



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 49

WRITTEN QUESTION

J Davis to the Minister for Corrections, Hon Gerard Maley 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
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.
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:
 - a. The Police, Fire and Emergency Services College Watch House, 814 McMillans Road, Berrimah NT 0828;
 - b. Palmerston Police Station, 2 Kettle Street, Farrar NT 0830;
 - c. The Alice Springs Watchhouse, Parsons Street, Alice Springs;
 - d. The police cells at the Northern Territory Police Headquarters, Mitchell Centre, Mitchell Street, Darwin;
 - e. Any other police custody centre?
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?



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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?
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*;
 - b. A member of the office of the NT Ombudsman; and
 - 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**).
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?
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?
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?
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?



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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?
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;



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

ANSWERS

1.

	SEPT	OCT	NOV
Alice Springs Police Prison	33	33	20
Darwin Police Prison	37	41	48
Peter McAulay Centre	5
Palmerston Police Prison	27	66	78



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2. Refer to WQ No. 48. NT Police Force to respond to this question.
3. Refer to WQ No. 48. NT Police Force to respond to this question.
4. Refer to WQ No. 48. NT Police Force to respond to this question.
5. Yes.
 - a. Official Visitors, as stipulated under the Act, have the authority to determine which sites they wish to visit.
 - b. Refer to answer in question 5.
6. Refer to WQ No. 48. NT Police Force to respond to this question.
 - a. Not applicable
 - b. The A/Assistant Ombudsman, Thomas Greaves visited Palmerston Watch House on 28 November 2024
 - c. There has been one visit to the Northern Territory by the SPT in 2022.
7. Refer to WQ No. 48. NT Police Force to respond to this question.
8. The average number of consecutive days prisoners are held in a police custody centre before being moved to another custodial facility varies depending on the specific operating model and circumstances at each site.
9. Identification of this information would require an extensive manual review and of records across multiple facilities since 1 December 2022. To answer this question would impose an unreasonable burden on departmental resources.
10. As per Q9.
11. All prisoners in police custody centres are assessed for suitability by medical and intelligence teams, with their welfare ensured through the provision of adequate food and climate-appropriate clothing, in compliance with Regulation 23.



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12. a. Both Palmerston Watch House and Alice Springs Watch House are operational police facilities, and as such, do not provide out-of-cell time other than to access phone calls, legal appointments, and court.

As Corrections has full management of the Darwin Watch House, the sally port area has been converted into an exercise space for the prisoners.

- b. The watch houses are not designed with an outdoor area as they are operational police facilities. There are windows available in some areas of each facility.
- c. The watch house facilities are air-conditioned throughout.
- d. Both Palmerston Watch House and Alice Springs Watch House are operational police facilities, requiring cells to remain artificially lit 24 hours a day for safety and security purposes. Where Corrections has control of the facility, lights are dimmed overnight.
- e. The watch house facilities are air-conditioned throughout.
- f. The medical review for all receptions includes appropriate triage and accommodation placement and includes organising of prescription medication where required.
- g. All female prisoners are provided access to feminine hygiene products.
- h. As police custody centres are operational facilities, prisoners are provided access to showers every two to three days where practical. However, in facilities where Corrections has full management, prisoners are provided access to showers every day.
- i. Yes.



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- j. Prisoners are provided with the ability to make calls to family members. However, due to the operational nature of these facilities, in-person visits cannot be facilitated.
 - k. Refer to WQ No. 48. NT Police Force to respond to this question.
 - l. Corrections has worked with NT Police Force to ensure that females are not being detained in cells adjacent and/or within earshot of cells detaining males wherever possible and practicable.
 - m. In addition to response 12.i, prisoners are provided packs of game cards and reading material (magazines) as part of their placements in Police Watch Houses. Prisoners also have access to television.
13. Prisoners remain eligible to retain the minimum accrued entitlements when they are moved to a police custody centre.
14. Corrections operate watch houses according to a range of Commissioner's Directions and standard operating procedures.
15. Prisoners being relocated from one custodial corrections facility to another, are managed in accordance with section 38, 39 and 40 of the *Correctional Services Act 2014* and in accordance with section 42 must comply with any reasonable direction of the Commissioner, General Manager or Correctional Officer.