



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 1

WRITTEN QUESTION

J Davis to the Minister for Corrections, Hon Gerard Maley MLA:

Youth detention

- 1. What is the cost per day of detaining youth in the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre and in the Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre?**

The Report on Government Services (ROGS 2024) indicated the cost per young person under detention-based supervision during 2022-2023 was \$51,567,000. This was based on an average population of 52 young people during the same reporting period. The cost per average day per young person was \$2703.68.

- 2. What proportion of youth detainees are on remand?**

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2022-2023 report provided the following:

Young people may be detained when they are unsentenced or sentenced. Some young people may also be both unsentenced and sentenced on the same day. This can occur when the young person has changed legal status or has both types of legal orders at the same time for different legal matters. On an average day in 2022-2023, 93 per cent of young people in the Northern Territory were unsentenced (remand).

- 3. What is the cost of bringing a youth to Alice Springs from Darwin to appear in court?**

The cost of transporting a youth from Darwin to Alice Springs to appear in court includes expenses such as airfares, youth justice officer time, and vehicle use. These costs can vary depending on the time of year, staffing availability, and other factors.

- 4. During the refurbishment of the Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre when it was operating at reduced capacity in 2022, 2023 and 2024, on how many occasions was a youth transferred from Darwin to Alice Springs to appear in court?**

Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre was not operating at reduced capacity during 2022.

During the period of reduced occupancy between June 2023 and March 2024, there were 224 occasions when a young person was transferred from Darwin to Alice Springs to appear in court.

5. How many days on average have youth detainees spent on remand before they are sentenced?

The average days a young person is in detention on remand before they are sentenced is not available. This is because a young person can be in detention on both remand and sentenced at the same time relating to different charges or court proceedings. When court outcomes are finalised, the system is updated and may result in backdating or cancellation of remand and sentencing information.

6. In 2022, 2023 and 2024 how many youth detainees were ordered to be released on the day they were sentenced?

This information requires data matching across multiple systems and is not available for 2023-24.

7. In 2022, 2023 and 2024 on how many occasions has a request submitted by an Alice Springs or Tennant Creek based lawyer to confer with a youth detainee on remand by video link been granted, and then cancelled or postponed by the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre?

Don Dale Youth Detention Centre operates a 7-days-a-week visits booking system, between the hours of 9am and 4pm. A visit booking schedule is circulated to legal services each week for the next 4 weeks in advance with a firmed weekly schedule for the following week. All bookings require a minimum of 24 hours' notice. The Superintendent has approved additional visits outside of core hours when contacted.

When the Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre was operating at reduced capacity, extra visits staff were allocated at Don Dale Youth Detention Centre. Utilisation rates of bookings during this period was approximately 70 per cent. Weekly cancellation of appointments by legal representatives varied between 15 per cent to 20 per cent each week.

Between 3 April 2024 and 5 April 2024. All audio-visual link (AVL) services coverage was disrupted as a result of a serious disturbance by young people and the destruction of 2 Don Dale Youth Detention Centre AVL facilities. As a solution detention centre management utilised 6 handheld iPads.

In addition, there are "unlimited" legal phone calls for young people to contact their lawyers between the hours of 7:30am and 6:30pm each day (7 days per week).

8. **In 2022, 2023 and 2024 on how many occasions was a matter listed for a youth to appear in the Youth Court at Alice Springs or Tennant Creek, but the youth failed to appear because they were in detention at the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre and were not transferred to court to appear?**

During the reduced capacity period June 2023 to March 2024, there was one occasion where the youth failed to appear. This was a result of a plane delay / cancellation.

9. **In 2022, 2023 and 2024 what was the average number of days that passed between the lodging of a request by a lawyer in Alice Springs or Tennant Creek to confer with a client on remand at the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre by video link, and the day when the video link conference was actually conducted?**

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10. **In 2022, 2023 and 2024 on how many occasions did a defence lawyer apply for an adjournment in the Youth Court at Alice Springs or Tennant Creek on the ground that they had been unable to confer with their client on remand at the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre to get instructions?**

Detention centres do not keep records of matters or reasons that have been adjourned in court. This question may be better directed to the Attorney-General's Department.