



Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

Inquiry into the 2019-20
performance of Department
of Justice and Community Safety

Rebecca Falkingham
Secretary, Department of Justice and Community Safety

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Department of Justice and Community Safety 2019-20

A justice and community safety system that works together to build a safer, fairer and stronger Victoria.

This year has presented the department with some unprecedented challenges, most notably the 2019-20 summer bushfire season and the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This year, more than ever, we've seen our people at their very best in challenging circumstances.

Financial operations



\$13.2 million in projects reaching practical completion



8 capital projects commenced valued at **\$1.05 billion**



18 capital projects completed valued at **\$0.35 billion**

Key financial operations and highlights

- **9000+** staff employed across DJCS
- Total operating budget of **\$7.96 billion**
- DJCS occupies **64** office locations across Victoria
- Supported social procurement through **144** suppliers at a value of **\$40.2 million**
- Mobile camera replacement program valued at **\$13.2 million** reached practical completion in 2019-20
- **Eight** capital projects commenced in 2019-20 – valued at **\$1.05 billion**
- **18** capital projects completed in 2019-20 – valued at **\$0.35 billion**
- Total ICT expenditure in 2019-20, including depreciation, of **\$215.088 million**, comprising of **\$121.660 million** in BAU ICT expenditure and **\$93.428 million** in non-BAU ICT expenditure

Victorian bushfires

The 2019–20 summer bushfire season started early and conditions in many parts of the state were consistently severe or extreme.



3500 fires

3500 fires burned between 21 November 2019 and 27 February 2020



1.5m ha

Fires burnt over 1.5 million hectares of land over 98 days



166 days

SCC was activated for 166 consecutive days from 6 October 2019

COVID-19 impacts

Coronavirus (COVID-19) changes across DJCS

The department responded quickly to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic with the successful implementation of policies, technology and other measures to ensure office-based staff working from home could continue to provide the services Victorians rely upon.

- Frontline workplaces and PPE provisions
- Frontline staff and leave provisions
- Job security
- IT support
- Legislative reform
- Strengthened Employee Assistance Program to support the health of our people.



The image shows the silhouettes of several construction workers on a building site. They are positioned on a structure with vertical rebar rods. The background is a bright, warm sunset sky, transitioning from orange at the bottom to a lighter purple/pink at the top. The workers are in various poses, some looking down, others standing. The overall scene is dark against the bright sky.

Key legislation passed

- Workplace Safety Legislation Amendment (Workplace Manslaughter and Other Matters) Act 2019
- Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Amendment Act 2019
- Wage Theft Act 2020
- Victoria Police Amendment Regulations 2020
- Road Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020
- Sentencing Amendment (Emergency Worker Harm) Act 2020

Infrastructure projects

Significant progress was made on our infrastructure projects. Appropriate COVIDSafe Plans were put in place to ensure all sites were able to continue their construction throughout 2019-20.

- At the end of 2019-20 the Community Safety Building Authority:
 - had **48** active projects, with a total approved budget of **\$2.925 billion**
- In 2019-20 we delivered the 10-bed Piper Detention Unit at Barwon Prison, the St John's Health Unit at Point Phillip Prison and a 35-bed management unit at Fulham Correctional Centre
- At January 2021, construction on the Chisholm Road Prison Project was well underway, with more than **750** workers on site
- Refurbishment of the former Maribyrnong Immigration Detention Centre
- Significant progress on new Youth Justice facility at Cherry Creek
- Supporting delivery of **seven** local infrastructure, maintenance programs and critical upgrades that will deliver immediate economic stimulus and support the creation of jobs across the state.



Corrections system overview

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



7,151

Prisoners on 30
June 2020



10,679

Offenders on Community
Corrections orders on
30 June 2020



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

Corrections responds to COVID-19

Corrections Victoria **quickly adapted** to ensure **safe and secure prisons** during COVID-19.



Quarantine and isolation arrangements established

Since 28 March 2020, all prisoners entering custody were required to complete a 14-day protective quarantine period.



Routine and regular testing

- 4** COVID-19 cases among incoming prisoners to 30 June 2020
- 0** Prisoner to prisoner transmission to 30 June 2020



Enhancing prison security to reduce contraband

- Additional x-ray scanners and millimetre wave scanners
- Drone detection program (introduced from October 2020)



Enhanced use of technology

- Enhanced use of Audio-Visual Link for court
- Remote delivery of health and mental health services
- Remote service provision
- Virtual personal and professional visits



Infection prevention and control measures

- Personal protective equipment and training
- Specialised cleaning and disinfection
- COVIDSafe Plans and outbreak prevention and management plans



Introduced wellbeing and distress interventions for Protective Quarantine



Aboriginal Wellbeing Officers providing additional supports



Vulnerable prisoners identified and adjustments made as required



Additional counselling services for women in custody



Emergency accommodation and support for those at risk of homelessness

CCS responds to COVID-19

Community Correctional Services manages and supervises offenders in the community.

Community corrections plays a vital role in ensuring the safety of the community by rehabilitating offenders and diverting low-risk offenders from prison which helps to break the cycle of reoffending.

Community Correctional Services continued to service offenders undertaking community-based orders during COVID-19 by:



Closing face to face reception services and moving to remote case management and remote service delivery access



Expanding home-based community work options



Providing additional supports to vulnerable offenders in the community access remote services – including alcohol and other drug programs, and mental health services



Youth Justice

Key achievements in 2019-2020



Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2020-30

Launched a 10-year plan for Youth Justice in Victoria, with a strategic vision and clear action plan for reform.



Multisystemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy

Delivered intensive and well-established family and community-based treatments that address antisocial behaviour.



Intensive Intervention Unit

Established an Intensive Intervention Unit at Parkville Youth Justice Centre, delivering intensive support to young people who exhibit a risk of violence.



Communities in Custody

The new 32-bed unit at Malmsbury Youth Justice Precinct opened as part of Communities in Custody, a model for providing differentiated custodial responses to young people.



Koori Youth Justice Taskforce

Undertaken by the Commission for Children and Young People and DJCS, the Taskforce examined the cases of Aboriginal young people in Youth Justice and will inform Victoria's first Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy.

Youth Justice

We have seen significant signs of stabilisation in 2019-20. Compared to 2018-19, there has been :



4% decrease in number of young people in community supervision



5.2% decrease in number of young people in custody



25% decrease in number of Aboriginal children in youth justice



40% decrease in category one incidents



Staff stats:

- Increase in FTE of **73** in 2019-20
- **212** entry-level youth justice staff employed
- **40% decrease** in resignations

COVID-19 pandemic - Youth Justice is continuing to implement a range of measures to support and keep young people and staff safe. The effectiveness of these measures has meant that:

- There have been **no** cases of young person to young person transmission in custody
- There continues to be **zero active cases** of COVID-19 among young people in custody and community and zero active COVID-19 cases among Youth Justice staff.

Consumer Affairs, Liquor and Gaming

Support for Victorians and business in 2019-20



advice to more than **234,600** callers



90,200 written and online queries responded to



4.4 million website visits



over **17,300** reduced rent agreements were registered



over **2,200** COVID temporary liquor licenses issued



over **20,000** businesses had liquor licence fees waived



Police and Community Safety

- The new Police Assistance Line and Online Reporting Portal for non-emergency matters was successfully launched in July 2019
- In August 2019, the final bollards were installed in the Bourke Street Mall to complete the CBD security upgrades.
- The Community Safety Statements outline shared commitments between the government and Victoria Police to reduce crime and improve community safety.



Road Safety

- Mobile camera expansion
- Road toll
- Road safety innovation

Police and Community Safety

Community Safety Statement implementation



The Embedded Youth Outreach Program



Crime Statistics Agency (CSA) measure of harm



Strong new penalties for serious driving offences



10 new mobile road safety camera cars deployed



Expert partnership established for road safety



Forensic Drug Intelligence Capability Program

Responding to Family Violence

In 2019-20 the Department of Justice and Community Safety successfully implemented four recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence

Recommendation 79: Empower courts to make interim family violence intervention orders on their own motion

Recommendation 121: Expand the delivery of financial literacy training for victims of family violence

Recommendation 128: Trial a new model to link Youth Justice Group Conferencing with an Adolescent Family Violence Program

Recommendation 205: Develop and maintain the Victorian Family Violence Database

As a prescribed Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework organisation, DJCS plays a leading role in ensuring a coordinated and integrated service system. It has:

- developed and delivered tailored Foundational Family Violence Training to nearly a third of our over **9,000-strong workforce**
- supported leaders across **27 prescribed programs** and 108 funded agencies to understand their roles and responsibilities.

Corrections Victoria

- The Family Violence Innovative Perpetrator Intervention Grants were launched in November 2017 as a 12-month pilot and later extended until June 2020.
- Continued its successful family violence perpetrator intervention programs.

Victoria Police

- In 2019 an **additional 189 Family Violence specialist** police were allocated to divisions across the state.
- Since August 2019 training developed by the Centre for Family and delivered by dedicated family violence training officers has been rolled out for all operational frontline police up to and including the rank of Superintendent.

Victim Services

Support for victims of crime in 2019-20

The **Victims of Crime Helpline** and the **Victims Assistance Program** continued to support victims of crime without any disruption to services during COVID-19. The **Child Witness Service** and the **Intermediary Pilot Program** also continued to support child victims, family members and other vulnerable witnesses.



14,099

people called the Victims of Crime Helpline for support



18,090

victims of a violent crime were supported by the Victims Assistance Program



23,543

victims were referred by Victoria Police to the Helpline, (including **17,369 male victims of family violence** and **6,174 victims of a violent crime**)



380

victims chose to join the Victims Register to receive information about an offender after conviction



1,077

children and their families were supported by the Child Witness Service



Restorative Engagement and Redress Scheme

Former and current Victoria Police employees who have experienced workplace sex discrimination or sexual harassment are continuing to be supported through the Restorative Engagement and Redress Scheme.

250 people have been supported with case management in the 2019-20 financial year, and demand for the scheme continues to be high.

Results are very positive:

- Many participants have accepted an offer of financial redress
- A significant number have accepted offers of counselling
- Many have elected to contribute to cultural reform of the organisation through restorative engagement.



Thank you.

