

**THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
THE SENATE**

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**17 MIGRATION—JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE—IMMIGRATION
DETENTION CENTRES: INSPECTION REPORT**

The Acting Deputy President (Senator McLucas) tabled the following document received on 27 February 2003:

Migration—Joint Standing Committee—Report—Not the Hilton—Immigration detention centres: Inspection, dated September 2000—Government response.

Government response to the recommendations from the Joint Standing Committee on Migration's report:
"Not the Hilton - Immigration Detention Centres: Inspection Report" September 2000

Reference	Recommendation	Response
<p>Recommendation 1 (Port Hedland) Paragraph No: 3.29 Page 21</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that the centre be screened to minimise photographic intrusion.</p>	<p>After the Committee's visit in November 1999, shade cloth was installed on the fences in order to prevent photographs being taken at ground level outside the fence. A palisade external fence with a weldmesh internal fence, completed in December 2001, has minimised the risk of photographic intrusion.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2 (Curtin) Paragraph No: 4.38 Page 28</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that the ratio of showers and toilets to detainees be increased.</p>	<p>In December 1999 the number of showers and toilets available to detainees was significantly increased; from 46 showers and 46 toilets to 78 showers and 76 toilets. The Curtin IRPC was closed in September 2002. Contingency capacity for up to 800 will be mothballed.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3 (Curtin) Paragraph No: 4.39 Page 28</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that ACM endeavour to maintain staffing continuity by re-engaging staff to maximise the use of their skills and knowledge.</p>	<p>This issue was the subject of a number of discussions between senior DIMIA officers and Australasian Correctional Management (ACM) personnel. In addition to re-engaging staff where possible, to maximise the use of their skills and knowledge, administrative mechanisms were put in place to ensure that procedures and local arrangements were documented for new staff and they were given appropriate briefing on current issues.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4 (Curtin) Paragraph No: 4.40 Page 29</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that the expansion of on-site medical facilities be given priority.</p>	<p>A second pre-fabricated building fully set up as a doctor's surgery was installed in the first quarter of 2000, and further space made available in the clinic block following the move of welfare services into a separate building. In late 2001 work was completed on the installation of a much larger facility. That facility included consultation and counselling facilities, a medical isolation facility, an overnight observation area and a multipurpose area for visiting health professionals.</p>

<p>Recommendation 5 (Curtin) Paragraph No: 4.41 Page 29</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that internal fencing be erected for security reasons.</p>	<p>In April and May 2000 the compound was divided into four large and two smaller sections using internal fencing.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6 (Woomera) Paragraph No: 5.45 Page 38</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that the expansion of on-site medical facilities be given priority.</p>	<p>The former military nurses quarters have been modified to create a medical facility capable of servicing the majority of the medical needs which would arise in the IRPC when operating at capacity. This facility is now operational and includes four ward rooms which can also be used as observation rooms for those at risk of self harm.</p>
<p>Recommendation 7 (Perth) Paragraph No: 6.26 Page 45</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that the IDC pursue acquisition of the adjoining areas in its current building to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expand the interviewing capacity to expedite processing of detainees; and provide more space for accommodation. 	<p>Renovation and expansion of the Perth IDC using additional space acquired within the building was completed in January 2002, providing an increase in capacity from 42 to 64. There is now a separate accommodation area for up to 22 people, comprising six accommodation rooms, dining and recreation rooms, with access to a second exercise yard. A new observation room has access to natural light, air-conditioning and ablutions. Ablutions for disabled detainees have also been installed.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8 (Perth) Paragraph No: 6.27 Page 45</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that the centre be used only for short-term detention.</p>	<p>Procedures to transfer long-term detainees at the Perth IDC to other immigration detention facilities where possible have been in place for some time. Perth IDC detainees' circumstances are regularly reviewed with a view to relocating them to other immigration detention accommodation. Since the recent expansion of Perth IDC, families and women can be accommodated separately from the rest of the population, depending on the mix of detainees in the centre at the time. Where separation cannot be achieved, arrangements are made to transfer families and female detainees to a more appropriate detention facility, including motels that have been designated for this purpose.</p> <p>Some adult male detainees choose to remain at the Perth IDC.</p>

<p>Recommendation 9 (Perth) Paragraph No: 6.28 Page 45</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that the provision of toilet and ablution facilities be increased.</p>	<p>The renovation and expansion of capacity at the Perth IDC (response to recommendation 7 above refers) has increased toilet and ablution facilities at the Centre. This increase includes the addition of 2 toilets, 2 hand basins and 3 showers.</p>
<p>Recommendation 10 (Perth) Paragraph No: 6.29 Page 46</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that, in relation to tranquillisers and antidepressant medication, DIMA ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ detainees provide informed consent; and ▪ clear documentation of such treatments is kept for each individual. 	<p>This is consistent with normal practice. Prescribed medicines such as antidepressants or tranquillisers are not imposed upon detainees. If there are serious concerns with regard to depression and it is considered that medication will improve the health of the individual, however, appropriately qualified staff will counsel and encourage the individual to take medication.</p> <p>Whenever a detainee is assessed by medical staff at the Centre, an entry is recorded into the detainee's medical file. Where treatment is initiated, this is also noted. When the centre doctor prescribes medication, they detail this on a medication sheet. Medical staff record each time medication is administered.</p>
<p>Recommendation 11 (Perth) Paragraph No: 6.30 Page 46</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that the practice of providing massage to detainees on a regular basis is discontinued, and that massage is only provided when recommended by a doctor for substantial medical reasons.</p>	<p>This form of therapy was provided infrequently. At Perth, it was provided on two occasions in April 2000. Centre medical staff provided the service. This practice has now ceased.</p>
<p>Recommendation 12 (Villawood) Paragraph No: 7.31 Page 52</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that DIMA proceed with the redevelopment of Villawood, taking account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the security issues increasingly associated with detention sites in urban areas; and ▪ the need for flexibility to deal with potential changes in the numbers and mix of suspected unlawful non-citizens arriving in Australia. 	<p>A strategic evaluation of detention centres in late 1999, in response to the significant increase in unauthorised boat arrivals, determined that the existing facility at Stage 2 Villawood should be retained and renovated with a view to increasing capacity and ensuring the longer term viability of the site. The completion of an expansion project has increased capacity to around 750, with up to 200 beds in Stage 3, (with security similar to Stage 1), around 400 in Stage 2, and up to 150 in Stage 1. This has provided increased flexibility to deal with potential changes in the numbers and mix of detainees. Upgrading of lighting at stages 2 and 3 was completed in June 2002. Work has commenced on a project to replace Stage 1.</p>

<p>Recommendation 13 (Maribyrnong) Paragraph No: 8.25 Page 57</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that the necessary security upgrading be undertaken as a matter of priority, both to improve security and permit fuller use of the centre's grounds.</p>	<p>The construction of a medium level security perimeter at the Maribyrnong IDC reached practical completion in December 2001.</p>
<p>Recommendation 14 (Broome) Paragraph No: 9.31 Page 65</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that consideration be given by AFMA of a clear physical separation of the family's and detainees' on-land areas.</p>	<p>Modifications to restrict access for detainees to the private family area and to isolate the potentially dangerous excavation have been completed.</p>
<p>Recommendation 15 (Broome) Paragraph No: 9.32 Page 65</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that the obvious safety risks of incomplete structures be addressed immediately.</p>	<p>Safety risks in some parts of the site have been addressed by restricting detainee access.</p>
<p>Recommendation 16 (Broome) Paragraph No: 9.33 Page 65</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that DIMA and AFMA monitor the operation of the Willie Creek facility more closely.</p>	<p>The facility is monitored on an ongoing basis by officers of Fisheries Western Australia who are funded by AFMA. These officers report to AFMA in Canberra on issues and matters requiring attention. Since 1999, AFMA has assumed more direct control of the contract with payment of accounts now being made directly by AFMA in Canberra, once service claims have been checked and signed-off by the local fisheries officers.</p> <p>AFMA's Canberra staff have also undertaken more frequent visits to Broome to check on standards and to endeavour to improve the responsiveness of the caretaker to AFMA requirements. AFMA is continuing to require the contractor to make improvements and will seek to address this issue further in future contracts within the limits of available funding.</p> <p>DIMIA is not involved in monitoring the facility as it is not a party to the contract for the management of the facility.</p>

<p>Recommendation 17 (Broome) Paragraph No: 9.34 Page 66</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that AFMA examine the desirability of a new facility at Broome.</p>	<p>The Government is reviewing its funding and strategic approach for fisheries detention in both Darwin and Broome in the light of the Ombudsman's report and this Committee's report. AFFA, AFMA and DIMIA are currently considering the most appropriate detention options to recommend to the Government.</p>
<p>Recommendation 18 (Darwin) Paragraph No: 10.21 Page 70</p>	<p>The Committee recommends investigation of the relative costs and benefits of centralising detention facilities currently at Darwin and Willie Creek, bearing in mind the necessary role of the RAN in apprehension and escort duties.</p>	<p>In 2001, AFFA commissioned a review of current and alternative arrangements for dealing with illegal foreign fishers operating off northern Australia. The Fisheries Resources Research Fund funded the review. The report of the review provides an assessment of the current arrangements for apprehending and detaining illegal Indonesian fishers operating in the northern Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ), an examination of the options for maximising deterrence and a summary benefit analysis of the four main detention options currently under consideration. The report expressed a preference for centralised detention arrangements in Darwin, and AFFA and AFMA see this as a viable option. The logistics of the option are currently being examined. AFFA, AFMA and DIMIA are currently considering the most appropriate options to recommend to the Government.</p>
<p>Recommendation 19 (Christmas Island) Paragraph No: 11.47 Page 80</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that the current practice of removing unauthorised arrivals to mainland detention centres be continued.</p>	<p>This recommendation has been overtaken by legislation which excised Christmas Island and certain other Australian territories from the migration zone, and the subsequent agreements between the Australian Government and the Governments of Papua New Guinea and Nauru to process unauthorised arrivals in those countries.</p>
<p>Recommendation 20 (Christmas Island) Paragraph No: 11.48 Page 80</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that the plans for the proposed recreational complex be drafted with sufficient flexibility in its construction to permit short-term housing of unauthorised arrivals.</p>	<p>The Government met the cost (\$204,000) of the construction of new ablutions facilities at the sports hall at Flying Fish Cove, completed in July 2001. A temporary reception centre with capacity to accommodate around 300 was constructed using demountable buildings in late 2001 and commenced operations on 12 November 2001. On 12 March 2002 the Government announced the construction of a purpose designed and built IRPC on Christmas Island. At the same time the Government announced that the funding for the dual purpose sports facility announced in September 2001 would be used for dedicated sports facilities for the Christmas Island Community.</p>

<p>Recommendation 21 (Christmas Island) Paragraph No: 11.49 Page 81</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that DIMA, in consultation with the department of Regional Services, Territories and Local Government, provide stock of equipment such as washable stretcher beds and non-perishables for use in the temporary detention of suspected unlawful non-citizens.</p>	<p>A Request for Expressions of Interest for the provision of non perishable goods was published on 27 October 2000 and a successful tenderer has since been contracted.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22 (Christmas Island) Paragraph No: 11.50 Page 81</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that arrangements with State medical authorities to cover emergency medical arrangements be finalised.</p>	<p>The Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOTARS) is currently negotiating a Service Delivery Arrangement with the Health Department of WA (HDWA) that may include an increased State role in the management and provision of health services for Indian Ocean Territories residents. Assuming a satisfactory outcome of these negotiations, resources required to cater for emergency medical arrangements would be accessed through HDWA.</p> <p>DIMIA will need to negotiate arrangements for on-Island medical services for detainees through the existing Christmas Island medical facility with DOTARS. For unauthorised arrivals requiring medical care that is beyond the resources of the Christmas Island medical facility, DIMIA will need to make arrangements for evacuation and treatment with the appropriate authorities.</p>
<p>Recommendation 23 (Overall) Paragraph No: 12.41 Page 89</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that DIMA examine the costs and benefits of deactivating, but retaining, structures and infrastructure at the current temporary detention centres.</p>	<p>In Budget 2000, the Government announced a long term strategy for the provision of detention facilities. The strategy involves the establishment of new facilities, and the upgrading of existing detention centres.</p> <p>On 23 August 2001, The Government announced the establishment of contingency facilities near Port Augusta, SA (Baxter IRPC), at HMAS Coonawarra in Darwin and at Singleton Army Base, NSW.</p> <p>On 12 March 2002 the Government announced the construction of a permanent purpose designed and built IRPC on Christmas Island for future contingencies.</p> <p>On 11th April 2002 the Government announced the outcome of a review of the long term strategy for detention facilities for unauthorised boat arrivals. This included the mothballing of Curtin IRPC with capacity for up to 800 maintained for contingency purposes; the scaling down of Woomera IRPC to 800 with the capacity for a further 400 to be maintained for contingency purposes; and the commissioning in mid 2002 of the Baxter IRPC (near Port Augusta) with capacity for up to 1200.</p>

<p>Recommendation 24 (Overall) Paragraph No: 12.42 Page 89</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that it continue to inspect and monitor detention facilities.</p>	<p>Supported. Timing and itinerary for visits for these purposes should be decided in consultation with the Minister.</p>
<p>Recommendation 25 (Overall) Paragraph No: 12.43 Page 90</p>	<p>The Committee recommends that, in future, in addition to inspection visits, arrangements also be made to meet with representatives of the detainees.</p>	<p>Supported. Timing and itinerary for visits for these purposes should be decided in consultation with the Minister.</p>