



Appendix four – About the audit

Audit objective

This audit assessed how efficiently and effectively the Department of Justice (NSW) (DOJ) is responding to growth in the NSW prison population.

Audit criteria

We addressed the audit objective with the following criteria:

1. Are DOJ's immediate and short-term responses to prison population fluctuations efficient and effective?
 - a) Immediate and short-term responses are supported by evidence, consultation, risk assessments and implementations plans.
 - b) Immediate and short-term responses to meet prison demand needs are efficient.
 - c) Immediate and short-term response to meet prison demand needs are effective.
 - d) Governance arrangements support effective implementation, monitoring and review of immediate and short-term responses.
2. Are DOJ's planned responses to medium and longer-term demand for prison accommodation likely to improve efficiency and effectiveness?
 - a) DOJ understands the future demands for prison accommodation and the ability of its existing asset base to meet those demands.
 - b) DOJ's strategy is designed to meet forecasted demand while improving efficiency and effectiveness.
 - c) DOJ's strategy to meet forecasted demand for prison accommodation considers the impact of broader criminal justice system (CJS) strategies.

Audit scope and focus

In assessing the criteria, we carried out:

- visits to nine correctional centres across New South Wales, including three female facilities
- interviews with DOJ frontline custodial correctional officers
- interviews with DOJ departmental staff
- interviews with stakeholders
- quantitative data analysis of DOJ performance data, population data including characteristics and trends and DOJ information system data
- review of documents, reports and relevant information: including policies, procedures, management reporting, governance arrangements, business cases, strategies and plans, consultation documents, risk assessments, research, independent evaluations, financial reporting.

Audit exclusions

The audit did not assess:

- procurement processes regarding selection of providers for new prisons
- effectiveness of programs and strategies to reduce reoffending
- programs and services, police practices, criminal court decisions that are outside the control of the prison system
- Juvenile Justice
- effectiveness of Justice and Forensic Mental Health Network services
- merits of government policy objectives.

Audit approach

Our procedures included:

- visits to nine correctional centres to observe the impact of growth on correctional operations
- interviews with Corrective Services NSW staff responsible for correctional administration, services and programs and education and employment
- interviews with DOJ departmental staff
- consultation with selected stakeholders and partner agencies
- review and analysis of DOJ and Corrective Services NSW documents
- review and analysis of DOJ and Corrective Services NSW data.

The audit approach was complemented by quality assurance processes within the Audit Office to ensure compliance with professional standards.

Audit methodology

Our performance audit methodology is designed to satisfy Australian Audit Standards ASAE 3500 on performance auditing. The Standard requires the audit team to comply with relevant ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance and draw a conclusion on the audit objective. Our processes have also been designed to comply with the auditing requirements specified in the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the co-operation and assistance provided by DOJ and Corrective Services NSW officers, frontline custodial officers, services and programs and education and employment staff and others who participated in interviews and discussions held during the audit. In particular, we wish to thank our liaison officers and others who provided material relevant to the audit.

We would also like to thank other stakeholders that spoke with us and provided material during the audit.

Audit cost

Including staff costs, travel and overheads, the estimated cost of the audit is \$375,000.