



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 48

WRITTEN QUESTION

J Davis to the Minister for Police, Hon Lia Finocchiaro MLA:

Police Custody Centres

1. **What was the average daily number of people committed or remanded to the custody of the Commissioner of Corrections (Prisoners) who were detained in police custody centres in:**
 - a. **September 2024;**
 - b. **October 2024; and**
 - c. **November 2024**

Refer to Written Question 49

2. **What was the average daily number of people detained in police custody centres in:**
 - a. **September 2024;**
 - b. **October 2024; and**
 - c. **November 2024.**

The daily average of people in police custody only for each police custody centre was taken from 6.00am each day and averaged out across the month. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest person.

Police custody centres	September	October	November
Alice Springs	12	13	16
Alyangula	1	1	1
Katherine	5	5	7
Nhulunbuy	1	1	1
Tennant Creek	3	4	3
Palmerston	15	20	20
PMC	0	0	0
Mitchell Centre	0	0	0



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3. **What is the maximum number of persons that should be detained at the following police custody centres in accordance with relevant fire regulations, industrial instruments and OHS instruments:**

Fire Regulations do not influence the cell capacity and impact on the safe evacuation of cells to a safe Muster Area in case of fire.

The NT Police Force do not have maximum occupancy levels for Watch Houses. The parameters for detainee numbers are based on reasonableness and operational need with the occupancy level of police cells considered during the design and construction stage.

The design plans for each WHS identify bed space, which refers to the elevated concrete benches only. These numbers do not include any of the available floor/cell space where mattresses can also be placed.

Police Custody centres	Design plans for bed space/mattresses
Alice Springs	61
Alyangula	25
Katherine	29
Nhulunbuy	20
Tennant Creek	18
Palmerston	53
PMC	9
Mitchell Centre	50

4. **What is the maximum number of persons that have been detained each police custody centre listed in question 3(a) – (e) since 1 September 2024?**

The maximum number of persons in police custody only during the months of September 2024 through to November 2024, broken down into each police custody centre is as follows. The data was collated as at 6.00am each day.

- a. **The Police, Fire and Emergency Services College Watch House,
814 McMillans Road, Berrimah NT 0828;**

Nil.



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- b. **Palmerston Police Station, 2 Kettle Street, Farrar NT 0830;**
36.
- c. **The Alice Springs Watchhouse, Parsons Street, Alice Springs;**
29.
- d. **The police cells at the Northern Territory Police Headquarters,
Mitchell Centre, Mitchell Street, Darwin;**
Nil.
- e. **Any other police custody centre?**

Police Custody Centre	Maximum # of persons during September to November 2025
Alyangula	2
Katherine	22
Nhulunbuy	2
Tennant Creek	10

- 5. **Are there any current official visitors appointed under s 26 or s 212 of the
Correctional Services Act 2014?**
 - a. **If so, have official visitors been provided with any opportunities to
visit a police custody centre?**
 - b. **If not, why have no official visitors been appointed? What steps
have been taken to appoint official visitors?**

Refer to Written Question 49.

- 6. **When was the last time each police custody centre listed in question 3(a)
– (e) was visited by:**
 - a. **An official visitor appointed under s 26 or s 212 of the *Correctional
Services Act 2014*;**

Refer to Question 49. This is not information recorded by the NTPF.



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b. A member of the office of the NT Ombudsman; and

The Ombudsman NT is an external authorised officer who has a right of access to all NTPF custody facilities for the purpose of conducting oversight audits and reviews. The NTPF accommodates all external authorised officer access requests, as such three Ombudsman NT visits have been facilitated as follows.

Details below:

- **The Police, Fire and Emergency Services College Watch House, 814 McMillans Road, Berrimah NT 0828;**
No visit.
- **Palmerston Police Station, 2 Kettle Street, Farrar NT 0830;**
21 May 2024.
- **The Alice Springs Watchhouse, Parsons Street, Alice Springs;**
24 May 2024.
- **The police cells at the Northern Territory Police Headquarters, Mitchell Centre, Mitchell Street, Darwin;**
22 January 2025.
- **Any other police custody centre?**
No visit.

c. A member of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of the Committee against Torture (SPT).

The SPT visited the Darwin and Palmerston watch houses in October 2022.



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7. If applicable, what findings or recommendations have been made by an official visitor, the NT Ombudsman or his delegates or a member of the SPT in relation to investigations at a police custody centre since 1 December 2022?

- The NT Ombudsman did not deliver any findings or recommendations to the NTPF regarding Police Custody Centres.
- the SPT made one recommendation in respect to the NTPF Police Custody Centre, that effective measures are taken to ensure every person in custody is promptly provided access to a lawyer or legal aid services.

8. On average, how many consecutive days are Prisoners being held in a police custody centre before being moved to another custodial correctional facility or another place?

Refer to Written Question 49.

9. What is the longest amount of time a male Prisoner has been held in a police custody centre before being moved to another custodial correctional facility or another place since 1 December 2022?

Refer to Written Question 49.

10. What is the longest amount of time a female Prisoner has been held in a police custody centre before being moved to another custodial correctional facility or another place since 1 December 2022?

Refer to Written Question 49.

11. What steps have been taken to ensure that the conditions for Prisoners in police custody centres comply with the *Correctional Services Act 2014* and reg 23 of the *Correctional Services Regulations 2014*, the Minimum Standard Guidelines for Australian Prisons and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture?

Refer to Written Question 49.



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12. For each of the police custody centres listed in question 3(a) to (e):
- a. Are all Prisoners being provided time outside their cell each day?
If not, how frequently are Prisoners being provided time outside their cell;
For how many hours each day, on average, is each Prisoner provided time outside their cell.
 - b. Are all Prisoners being provided access to direct sunlight and fresh air each day? If not, how frequently are Prisoners being provided access to direct sunlight and fresh air
 - c. Are all Prisoners being provided with access to adequate temperature control, including air-conditioning, in their cells;
 - d. For how many hours each day do the cells remain artificially lighted;
 - e. For how many hours each day are the cells air-conditioned;
 - f. Are all Prisoners being provided access to prescription medication;
 - g. Are all female Prisoners being provided access to feminine hygiene products
 - h. Are all Prisoners being provided with access to daily showers and private use of hygiene facilities? If not, why not;
 - i. Are all Prisoners being provided with the ability to make priority calls and calls to their legal representatives;
 - j. Are all Prisoners being provided with the ability to make calls to and receive visits from family members;
 - k. What steps have been taken to ensure that persons under the age of 18 are not being detained in cells adjacent to, and within sight and/or earshot of cells detaining adults;
 - l. What steps have been taken to ensure that females are not being detained in cells adjacent to, and within sight and/or earshot of cells detaining males;
 - m. What privileges in Schedule 2 to the *Correctional Services Regulations 2014* are Prisoners being provided with access to?
- Refer to Written Question 49.



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- 13. What is the effect on a Prisoner's accrued entitlements when they are moved from a Corrections facility to a police custody centre?**

Refer to Written Question 49.

- 14. Has the Commissioner of Correctional Services (Commissioner) issued Directions to guide the determination as to whether a Prisoner is to be held in a police custody centre? If not, on what basis does the Commissioner (or any other person with the appropriate authority) make this decision?**

Refer to Written Question 49.

- 15. In the exercise of a general discretion under section 38 of the *Correctional Services Act 2014*, does the Commissioner or his delegate consult with or seek submissions from a prisoner, and/or their family, legal representative or support services, and take into consideration any such consultations or submissions and the best interests of the prisoner and their rehabilitation before determining a prisoner should be relocated from one custodial correctional facility to another?**

Refer to Written Question 49.