

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee
Inquiry into the 2025-26 Budget Estimates

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by: AIV PUGLIELLI

Question: For each prison location, what is the current average daily out of cell hours for prisoners [as at the date of the hearing, 4 June 2025]?

Reply:

In the period 1 July 2024 to 30 April 2025, the total average daily out-of-cell hours across the Victorian prison system was 10.1 hours. This is above the national average of 9 hours reported in the 2023-2024 Report on Government Services Annual Report.

The average daily out-of-cell hours reported by prison type over this period was:

- Women's prisons = 9.8 hours
- Maximum security men's prisons = 8.9 hours
- Medium security men's prisons = 10.2 hours
- Minimum security men's prisons = 14.2 hours



The Hon. Enver Erdogan MLC
Minister for Corrections

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by: JADE BENHAM

Question: How many lockdown incidents have there been in total at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre [in the relevant reporting period to the date of the hearing, 4 June 2025]?

How many lockdown incidents have there been in total [across the adult prison system in the relevant reporting period to the date of the hearing, 4 June 2025]?

Reply:

Lockdowns at any Victorian correctional facility occur only when necessary and may be for operational reasons such as staff absences, security incidents and adverse weather.

When they are required, lockdowns occur for the minimum time necessary and can impact individual accommodation areas, multiple units or the entire prison as required. Any lockdown of any unit for more than 15 minutes is counted as a lockdown.

Between 1 July 2024 and 30 April 2025, there were 249 days in which a unit or an area of Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC) was locked down for a period of time. A substantial portion of these lockdowns were for standard operational reasons – the top two reasons being 'adverse weather' and 'security and emergency'. The average time of a lockdown in this period was 3 hours and 21 minutes.

Lockdowns for adverse weather and security and emergency reasons are routine across the prison system. For weather lockdowns, women are restricted to their areas or precincts and not to their cellular accommodation. Security and emergency lockdowns occur to manage incidents such as medical emergencies or when Ambulance Victoria are on site.

The recording of lockdowns at each individual prison location is not readily available.



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QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by: JADE BENHAM

Question:

What has been spent on staffing [since the date of Dhurringile's closure to 30 April 2025, consistent with the dates in scope of the Inquiry/Questionnaire] on decommissioning the former Dhurringile Prison?

Reply:

The former Dhurringile Prison ceased operations on 30 August 2024 and was degazetted as a prison on 3 December 2024.

Between 1 September 2024 and 30 April 2025, just over \$5 million in employee costs (including leave and other on-costs) was attributed to Dhurringile Prison.

This is reflective of the winding down of staff numbers, decommissioning and maintenance of the site that occurred following the end of operations on 30 August 2024.



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QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by: AIV PUGLIELLI

Question:

For each prison location:

1. please provide a list of all available men's behaviour change programs [as at the date of the hearing, 4 June 2025]
2. please provide the current completion rates for each men's behaviour change program listed.

Reply:

The following offence specific, personal development and psychoeducational men's behaviour change programs are delivered in Victorian prisons:

- Changeabout Program – delivered in the community and prisons
- Diffuse
- Tuning into Respectful Relationships
- Men's Healing and Family Violence Program (for Aboriginal men).

The below table details the number of men who have completed men's behaviour change programs each year from 2020-21 to 2024-25, to 31 March 2025.

Program	2020-21	2021-22*	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (to 31/03/25)
Offence specific programs					
Changeabout Program - Community	16	61	67	73	60
Changeabout Program - Prison	31	15	2	7	11
Personal development and psychoeducational programs					
Diffuse**	-	15	31	36	63
Tuning into Respectful Relationships	327	206	739	718	484
Men's Healing and Family Violence Program	This is a new program and data is not yet available.				

*Completion rates for 2020-21 may be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

** Diffuse program commenced in the second half of 2022.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by: JADE BENHAM

Question: How many staff were employed to secure Western Plains Corrections Centre prior to its opening?

Reply:


On average the number of staff employed at Western Plains from the time the facility reached practical completion and was handed over to Corrections Victoria (in December 2022), across custodial and non-custodial roles, each month was as follows:

- January – June 2023: 92 staff
- July – December 2023: 95 staff
- January – June 2024: 98 staff
- July – December 2024: 120 staff *
- January – April 2025: 282 staff. *

During this time, custodial staff were essential to:

- Delivering 24/7 core security and emergency response, ensuring that the internal facility, its perimeter and external buildings remained secure, and the internal facility remained sterile through gatehouse operation and barrier control processes. This is necessary for the safety and security of the facility, staff and prisoners.
- Providing proactive and reactive facility and asset maintenance
- Establishing a team to support workforce learning and support, and use of Western Plains as a training facility.

* The increase in the number of staff since July 2024 reflects recruitment activity in preparation for the ongoing operation of Western Plains from mid-2025, following the announcement in June 2024.



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