

FEMALE PRISONERS — CHILDREN'S VISITS

5104. Hon Giz Watson to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Corrective Services

- (1) I refer to the response by the Department of Corrective Services to Recommendation 20 of Report 73 *Report of an Announced Inspection of Bandyup Women's Prison* of the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services, and I ask — Has the Department of Corrective Services reached a decision on whether to allow day stays for 'significant' children with female prisoners who are not their mothers?
- (2) If yes to (1), what was the decision?
- (3) If no to (1), when is that decision expected to be made?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The Department of Corrective Services' (the Department) current Policy Directive (PD) 10 'Prisoner Mothers/Primary Carers and their Children' states that where it has been established that a 'significant primary caring relationship' exists, prisoners may apply to the Superintendent to have the child for whom they have been caring stay with them for overnight stays or extended day visits. However, in its current form, the PD does not explicitly provide for 'significant' relationships that may not involve a primary carer. The Department recognises the importance of all relationships significant to children, and these are currently examined on a case by case basis.

It must be stated that the Department is operating a correctional facility with all of the associated risks and therefore it is not always possible to meet every need. The Department is still considering future policy direction and it is not possible to provide an exact date on when a decision is to be made.