant experts to co-design a best-practice prisoner through care model for adults (including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women), develop a plan for its implementation and set up mechanisms to evaluate its impact.

In December 2016, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) released the Commonwealth commissioned Prison to Work Report. The Report highlights the challenges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people face in trying to find and stay in work after release from prison. As part of the Commonwealth Government's response to the Prison to Work Report, \$17.6 million over four years was appropriated in the 2017-18 Budget to provide Indigenous prisoners with assistance to access the support they need on their release, better preparing them to find employment and transition back into the community.

In 2016, the Commonwealth established the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory to examine the workings of the Northern Territory's youth detention system. The Government will consider the findings of the Royal Commission when it hands down its final report on 30 September 2017.