



Minister for Emergency Services; Corrective Services

Our Ref: 65-11556

PERTH CORONERS COURT

28 FEB 2020

RECEIVED

Mr Michael Jenkins
Coroner
Office of the State Coroner
Level 10
Central Law Courts
501 Hay Street
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Mr Jenkins

Thank you for your letter dated 27 November 2019 regarding the Coronial Inquest into the death of Brett Lindsay Capper.

The Department of Justice (the Department) supports five of the six recommendations you have made. To date, one recommendation has been completed and the Department is progressing implementation of the remaining four recommendations as per the attachment.

If you require any further information or assistance please contact Ms Alexandra Filipe, Director Performance Assurance and Risk, on 9264 9783 or via email alexandra.filipe@justice.wa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

HON FRANCIS LOGAN MLA
MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES; CORRECTIVE SERVICES

17 FEB 2020

Enc.

Death in Custody Review – Bret Lindsay CAPPER

Reviewer: Coroner

Date Raised: 31 October 2019

Recommendation 1

The Department should urgently review the deployment procedure for the Special Operations Group (SOG). The review should consider the views of experienced custodial and operational officers that the current system is inefficient and should give consideration to reverting to the previous deployment system where officers in charge of prisons could contact SOG directly when seeking assistance.

Management Comment

The process for the deployment of the SOG (previously known as the ESG) went through a number of changes. Initially a decentralised deployment model was utilised whereby Superintendents had the authority to request SOG deployment. In 2015, a centralised model was introduced which allowed one of the following three persons to approve SOG deployment:

- Director, Security and Response Services
- Deputy Commissioner, Operational Support / Duty Director; or
- Commissioner, Corrective Services

A review of the decentralised model highlighted a number of increased risks for the Department namely; limited visibility regarding each deployment and a lack of transparency regarding the whereabouts of SOG resources. This in turn resulted in reduced availability of resources in the event of a major incident occurring, or multiple incidents occurring at the same time.

Following discussion with the Corrective Services Executive Team, the Commissioner agreed with the centralised model as it provides for a better governance and accountability process, an efficient and effective use of the SOG resources and at the same time ensures the safety of staff, prisoners and the community. Therefore there will be no reverting back to a decentralised deployment process whereby the Superintendent is able to approve SOG deployment.

However, Corrective Services will review the current centralised model and adjust the deployment matrix to introduce process improvements to triage and streamline SOG deployment and provide for increased transparency and improved responsiveness with appropriate controls in place.

Level of Support	Not Supported
Responsible Division	Corrective Services
Directorate	Operational Support
Responsible Person	Richard Elderfield
Delegated Authority	Wade Reid
Completion Date	Not Applicable

Recommendation 2

Now that the funding for nine additional Prison Counselling Service (PCS) staff has been approved, the Department should take urgent steps to recruit these staff and more broadly, should consider the appropriate level of PCS and mental health staff for prisons across the State.

Management Comment PCS was allocated 9 additional FTE. This includes the allocation of 3 additional FTE to Hakea Prison, while the other 6 will be allocated to Metropolitan Prisons (3) and regional facilities Albany, Bunbury and Eastern Goldfields 1 each.

The current **Pool Ref 014885 - Prison Counsellor** was advertised from 4 to 17 September 2019. Interviews were undertaken from 9 to 28 October 2019. There was a strong response to the advertisement so PCS anticipate appointing successful applicants to these positions in late 2019.

Level of Support	Supported – Existing Departmental Initiative
Responsible Division	Corrective Services
Directorate	Community Corrections, Health and Offender Management
Responsible Person	Bindiya Puri
Delegated Authority	David Whittle
Completion Date	Completed

Recommendation 3

In order to better manage prisoners and thereby enhance security at Hakea Prison, the Department should, without delay, take all necessary steps to remove any remaining impediments so as to ensure that PCS and Prison Health Service staff have reciprocal access to prisoner information stored in the Echo computer system and the PCS module of the Total Offender Management Solutions system respectively.

Management Comment Echo is now used by all Clinical staff to record information relevant to patients, and therefore all clinical staff have access to information to inform treatment and management of patients. This includes Psychiatrists / Doctors / General Nurses / Mental Health Nurses and all PCS staff who now have access to Echo. Training in Echo for PCS staff is due for completion by 31/12/2019.

Copies of relevant PCS notes are now available to health staff via Hewlett Packard Record Management (HPRM) – central medical records. It is expected that all training and full implementation of the use of Echo by PCS staff will be completed by the end of March 2020.

Level of Support	Supported – Existing Departmental Initiative
Responsible Division	Corrective Services
Directorate	Community Corrections, Health and Offender Management
Responsible Person	Bindiya Puri
Delegated Authority	David Whittle
Completion Date	30 March 2020

Recommendation 4

The Department should consider expanding the delivery of information sessions about by the Special Operations Group (currently being presented to prison health staff) to custodial officers.

Management Comment The Special Operations Group continue to develop and deliver training to prison-based medical staff. This seeks to ensure that medical staff are prepared to provide specialist support during emergencies. Sessions especially focus on medical input into order development, decontamination requirements and increased awareness of the effects of CS, impact rounds, asphyxia, excited delirium and positional asphyxia.

Response procedures will be reviewed in line with the above, after which broader awareness sessions on prison-response, the role of medics, and the role of specialist response groups will be delivered to prison-based staff.

Level of Support	Supported
Responsible Division	Corrective Services
Directorate	Operational Support
Responsible Person	Richard Elderfield
Delegated Authority	Wade Reid
Completion Date	30 September 2020

Recommendation 5

In order to better manage prisoners and thereby enhance security at Hakea Prison, the Department should consider providing critical incident management training to its senior custodial officers (i.e.: senior officers and above).

Management Comment The Department provides first responder training to all staff through the entry level training program. Incident Management Team training is identified as a key deliverable as part of the enhancement of Security and Response Services across the state.

Prisons currently conduct live and desktop emergency management exercises to practice and validate their preparedness.

Level of Support	Supported
Responsible Division	Corrective Services
Directorate	Operational Support
Responsible Person	Richard Elderfield
Delegated Authority	Wade Reid
Completion Date	30 September 2020

Recommendation 6

The Department should consult with an expert in the field of mental health with a view to providing training to custodial staff on the features of personality disorders and common mental disorders and strategies to more effectively manage prisoners with these conditions.

Management Comment	The Department is developing the Staff Mental Health Training Framework and will take into consideration the recommendation provided.
Level of Support	Supported in Principle
Responsible Division	Corrective Services
Directorate	Community Corrections, Health and Offender Management
Responsible Person	Bindiya Puri
Delegated Authority	David Whittle
Completion Date	31 December 2020