

PRISONS — BANDYUP — INMATE DEATHS

4166. Ms M.M. Quirk to the Minister for Corrective Services:

- (1) How many women held in Bandyup Women's Prison (Bandyup) have died since the commencement of operations in Bandyup (please provide these numbers separately, and by year):
 - (a) in Bandyup; and
 - (b) in hospital or in transit between hospital and Bandyup?
- (2) As to the woman who died in Bandyup on or about 15 June 2015, please provide the following information:
 - (a) was she in remand or had she been sentenced;
 - (b) what charge or charges had been laid against her; and
 - (c) if no charges had been laid, please advise the reason she was in Bandyup?
- (3) Was she assessed as being "at risk" on reception at Bandyup?
- (4) Is it the Minister's usual practice to issue a statement advising the public of a death in custody?
- (5) Why did the Minister choose not to issue a statement advising the public of the death which occurred in Bandyup on or about 15 June 2015?
- (6) Does the fact that the person who died in Bandyup is female have any bearing on the Minister's decision not to issue a statement advising the public of the death in custody?
- (7) Is the Minister examining alternatives to imprisonment of women and/or options to reduce the population in women's prisons? If so, please advise the options that are being considered?
- (8) Please advise whether the Minister is, or has, considered the following alternatives to imprisonment and in each case advise of the status of those considerations and where an alternative has been considered and rejected, please advise the reason or reasons why it has been rejected:
 - (a) arrangements relating to women held on remand; and
 - (b) options of home detention for women?

Mr J.M. Francis replied:

The Department of Corrective Services advises:

- (1) Death in custody information is unavailable prior to 1 July 1980. Since 1 July 1980, six Bandyup Women's Prison (Bandyup) prisoners have died in custody. Of those the specific location of death for the earliest death in custody, which occurred in 1982, is unknown as the incident records are unavailable;
 - (a) Four — 1998, 2001, 2002 and 2015.
 - (b) One — at Graylands Hospital in 1998.
- (2)
 - (a) The woman was remanded at Bandyup on 13 March 2015.
 - (b) 2x Burglary, 3x Stealing, 1x Disorderly Behaviour, 1x Trespass and 1x Obstructing Police Officers.
 - (c) Not applicable
- (3) The circumstances surrounding her death are subject to a coronial inquest.
- (4)–(5) The Western Australian Police advise the public of a death in custody.
- (6) No and this question is insulting.
- (7) Reducing the number of Aboriginal people, including women, in jail is a priority for the State Government. In late June, the Premier of Western Australia announced that three key areas for reform include introducing measures to avoid incarceration for low level offending; supporting prevention and diversion initiatives that keep people out of the criminal justice system and creating safer custody environments. The Premier has established a Justice Ministers Working Group to oversee the development and implementation of these important reforms. The Minister for Corrective Services is a member of this ministerial working group.
- (8) Not applicable

