

PRISONS — CAPACITY

**440. Mr P. PAPALIA to the Minister for Corrective Services:**

I refer to the 2009-10 budget allocation for the Department of Corrective Services and the associated spin regarding the increase in prison capacity. Is it true that, apart from Labor's Derby prison project, the only increase in prison capacity between now and 2013 will be in work camps and more double-bunking in current prisons?

**Mr C.C. PORTER replied:**

I begin by saying that the increase in capacity will be a great deal more than it would have been under the previous government, which would have been zero. There are two phases to the program. The first phase is an urgent and immediate expansion in capacity. Under the program, there will be an additional 600 beds—not spin, not press releases. The overwhelming majority—I think it is around the 560 mark—will be completed by the end of Christmas.

**Mr M. McGowan:** What are they?

**Mr C.C. PORTER:** There is some double-bunking in that category. I will show members why we need some double-bunking immediately. The document I have here shows a huge gap. Can members see the big gap? That is why we need double-bunking. If members travelled around to the prisons and saw what double-bunking meant under Labor, it meant that some prisoners slept on a mattress on the floor with their heads under a toilet. A mattress on the floor was counted as double-bunking. There is not a lot of construction involved in putting a mattress on a floor.

I can answer the member's question. The urgent and immediate bedding strategy will involve 100 extra beds at Acacia Prison and 60 extra beds at Albany. That does not include Pardelup Prison Farm. I will get to that in a moment.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** There are 128 beds in Albany. The minister said it doubles—that figure should be 128.

**Mr C.C. PORTER:** There are two relevant prisons in the member's electorate—there is Pardelup and Albany Regional Prison.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** You misled the house! There are 130 beds there now. You said it was double.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, Member for Albany!

**Mr C.C. PORTER:** It was embarrassing for the member for Albany. When he looks at *Hansard*, he will see that I was referring specifically to Pardelup. The increase at Pardelup is 64. I will go through it for the member. He can add up the figures in his head. There are 100 additional beds at Acacia Prison, 60 additional beds at Albany Regional Prison —

**Mr P.B. Watson** interjected.

**Mr C.C. PORTER:** I will get to the member in a second.

There will be an additional 117 beds at Bunbury Regional Prison and an additional 61 beds at Greenough Regional Prison. They involve the actual construction of double-bunks, not putting mattresses on the floor. At Karnet Prison Farm, the increase of 120 beds is being achieved by putting on site purpose-built demountables. At Wooroloo Prison Farm, 74 beds are provided for, and the construction of them has already started—that is outside the budget regime. That is a run-down of the refurbishment of existing institutional facilities. An additional 36 beds are being freshly built at Wooroloo. As I said in response to the member for Albany's interjection, there are an additional 64 beds at Pardelup Prison Farm.

**Mr P.B. Watson** interjected.

**Mr C.C. PORTER:** When the member reads it, he will find that that is exactly what I said. Pardelup is very interesting. When members visit it, as I have done, they will see that it is an enormous facility. It once was a minimum-security facility that housed 80 people. When I visited it, there were 16 prisoners and currently there are 18 prisoners on the muster. We will increase that number by 64 by using prison skills, labour, employment and training to refurbish the existing facilities.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** You have misled the house.

**Mr C.C. PORTER:** I have not. The member does not have a clue.

**Mr P.B. Watson** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Albany! I have heard you make your point at least five or six times. I do not want to hear you make your point again on this particular question. I call you formally for the first time. There are other avenues through which you can talk to the minister, and you know how to follow those.

**Mr C.C. PORTER:** The immediate and urgent prison increase bedding strategy will provide 600 new beds shortly after Christmas. That is quite amazing, given the problem that we inherited. By the end of the program there will be a total net increase of 1 500 beds once the beds are decommissioned. That should be finished by 2014. That is quite a remarkable achievement. I know that the opposition is trying very hard to find a cloud to the silver lining, but it is just not there.