



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Don Dale Youth Detention and Alice Springs Youth Detention Monitoring Reports

The independent monitoring reports for Don Dale Youth Detention Centre and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre from the Office of the Children's Commissioner have been tabled in the Northern Territory Parliament.

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Hon Natasha Fyles, tabled the reports in the Legislative Assembly Sittings on 24 June 2020.

There are 23 recommendations across the two reports relating to systems improvements relevant to Territory Families and Department of Health across the following areas:

- Introduction of a therapeutic model of care, including the provision of onsite wrap around psychiatric and therapeutic mental health services
- Compliance with Youth Justice Policy Determination 4.11: Separation
- Introduction of mandated staff training in the areas relevant areas; and reflective supervision
- Improved record keeping and case/behaviour support planning
- Improved systems to support young people maintain contact with family members
- Review of the effective implementation of the Elders Visitor Program

Since the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory (2017), the Commissioner has observed ongoing improvements to the way young people are treated and rehabilitated within the detention setting, however there is still work to be done to ensure youth detention serves as a therapeutic intervention in the lives of young people who enter the facilities.

Commissioner Gwynne states "Of greatest concern from the latest round of monitoring is that the introduction of a therapeutic model of care within youth detention centres in the Northern Territory is still in the infancy stages. The evidence clearly shows that therapeutic, trauma informed approaches to working with young offender's supports them to address their behaviour and to build pro-social skills in preparation for a successful reintegration into their communities. Healthy, well-adjusted children and young people are less likely to reoffend, which is a great outcome for everyone'.

The Commissioner thanks Territory Families for their ongoing cooperation to allow OCC staff access to both the Alice Springs and Don Dale Youth Detention Centres, whilst we await the legislative reform required to enable the OCC to have free and unfettered access to places of youth detention, as recommended in the Royal Commission (2017).

The OCC monitors service providers implementation of monitoring report recommendations; and will continue to do so until they are fully implemented.

Full reports can be read here: <https://occ.nt.gov.au/>

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