

TREASURER TOM KOUTSANTONIS

Thursday, 7 July 2016

More prison beds and rehabilitation services for offenders

An additional \$91.3 million over four years will be spent easing prison overcrowding and expanding rehabilitation services to reduce reoffending.

South Australia continues to experience an increase in prisoner numbers, consistent with what is occurring interstate.

To help meet demand, the 2016-17 State Budget includes:

- \$33.7 million in operating costs for a 128 bed upgrade at Port Augusta Prison due for commission in 2017;
- \$32.1 million for additional prisoner accommodation;
- \$15.6 million for home detention expansion, rehab and support; and
- \$9.9 million for rehabilitation programs to reduce repeat offending.

Following legislative changes in May 2016, more offenders can now be sentenced to home detention which has wide-ranging positive social and economic impacts for the state.

Increased funding for home detention monitoring staff, monitoring technology and support and rehabilitation services provided by the not-for-profit sector will enable the home detention program to be expanded.

Effective rehabilitation is critical to reducing the rate of reoffending.

The Government is increasing the capacity of existing programs and funding the introduction of four new rehabilitation programs targeting violence, family violence, sex offending and drugs and alcohol.

Background

The number of offenders within our prisons has risen more than 80 per cent since 2004 and continues to grow. This growth is consistent with that of other states.

The current daily prisoner average is higher than the number of beds available within our prisons. The Department for Correctional Services therefore relies on temporary beds to fill the gap.



This Budget provides additional funding to continue the use of temporary accommodation where necessary while permanent prisoner accommodation is being constructed.

An additional \$22 million is provided for 70 beds in 2016-17 at:

- Mobilong (26 beds)
- Mount Gambier (40 beds) and
- Port Augusta prisons (4 beds)

These beds are additional to the 112 beds already committed to become available by June 2018 at Mount Gambier Prison.

Quotes attributable to Treasurer Tom Koutsantonis

Keeping the community safe is our number one concern, and we will always find room in our Budget to achieve this.

But we are also looking at ways to reduce these costs into the future, including building more permanent infrastructure and investing in programs that stop people reoffending time and time again.

Quotes attributable to Corrections Minister Peter Malinauskas

To reduce the pressure on our prison system we need to be increasing permanent bed numbers and investing in ways to reduce the number of offenders returning to jail.

Each prisoner costs our state nearly \$100,000 per year. Nearly half of those that are released from our prison system re-offend.

Reducing the rate of reoffending will result in fewer victims of crime and ease the financial burden on the State posed by incarcerating criminals.

The Department for Correctional Services works with a number of not-for-profit organisations which are instrumental in the positive reintegration of offenders back into the community.

Today's Budget will build on this work, improving community safety.

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