

24 March 2015

Ms Lauren Mesiti  
Committee Clerk  
Standing Committee on Public Administration  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
PERTH WA 6000

Email: [icpac@parliament.wa.gov.au](mailto:icpac@parliament.wa.gov.au)

Dear Ms Mesiti

### **INQUIRY INTO THE TRANSPORT OF PERSONS IN CUSTODY IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

The Law Society of Western Australia refers to the invitation from the Standing Committee Chair, Hon Liz Behjat MLC, to make a submission in response to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

The Society is unable to comment on the oversight and management of the contract between the Department of Corrective Services and SERCO. With respect to the delivery of services, the Society makes the following observations.

- Vehicles used to transport persons in custody must be equipped with all modern conveniences to ensure the safety and comfort of the persons being transported.
- The recruitment of court security and custodial services officers should be rigorous and thorough. The training of court security and custodial services officers should be continually reviewed to ensure best practice at all times for the safety and comfort of persons in custody.
- Regional court security and custodial services officers need to work more efficiently and effectively with judges of the District and Supreme Courts on circuit. For example, security officers do not always strictly observe court times when bringing persons in custody to the court. Court times need to be strictly observed. More training of security officers and engagement between security staff with associates and ushers may alleviate these problems.
- Where video and audio link facilities are available, if acceptable to the accused, to counsel and to the court, bail, sentencing and other interim hearings should be able to be heard via video or audio link to avoid all persons in custody having to be transported to the court. It is accepted that this will not always be practical but there are instances when transporting persons in custody over long distances in regional areas can be detrimental to their health and those who are released often have no means of travelling back to their homes.

Level 4, 160 St Georges Terrace Perth WA 6000, DX 173 Perth

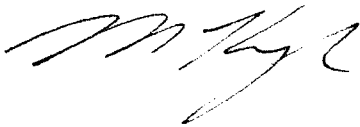
Telephone: (08) 9324 8600 Facsimile: (08) 9324 8699

Email: [info@lawsocietywa.asn.au](mailto:info@lawsocietywa.asn.au) Website: [www.lawsocietywa.asn.au](http://www.lawsocietywa.asn.au)

Please address all correspondence to The Law Society of Western Australia PO Box Z5345, St Georges Terrace Perth WA 6831

- It is noted that when District and Supreme Court judges are on circuit in Karratha, WA police officers must perform the role of security and custodial services officers. An extension of the contract to include the provision of security and custodial services in Karratha would free up WA Police officers to carry out their usual policing roles. Extending the contract to include weekends could enable the Northbridge Court/Police Station to operate on a Sunday.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Keogh', written in a cursive style.

**Matthew Keogh**  
**President**