



dhcs | ACT

department of disability,
housing & community services

Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators' Meeting

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ACT Report



Community Partner

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1. STATE / TERRITORY YOUTH JUSTICE STATISTICS

1.1 Custodial Population (Admissions)

FINANCIAL YEAR	COMMITTAL	REMAND	TOTAL	CUSTODY DAYS ¹
2002 / 2003	26	231	257	5,756
2003 / 2004	25	273	298	7,482
2004 / 2005	17	193	210	6,014
2005 / 2006	17	250	267	6,923
2006/ 2007	11	276	287	6,177
2007/ 2008	17	227	295	5,710

1.2 Age in Custody

AGE IN CUSTODY	2002 / 2003	2003 / 2004	2004 / 2005	2005 / 2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
10 years	0	1	0	2	0	0
11 years	1	14	2	2	3	0
12 years	8	15	12	4	12	5
13 years	17	30	24	24	21	60
14 years	53	58	29	47	33	50
15 years	45	60	46	42	58	44
16 years	70	50	44	66	61	42
17 years	54	66	51	77	86	77
18 years	9	4	2	4	13	12
19 years	0	0	0	0	0	2
20 years	0	0	0	0	0	1
21 years	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total	257	298	210	267	287	295

1.3 Detainee Breakdowns

CLASSIFICATION	2002 / 2003	2003 / 2004	2004 / 2005	2005 / 2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
ATSI Male	35	56	59	56	60	61
ATSI Female	28	32	18	17	17	28
Male (non ATSI)	146	145	91	150	139	155
Female (non ATSI)	48	65	42	44	71	51
Total Population	257	298	210	267	287	295

¹ Custody Days – population includes children and young people on remand and committal and accounts for the daily population of children and young people held in Quamby Youth Detention Centre.

1.4 Community Based Orders

	2003 / 2004	2004 / 2005	2005 / 2006	2006 / 2007	2007/2008
Individuals on Community Based Orders	372	314	282	286	293
Bail	522	466	677	717	611
Community Service Orders	63	37	31	25	14
Attendance Centre Orders	6	5	13	19	14
Probation	55	49	49	109	103
Recognizance	105	91	52	6	5
Warrant	53	48	49	42	41
Home Detention	0	3	0	0	0
Number of Orders	809	699	871	918	788

2. SCHEDULE OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND INNOVATIONS

2.1 Bimberi Youth Justice Centre

Bimberi Youth Justice Centre was officially opened by the ACT Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope, and Deputy Chief Minister, Katy Gallagher, on 3 September.

A staged transition of young detainees from Quamby Youth Detention place is anticipated to be completed by the end of November 2008.

The ACT is continuing to explore the potential use of scanning devices in Bimberi, however the ACT Radiation Council has indicated it would be unlikely to approve the use of a Sotar Scanner on juveniles.

Negotiations with Youth Services Programs, which are funded by the Youth Directorate, has resulted in an expansion of the range of programs and services offered to Bimberi residents within existing funding agreements. Three community service organizations have developed a joint proposal for the delivery of life skills programs to residents. These programs will be delivered for 2 hours 2 days each week. In addition PCYC will provide 2 recreational programs each week and the Indigenous Youth Centre, Gugan Gulwyn, in partnership with Ted Noffs, will deliver a drug and alcohol program to residents with Gugan focusing on culture.

2.2 Implementation of Legislation

The *Children and Young People Act 2008* ('the Act') was passed by the ACT Legislative Assembly on 10 September 2008. The Act is being commenced in three stages. The commencement schedule for the parts that relate to youth justice is:

1. 9 September 2008 – the overarching principles and the youth justice principles in the *Children and Young People Act 2008* as well as legislative provisions related to transfers and youth detention commence. These are Chapters 4 – 9 of the Act;
2. 27 October 2008 – legislative provisions in the *Children and Young People Act 2008* related to information sharing, including declaration of a care team, commence. This is Chapter 25 of the Act;
3. 27 February 2009 – provisions applying to children and young people contained in other criminal justice legislation, such as sentencing options and the administration of sentences, will commence. These are in Schedule 1 of the *Children and Young People Act 2008*.

Considerable work was done prior to the first commencement date developing a range of policies and procedures to support compliance with new legislative requirements for the custodial environment. Some of the more significant policies relate to:

- Admission and Classification;
- Behaviour Management;
- Discipline;
- Minimum Living Conditions;
- Search and Seizure;
- Segregation; and
- Treatment of Convicted and Non-Convicted Young detainees.

Each of the 20 policies and procedures has been notified as a Notifiable Instrument.

The Act, Explanatory Statement and associated Notifiable Instruments can be accessed through the ACT Legislation Register at <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/default.asp>

2.3 Recent Initiatives

Service Partnership Agreements

Negotiations have commenced to develop Service Partnership Agreements between ACT Youth Justice and several key service providers to youth justice clients:

- ACT Health;
- ACT Corrective Services;
- The Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT – equivalent to TAFE in other States); and
- The Australian Federal Police.

SAAP V

New youth homelessness initiatives include:

- The establishment of two Youth Housing Officers in ACT Housing's Gateway Services. This initiative acknowledges the need to support young people's tenancies;
- A Transition Flats project which specifically targets youth justice clients, both those already in the community and those exiting from detention. The project is run in partnership between government and community organisations; and
- Provision of brokerage funding for "couch surfing".

3. HUMAN RESOURCE ACHIEVEMENTS AND INITIATIVES

3.1 Recruitment

A substantial recruitment campaign has been undertaken to fill the additional staffing requirements for Bimberi and to reduce the reliance on casual staff. Employment opportunities were advertised through the press and radio and an information booklet developed for potential recruits. Copies of the booklet will be provided at the meeting. Information sessions were conducted at local clubs and throughout the region. A website for recruitment to Bimberi was also established:

<http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/ocyfs/bimberi/Recruitment/vacancies> The recruitment campaign targeted people who may not have had any direct experience of a detention facility, but may have worked with young people in a another capacity.

The result of the recruitment campaign has been that 25 new youth workers have been appointed, and there are no current vacancies. The impact on the whole staff pool has been to increase the number of female employees and the diversity of cultural backgrounds of the staff as well as broadening the range of expertise across the staff group.

Prior to Bimberi becoming fully operational ancillary management and administrative positions will also be filled.

The classification of Community Youth Justice positions and the structure of the unit is under review. Consideration is being given to expanding the range of qualifications that would be suitable prerequisites for case management positions.

3.2 Training of Youth Justice Staff

ACT Youth Justice has entered into a partnership with the Canberra Institute of Technology to conduct the 7 week full time training program for Bimberi Youth Workers. This training equates to 50% of a Certificate IV in Juvenile Justice Studies. Over the next 12 months every effort will be made to encourage the new recruits to complete the Certificate IV through CIT.

Training in the "What Works" research and literature has been delivered to over 50 Youth Justice Staff in collaboration with the Psychology school at the University of Canberra.

Staff have been trained in CHART (Changing Habits and Reaching Targets), a cognitive behavioural program developed by the Victorian Department of Juvenile Justice to address and manage offending behaviour and are using it with medium to high risk young offenders.

3.3 Review of Rosters

The CPSU has been involved in negotiations about a new roster system for Bimberi. Unanimous agreement has been reached to move to a permanent 12 hour roster. This is a very positive outcome for the staffing model for the centre.

4. RESEARCH, REVIEWS AND PUBLICATIONS

4.1 Research

- A doctoral student from the Australian National University, Vanessa Hamilton, is using Youth Justice records to assist her research on "The Relationship between Attachment, Emotion Regulation, Psychopathology and Childhood Maltreatment in Conduct Disordered Young Offenders". This project is anticipated to take at least 2 years.
- The Institute of Child Protection Studies research project *Research into Supporting Outcomes for Young People Transitioning from Youth Detention* has produced a literature review and a progress report. The progress report is based on interviews with young people who have experienced a committal. Each young person was asked to nominate a support person who could also be interviewed. Every young person nominated either a Quamby youth worker or a CYJ case manager as their support person. Key findings from the progress report are:
 - Young people report finding a period of detention as useful in "getting clean" from drugs and alcohol;
 - The majority of young people stated it was important that they received good support when they returned to the community;
 - Young people found training opportunities offered while they were in custody very positive.

4.2 Reviews

The internal audit of Community Youth Justice earlier this year made recommendations along the themes of commonality of practice across the community and custodial youth justice settings, improving data management processes, enhancing practice through use of evidence based approaches and reviewing human resources. Considerable progress has been made in addressing these themes through training of staff, development of forms and templates to facilitate enhanced practice and work on the Youth Justice Policy and Procedures manual.

5. KEY POSITIONS AND CONTACT NUMBERS

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