



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 50

## WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Guyula to the Minister for Corrections, Hon Gerard Maley MLA:

### Corrections data

1. **On 7 February 2025, a Government media release outlined an increase in 500 additional prisoners in the Corrections system since the 2024 August election. Please advise:**

a) **On the day prior to the election what was the number of people being held in correctional facilities and watch houses? Of these people, what proportion identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?**

On 23 August 2024, there were 2229 prisoners held, of which 1970 (88%) identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

b) **On the day of the media release, what was the number of people being held in correctional facilities and watch houses? Of these people, what proportion identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?**

As of 25 February 2025, there were 2720 prisoners held in Corrections custody and 53 held by Police in police cells, of those in Corrections custody 2397 which (88%) identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

c) **Of the 500 detainees increase since the election, what proportion of these detainees identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.**

Since the election on 23 August 2024, through until 25 February 2025 the increase of 491 prisoners, excluding the 53 held in police custody, 424 (86%) identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

- d) On the day prior to the election, what proportion of detainees were being held on remand?**

On 23 August 2024, of the 2229 prisoners held in custody, 1009 (45%) were remanded in custody.

- e) On the day of the media release, what proportion of detainees were being held on remand?**

On 25 February 2025, of the 2720 prisoners held, 1323 (49%) were remanded in custody.

- 2. On 29 January, 2025, a Government media release outlined an increase of 400 additional prisoners since the August 2024 election. In slightly more than a week another Government media release on the 7 February outlined that there had been 'more than 500 additional prisoners' since the 2024 election. This is a significant increase, please provide a breakdown of the police charges for the approximate 100 additional prisoners over this 9 day period.**

Please refer to Northern Territory Police Force to respond to this question.

- 3. For the month of January 2025, in the Palmerston Watch House/ Palmerston Police Prison:**

- a) What was the average number of detainees held each day?**

The average number of Department of Correction (DoC) managed prisoners held in the Palmerston Police Prison was 130.

- b) What was the highest number of detainees held in a day?**

The highest number of DoC managed prisoners in the Palmerston Police Prison was 138.

- c) What was the average number of detainees in each cell?**

The cell sizes within Palmerston Police Prison vary.

- d) What was the highest number of detainees in a cell in one day?**

The highest number of prisoners detained in one cell is 19.

**e) What was the longest amount of time that a detainee was held in this facility?**

The longest amount of time a prisoner was held in Palmerston Police Prison was 34 days.

**f) What was the average length of stay for detainees?**

At 13 February 2025, the average length of stay was 13 days.

**g) What proportion of detainees were on remand?**

The proportion of prisoners held on remand was 77%.

**h) What proportion of detainees identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?**

On 31 January 2025, 90% of DoC managed prisoners identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

**i) How often could detainees meet with their lawyers onsite?**

Prisoners are provided with the ability to make calls to their lawyers. However, due to the operational nature of these facilities, in-person visits cannot be facilitated.

**j) How many times did detainees meet with their lawyers onsite?**

As per response above.

**k) How often could detainees shower in a bathroom outside their cell?**

As police watch houses are operational facilities, prisoners are provided access to showers every two to three days when practical. However, in facilities where DoC has full management, prisoners are provided access to showers every day.

**l) How often could detainees spend time outside in fresh air?**

As the Palmerston watch house is an operational police facility, prisoners are unable to spend time outside.

**m) How often could detainees spend time outside their cell on a daily basis?**

Prisoners are permitted to spend time outside their cells solely for the purposes of showering, making phone calls, attending medical appointments, or appearing in court.

**n) How often was there access to medical clinics, on site, for detainees?**

All prisoners accommodated at the watch house have access to medical personnel, who are available on-site each day.

**o) How often did detainees attend rehabilitative programs? Which programs were attended, by how many detainees and on which days?**

Due to the operational nature of the Palmerston Police Prison, programs are unable to be facilitated.

**p) How often did detainees sleep in darkness?**

Palmerston Watch House is an operational police facility, requiring cells to remain artificially lit 24 hours a day for safety and security purposes.

**q) How many phone calls were made by detainees?**

On average, 23 calls a day are made for legal purposes.