

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee 2020-21 Budget Estimates Hearings

The Hon. Natalie Hutchins MP

Minister for Corrections

Tuesday 15 December 2020



Corrections system overview

The Government is **committed to strengthening the criminal justice system and keeping Victorians safe.**



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Publicly operated prisons



7,000+

People employed within prisons and community corrections



\$1.8 billion

Invested in the Prison Infrastructure Project, delivering critical upgrades to existing and new custodial facilities



3

Privately operated prisons



1

Transition centre

Corrections system overview

The Government is committed to strengthening the criminal justice system and keeping Victorians safe.

Total prison receptions and discharges trend



Over 2019-20,
prison population fell 12%
from
8,102 prisoners
on 30 June 2019 to
7,151 prisoners
on 30 June 2020

Since 2018-19,
prison discharges increased 6%
from
12,777 discharges
on 30 June 2019 to
13,564 discharges
on 30 June 2020

Since 2018-19,
prison receptions fell 4%
from
13,251 receptions
on 30 June 2019 to
12,665 receptions
on 30 June 2020

Safe and secure prisons during COVID-19

Quick adaptation of the prison system to ensure COVID safe delivery, including:



Routine and regular testing

9,568 COVID-19 swabs of prisoners completed

28 COVID-19 cases among prisoners

0 Prisoner to prisoner transmission



Protective quarantine units



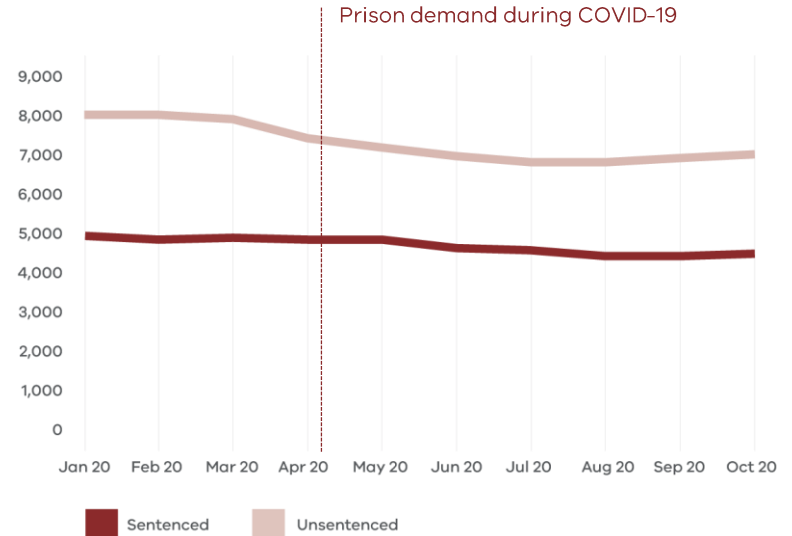
Use of Emergency Management Days



Personal protective equipment (PPE) and specialized cleaning



Remote service delivery and video based visits to replace face-to-face visits



Budget in 2020-21 [A]



\$103.6 million

To support the **response to COVID-19** in the adult custodial and youth justice systems. This investment will help continue to operate a strong and safe corrections system.



\$21.2 million

To ensure prisoners have access to quality **VET education programs**



\$6.7 million

For critical **capital upgrades** at the **Emu Creek facility**

Budget in 2020-21 [B]



\$4.8 million

To support increased access to **clinical assessments** for prisoners with **disability**, who are over-represented in the corrections system; as well as people in the Youth Justice system



\$0.8 million

For tailored **women's psychological trauma counselling**



\$0.5 million

To continue the **Court Assessment and Prosecution Service** support of the Bail and Remand Court

Rehabilitation of offenders

Rehabilitation and reintegration programs are critical to **enhancing community safety and reducing reoffending**.

Prisoners have a complex range of health issues, including higher levels of mental illness, substance use and chronic and communicable diseases.

Over \$550 million has been committed to programs and services to reduce reoffending since 2015-16.

The prison system provides a range of treatment options to help address substance use problems. These services are targeted at rehabilitation and reducing recidivism.

Services include:



Drug and alcohol programs



Disability support



Counselling and mental health support



Indigenous programs, such as those delivered by the Torch



Education and training



Reintegration Services

The State-wide Indigenous Arts in Prisons and Community (SIAPC)

This program, delivered by the Torch, assists rehabilitation by generating opportunities to reconnect with culture, foster new networks and pursue educational and vocational avenues upon release for emerging Aboriginal artists.

The Torch employ in-prison and post release Indigenous Arts Officers who provide cultural and artistic support to participants across all Victorian prisons. An annual exhibition, Confined, gives participants a change to exhibit and sell art. During 2019 – 2020, there were 204 participants in prison and 137 accessing support post-release.

Illicit drugs in prisons

With the suspension of in-person visits, there has been a **significant reduction in contraband and drugs in the prison system.**

Corrections Victoria continues to implement a range of methods to prevent contraband entering Victoria's prisons, including:



Drone and body scanning technology



Use of **drug detection dogs**

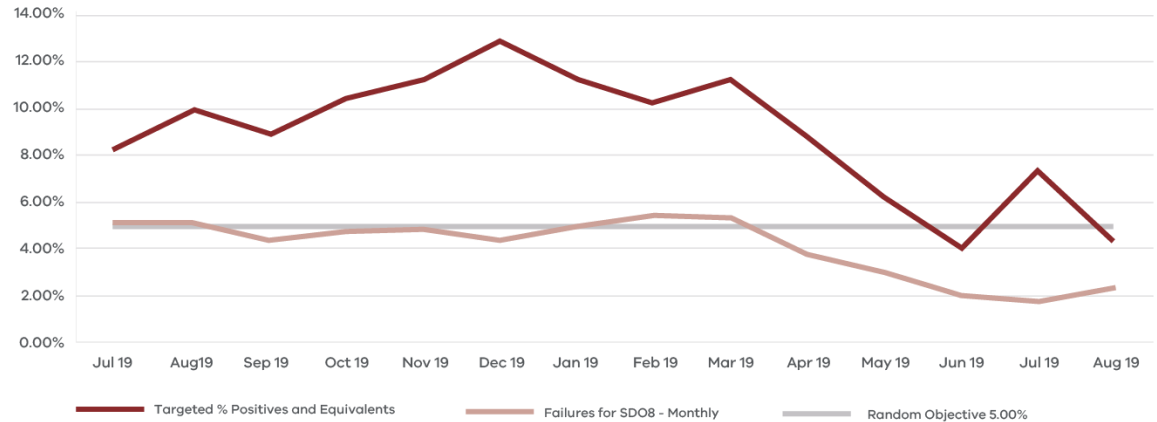


New laws introduced the power to **scan non-exempt prisoner mail**



Intelligence led searches

Targeted and Random General Positives and Equivalents 2019-20 and 2020-21 (Jul & Aug)
Monthly Percentage Rate



Prison Infrastructure Program



Hopkins Correctional Centre

Beds delivered: 94
Opening: Sept 2022



Middleton Annex

Beds delivered: 39
Opening: May 2022



Ravenhall Correctional Centre

+300 beds
Project complete

Dame Phyllis Frost Centre

+106 beds
Opening: Aug 2022

Metropolitan Remand Centre

+212 beds
Opening: Oct 2022



Chisholm Road Prison

+548 beds (total of 1248)
Opening: late 2022

Barwon Prison

+243 beds
Opening: Dec 2022

Margoneet Correctional Centre

+72 beds
Opening: Oct 2022



Fulham Correctional Centre

Beds delivered: 54
Project complete

The 2019-20 State Budget invested **more than \$1.8 billion** to ensure that prisons are able to keep pace with demand.





Thank you.

