

**BANKSIA HILL DETENTION CENTRE — INSPECTOR OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES —  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Statement by Minister for Corrective Services*

**MR J.M. FRANCIS (Jandakot — Minister for Corrective Services)** [9.07 am]: In September this year I advised the house of the government's response to the majority of recommendations made by the Inspector of Custodial Services in his inquiry into the serious incident of mass disorder at Banksia Hill Detention Centre. I also undertook to give regular progress reports. The Commissioner of Corrective Services is progressing with the implementation of the 28 endorsed recommendations through action plans with milestones. The revised approach at Banksia Hill Detention Centre is underpinned by my firm commitment to the rehabilitation of young people. This is consistent with the Young Offenders Act 1994, which specifies as its objectives the rehabilitation of young persons and the integration into the community of young persons who have committed offences.

Today I will outline to the house the government's response to the remaining eight recommendations. I am pleased to announce that a youth justice board with external representatives will be established in early 2014 to ensure that the government's commitment to prevention, early intervention and diversion services is strengthened. The board will oversee the work of a new, consolidated youth justice division within the Department of Corrective Services. The board, with the division, will facilitate direct connections between the community, the non-government sector and the public sector. This will enable the systematic engagement of stakeholders, innovative service design and delivery and the monitoring of the effectiveness of interventions. Stronger engagement with Aboriginal families and communities will be a focus of the youth justice board and the division.

The board will ensure continuous evaluation and improvement of matters such as the conditions of young people detained at Banksia Hill and the commissioning of services. The division will be responsible for a wide range of programs covering prevention and diversion. It will also help young people complete community-based sentences and assist them and their families to get them back on track to evaluation and research. External scrutiny is an essential element of a just and humane corrections system. Hence, the division will be overseen by the Youth Justice Board and the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services. In particular, I expect the board to oversee the high-level review of the youth justice services across all agencies and will develop a master plan regarding the use of correctional facilities for young people, as was recommended by the commissioner.

This government remains committed to the effective administration of justice. This means expecting all officers to act with integrity in the performance of their official duties, thereby maintaining public confidence. It includes securing the safety of the community and addressing the complex underlying factors that give rise to offending behaviours. A detention centre characterised by punishment fails young people and fails the community. The sentence of detention is itself a punishment. Rehabilitation encourages young people to accept responsibility for their actions and to show remorse, and it provides a path to becoming responsible citizens. The establishment of the youth justice division and the Youth Justice Board will ensure that the government establishes an appropriate balance between custodial services and prevention and community-based options for young offenders. As has been said many times, one way of judging the moral quality of a community is to look at how well it supports and protects its children and young people so that they can learn, dream about the future and reach their full potential. I table the breakdown of the recommendations from the Inspector of Custodial Services.

[See paper 1257.]