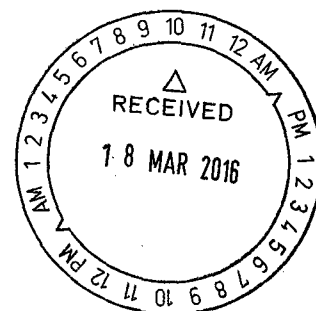




The Hon Joe Francis MLA
Minister for Emergency Services; Corrective Services;
Small Business; Veterans

Our reference: 51-10053

Hon Simon O'Brien MLC
Chairman
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
GPO Box A11
PERTH WA 6837



Dear Mr O'Brien,

Thank you for your letter dated 24 February 2016 relating to the Women's Remand and Reintegration Facility (WRRF). I am pleased to be able to provide you with the following responses:

- *What date is the Women's Remand and Reintegration Facility at Hakea expected to be operational by?*
December 2016

- *What is the number of inmates at Bandyup Women's Prison (Bandyup) who are on bail and cannot meet the conditions of providing a residential address (have no fixed place of abode) for the years 2014 and 2015.*

In 2013-2014, there were 184 receptions into Bandyup where the woman was granted bail but unable to meet the conditions. In 2015, this increased to 212. Approximately half of these women were released on bail within one week.

The Department of Corrective Services (the Department) does not collect data with regard to the bail conditions that women were unable to meet. Anecdotal evidence suggests that surety is the most common condition that is not met.

If lack of suitable accommodation is a barrier to bail, this is generally identified by the court during consideration of the bail application. The Department of the Attorney General (DotAG) may be able to provide the Committee with data relating to the number of women who were refused bail in 2014 and 2015 because they did not have suitable accommodation.

- *In providing the answer to the above question, what is the number of inmates who have breached bail for non-attendance at court verses inmates who have been bailed from a police station and have no fixed place of abode.*

It is recommended that this query be redirected to DotAG.

- *What are the non-custodial options the Department will be implementing to divert fine defaulters, where a warrant of commitment for the person has been executed.*

It is intended that the WRRF operator provide women with opportunities, prior to their formal reception into prison, to make alternative arrangements to deal with fine defaults. This will occur within current legislative provisions and existing processes. The objective is to assist women to access opportunities that already exist but are not often taken up. Further detail relating to how this might be achieved is not yet available.

- *Is it the intent of the Department that services offered by the WRRF, will be accessed by the Courts as non-custodial options for women who have no fixed residential address or cannot access a surety? If not what is the legal basis that enables a remand centre to divert prisoners from time in custody?*

It is the intention of the Department that the prison operator attempt to divert women from custody wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so and within existing legislative provisions. With regard to bail, the operator will focus on women who have been granted bail by the court but have been unable to meet these conditions prior to being transferred to the prison. The objective is to reduce the number of women who are granted bail but are transferred to prison before they have time to arrange to meet the attached conditions, e.g. surety or accommodation. In many instances, these women are transferred to Bandyup only to be released the next day. Further details about how proponents would achieve this are not yet available.

- *If an accused has been refused bail by either a police officer or the court due to conditions not being met, what services will the WRRF offer women prior to being processed into custody?*

It is not intended that the WRRF offer bail diversion services to women who have been refused bail. The WRRF will focus on women who have been granted bail but are struggling to meet the attached conditions.

- *Further information about specific programmes provided by the WRRF to reintegrate prisoners:*

It is intended that the prison operator ensure prisoners are "...provided with programs and services, both in prison and following release, that are tailored to meet their individually assessed needs and risks and which will assist them to sustain long term behavioural change." Further details are not available at this point in the tender process.

I once again thank you for raising these issues with me and I hope that the information provides you with the clarification you seek.

Yours sincerely



HON JOE FRANCIS MLA
MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES;
CORRECTIVE SERVICES; SMALL BUSINESS; VETERANS

1 8 MAR 2016