

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

## WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Maley

to Minister for Justice and Attorney-General

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### Prisoner daily costs

Why does it cost \$152.00 per day to keep an adult prisoner (*refer Budget Paper No.3, page 114*) and cost \$502.00 per day to keep a juvenile prisoner (*refer Budget Paper No.3, page 115*)

### ANSWER

The daily cost of keeping an adult prisoner/detainee in custody/detention is calculated by adding the total operating expenditure, including overheads, for the respective output (adult custodial/juvenile detention) divided by the daily average number of prisoners/detainees for the period.

The daily average number of juvenile detainees per day for the current financial year to December 2002 was 24 while the average number of adult prisoners per day for the same period was 692.

The variance in the estimated cost between adult prisoners per day (\$152) and juvenile detainees per day (\$502) can be explained in terms of the advantages in the economies of scale of adult custody. Operating expenses are significantly reduced when measured on a prisoner per day basis because of the larger volume of adult prisoners. The operating expenses for juvenile detention are higher against the measure per detainee per day because of the lower numbers of detainees.