



Inspector of
Custodial Services

Inspector of Custodial Services

Inspection of Macquarie
Correctional Centre and
Hunter Correctional
Centre



Inspector of Custodial Services

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Contents

Foreword	4
Acknowledgements	5
Glossary of terms and acronyms	6
Executive summary	7
Physical infrastructure, structured day and staffing.....	7
Macquarie Correctional Centre	8
Hunter Correctional Centre	9
Recommendations	11
Macquarie Correctional Centre.....	11
Hunter Correctional Centre	12
Introduction	13
Inspection process.....	13
Dormitory-style correctional centres.....	13
The ‘Rapid Build prisons’	14
Physical infrastructure.....	15
Macquarie Correctional Centre	22
Custody.....	22
Care and wellbeing	26
Rehabilitation	31
Hunter Correctional Centre	36
Custody.....	36
Care and wellbeing	42
Rehabilitation	47

Foreword

This report documents the inaugural inspections of Macquarie Correctional Centre and Hunter Correctional Centre, also known colloquially as the ‘Rapid Builds’. These correctional centres are unique in NSW for their dormitory-style accommodation and this characteristic has resulted in considerable public interest in these facilities. Macquarie and Hunter Correctional Centres were inspected in December 2019 and January 2020 respectively.

The months following these inspections have been dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Macquarie and Hunter Correctional Centres have been identified as locations at high-risk of transmission of COVID-19 due to their dormitory-style accommodation. As a result of the significant aged and frail inmate population at Hunter Correctional Centre, COVID-19 transmission among inmates could result in a number of serious COVID-19 infections. We visited Hunter Correctional Centre in June 2020 and Macquarie Correctional Centre in July 2020 and were pleased to observe that practices had been implemented to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 infections among inmates.

Examining the inspections of Macquarie and Hunter Correctional Centres in the same report provided an opportunity to consider their common features – primarily the physical infrastructure, structured day and staffing profiles – and reflect on their role within the NSW correctional system and the practices that could have broader application. It was not done with the intention of providing or inviting comparison between Macquarie and Hunter Correctional Centres. Each has a very different inmate population, leading me to conclude that comparing the two would be unfair and unhelpful.

Therefore, this report aims to assess Macquarie and Hunter Correctional Centres, independently of one another, against our *Inspection Standards for Adult Custodial Services in New South Wales* and other relevant international guidance. Its findings and recommendations seek to maximise the benefits of a structured day routine that engages inmates in work, programs, education and other purposeful activity and identify areas that could inform approaches to inmate management and wellbeing at other locations.

Fiona Rafter
Inspector of Custodial Services
November 2020

Acknowledgements

The Inspector appreciates the contribution made by the inmates of Macquarie and Hunter Correctional Centres who spoke to the inspection team. The Inspector would also like to acknowledge the assistance and input of Corrective Services NSW, Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network staff and the Corrections Research, Evaluation and Statistics team. The involvement of Official Visitors Chris Bult and Michael Parris is also very much appreciated.

Glossary of terms and acronyms

Aboriginal	'Aboriginal' when used in this report is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
AVL suite	Audio-Visual Link suite for communication between an offender and their legal representative or a court. They can also be used for virtual family and social visits.
CAS Act	<i>Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999</i>
CAS Regulation	<i>Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014</i>
CC	Correctional Centre
the Committee	NSW Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs
COPP	Corrective Services NSW's Custodial Operation Policy and Procedures
CSI	Corrective Services Industries
CSNSW	Corrective Services NSW
EQUIPS programs	Explore, Question, Understand, Investigate, Practice and Succeed programs. There are four EQUIPS programs – EQUIPS Foundation, EQUIPS Addiction, EQUIPS Aggression and EQUIPS Domestic Abuse.
GP	General Practitioner
ICS	Inspector of Custodial Services
IDC	Inmate Development Committee
IPTV	Internet Protocol Television
JH&FMHN	Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network
Mandela Rules	United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners
MPU	Multipurpose Unit
OST	Opioid Substitution Therapy
PBCP	Prison Bed Capacity Program
PRLC	Pre-Release Leave Committee
Rapid Build prisons	Macquarie Correctional Centre and Hunter Correctional Centre
RIT	Risk Intervention Team
SORC	Serious Offenders Review Council
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services

Executive summary

The Inspector of Custodial Services inspected Macquarie Correctional Centre (Macquarie CC) and Hunter Correctional Centre (Hunter CC) in December 2019 and January 2020 respectively. These correctional centres are unique within the NSW correctional system due to their physical layout and structured day routine. Both became operational in early 2018 and are known colloquially as ‘Rapid Build’ prisons due to the speed of their construction, which was in response to a larger than anticipated increase in the NSW prison population.¹ They are the only correctional centres in NSW with dormitory-style accommodation and this feature has resulted in significant public interest. Their operation was previously examined by an inquiry conducted by the NSW Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs.² The Committee found that both Macquarie CC and Hunter CC appeared to be operating effectively and that this was attributable to four features – the structured day, comprehensive security and surveillance systems, high staff levels and the careful selection of inmates.³ The Inspector concurs that these features are crucial to operating safe dormitory-style custodial environments.

International standards such as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Mandela Rules) and the technical guidance of the United Nations Office for Project Services are clear that dormitory-style prisons have inherent security risks. Consequently, there must be careful selection and thorough supervision of prisoners to ensure their safe operation.⁴ The inspection found that the physical infrastructure of Macquarie CC and Hunter CC met the physical standards required by the United Nations. However, given the recognised challenges of safely operating dormitory-style prisons, the Inspector recommends that future estate planning focus on the provision of single-cell and purpose-built double-cell accommodation.

Physical infrastructure, structured day and staffing

Macquarie CC and Hunter CC were modern, clean and well-appointed. The inmates who spoke with the inspection team were generally settled and spoke highly of the opportunities available to them. Extensive electronic surveillance systems enhanced inmate supervision and safety and facilitated movements between different areas. Some aspects of the physical infrastructure were highly valued among inmates, including private bathrooms, access to telephones and Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) kiosks, which enabled inmates to check personal information. A lack of access to telephones and relying on custodial officers for administrative matters is a common source of tension in correctional centres. The strategies applied at Macquarie CC and Hunter CC significantly mitigated these issues and helped combat the effects of institutionalisation, and should be implemented across the NSW correctional system.

The inspection found that there were a number of benefits to the structured day model implemented at Macquarie CC and Hunter CC, although the effectiveness of this varied due in large part to the different inmate populations at each correctional centre. Generally, the structured day was focused on inmate engagement with activities aimed at reducing their risk of reoffending. This was achieved by maximising time out-of-cells (or in this context, dormitories), enabling inmates to spend half a day working and half a day undertaking education or programs while allowing sufficient time for inmates to engage in other activities such as exercise, cooking, reading, art and music. Given the evident benefits of this for inmate rehabilitation,

1 See Don Weatherburn, Simon Corben, Stephanie Ramsey and Jacqueline Fitzgerald, ‘Why Is the NSW Prison Population Still Growing? Another Look at Prison Trends Between 2011 and 2015’ (Crime and Justice Statistics Bureau Brief No 113, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, January 2016).

2 Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs, Parliament of New South Wales, *Parklea Correctional Centre and Other Operational Issues* (Report 38, December 2018) ch 5.

3 Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs, Parliament of New South Wales, *Parklea Correctional Centre and Other Operational Issues* (Report 38, December 2018) 93 [5.76].

4 *United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners*, GA Res 70/175, UN Doc A/RES/70/175 (8 January 2016, adopted 17 December 2015) rule 12(2).

the Inspector recommends that Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) increase the amount of time out-of-cells and introduce a longer structured day routine across the NSW correctional system.

The safe operation of the structured day and of work, education and programs at Macquarie CC and Hunter CC was facilitated by the number of staff and 12-hour shifts for custodial staff. Consequently, the Inspector recommends that the staffing profiles of both correctional centres are maintained and that CSNSW explore implementing 12-hour shifts at other correctional centres.

Macquarie Correctional Centre

At the time of the inspection, Macquarie CC was underutilised and the inspection team was concerned that there were suitable inmates who would benefit from placement at Macquarie CC who had not been identified during the classification and placement process. However, it is imperative that inmates placed in dormitory-style prisons are carefully selected, as provided by the Mandela Rules. The Inspector considers that the classification and placement process needs to be reviewed to identify and place all suitable inmates at Macquarie CC while ensuring that its security and safety is not undermined.

There were concerns about a lack of suitable progression pathways from Macquarie CC to minimum security correctional centres. A number of inmates expressed that moving to a minimum security correctional centre would feel like a backwards step after experiencing the opportunities available at Macquarie CC. Moreover, the Inspector is concerned that failure to provide progression pathways will undermine the significant investment in rehabilitation that is being made at these centres. Appropriate minimum security placements need to be developed in order for inmates at Macquarie CC to experience lower security settings and undertake external leave programs to help prepare for their release into the community. This concern was also observed at Hunter CC and may reflect a system-wide issue regarding the capacity of minimum security correctional centres to offer inmates opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration.

Generally, the inspection team found the staff culture at Macquarie CC to be positive and committed to the goal of inmate rehabilitation. However, the inspection team identified several areas where staff may benefit from additional training. These included the distinction between segregation, separation and confinement to a cell for committing a correctional centre offence, inmate mental health and trauma-informed practice. Given the regional location of Macquarie CC, the delivery of additional training should be facilitated by Brush Farm Corrective Services Academy trainers travelling to the correctional centre or delivering virtual training rather than requiring staff to travel to its campus in Sydney.

The Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (JH&FMHN) services provided at Macquarie CC were generally timely and adequate. The health centre was modern and well-appointed. However, it did not include a dental suite and dental services were provided by the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia Dental Van. At the time of the inspection, the waitlist for dental services was long and the inspection team considered that the provision of dental services at Macquarie CC needed to be increased.

Psychology services provided by CSNSW also needed to be increased. At the time of the inspection there was one Senior Psychologist position and two Psychologist positions. The two Psychologist positions were vacant and reportedly had been vacant since Macquarie CC opened. The Senior Psychologist position was due to become vacant soon after the inspection. The recruitment and retention of psychology staff needs to be prioritised at Macquarie CC.

Macquarie CC had a multicultural inmate population and the inspection team considered that there was scope for improving provision for the needs of particular cultural and religious groups. There was a general perception that Aboriginal inmates disliked the dormitory-style accommodation at Macquarie CC. However, the inspection team felt that additional supports and cultural competence could improve outcomes for Aboriginal men placed at Macquarie CC. Further, contemporaneous commemoration of events of cultural or religious significance, such as Lunar New Year, is important and how this can be achieved needs to be explored with affected inmate groups.

In other areas concerning inmate wellbeing and rehabilitation, Macquarie CC had a well-functioning Inmate Development Committee that appeared to provide an effective forum for inmates and staff to discuss issues that had been raised and ideas for improvement. There were also a range of recreational activities that provided important opportunities for inmates to exercise and pursue pro-social interests. In-person visits from family and friends appeared to work well and were enhanced by their extended length of up to three-and-a-half hours and the presence of a café that enabled families to share food and drink. Programs, education and work were generally functioning well. In particular, the inspection team was impressed with the range of education offerings at Macquarie CC.

Hunter Correctional Centre

Hunter CC only held inmates who had been in protective custody. Consequently, its inmate population consisted of high numbers of aged and frail inmates and inmates convicted of sex offences. Inmates who have been in protective custody still need to be carefully selected for placement in a dormitory-style prison. Inmates should also be carefully placed *within* Hunter CC to reduce the risk of bullying and harassment on the basis of an inmate's rumoured or known offending.

The inspection found there to be a disconnect between the inmate population at Hunter CC and its structured day and available services. The programs, education and work available at Hunter CC were, for a range of reasons, unsuitable for the high proportion of aged and frail inmates and inmates convicted of sex offences placed at Hunter CC. Sex offender programs were not offered due to security concerns and a number of sex offenders were reportedly ineligible or unsuitable for the programs that were on offer. The education offerings did not appear to be compatible with the education levels of the inmate cohort, which were generally higher than the inmate population more broadly. The physical nature of some work opportunities was not appropriate for aged and frail inmates.

Further, the specific needs of this inmate population had not been taken into account in decisions regarding the type and level of JH&FMHN and psychology services at Hunter CC. Staff at Hunter CC reported a high number of hospital escorts, largely driven by the health needs of aged and frail inmates. There was also resistance among inmates to be transferred to Sydney for medical appointments due to fears they would lose their place at Hunter CC. The psychology staffing profile was not resourced to both provide psychology services and complete sex offender risk assessments. The capacity of JH&FMHN and psychology services should be tailored to the needs of Hunter CC's inmate cohort.

CSNSW needs to clarify the purpose of Hunter CC and the placement of inmates should align with this purpose. Programs, education and work opportunities should also align with this purpose and the needs of the inmate population. Should CSNSW determine that Hunter CC is a desirable placement option for aged and frail inmates, appropriate services need to be provided for this cohort. If not, they should be moved to suitable correctional centres as soon as possible. Further, greater guidance is needed on the requirement of aged and frail inmates to attend work. This group should not be expected to undertake work that is beyond their capacity and this should be clear to all relevant staff. While finalising this report, the Inspector was informed that additional beds for aged and frail inmates are planned for the Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre. It is hoped that this development provides greater clarity on how CSNSW intends to manage this growing cohort.

The inspection team observed problematic aspects within the staffing culture at Hunter CC. There was a lack of understanding of the difference between segregation, separation and confinement to a cell for committing a correctional centre offence and a perception that all those placed in the Multipurpose Unit were being punished. There were also tensions between different staffing groups and the approach of some staff toward inmates was unprofessional and disrespectful. This included instances of staff using offensive language toward inmates that were witnessed by the inspection team. Greater stability of personnel in senior management positions at Hunter CC and additional training for custodial staff in areas including respectful interactions and de-escalation is needed to embed a healthy staff culture.

In areas relating to inmate welfare, the inspection team was pleased to observe that there were several staff members who were committed to facilitating cultural support and activities for Aboriginal men placed at Hunter CC. These staff members appeared to have a good working relationship with the Aboriginal delegate and a regular forum had been established by which Aboriginal men could discuss those matters that particularly affected them. The inspection team considered that this was a positive initiative. The inspection team was also pleased that a café similar to that operating at Macquarie CC opened in the visits area following the inspection.

Recommendations

The Inspector recommends:

1. Future estate planning should focus on the provision of single-cell and double-cell accommodation.
2. The installation of IPTV kiosks or similar to enable inmates to check their accounts, visits and other matters should be explored across the NSW correctional system.
3. All correctional centres should provide a ratio of at least one telephone per 20 inmates and ensure inmates have telephone access at times suitable for regular contact with children.
4. Shade cloths should be installed in the oval and activities areas of Macquarie Correctional Centre and Hunter Correctional Centre. Adequate seating should be available in these areas.
5. Macquarie Correctional Centre and Hunter Correctional Centre are equipped with library facilities that comply with the Australian Library and Information Association's *Minimum Standard Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners* and Corrective Services NSW policy.
6. Corrective Services NSW increase time out of cells and introduce a longer structured day across the NSW correctional system.
7. The current staffing profiles of Macquarie Correctional Centre and Hunter Correctional Centre should be maintained.
8. The implementation of 12-hour shifts is considered for other correctional centres.

Macquarie Correctional Centre

9. Progression pathways to minimum security are developed for Macquarie Correctional Centre inmates that provide corresponding opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration.
10. Inmates placed at Macquarie Correctional Centre should be carefully selected.
11. Corrective Services NSW review the process for classifying and placing inmates at Macquarie Correctional Centre to ensure the identification of all suitable inmates.
12. Macquarie Correctional Centre should ensure that strip searching practices comply with Corrective Services NSW policy and introduce body scanners.
13. Macquarie Correctional Centre staff require additional training on the differences between segregation, separation and confinement to a cell for committing a correctional centre offence.
14. Macquarie Correctional Centre provide additional training to staff focused on inmate mental health and trauma-informed practice.
15. Brush Farm Corrective Services Academy deliver staff training in remote or regional locations where required.
16. The availability of dental services at Macquarie Correctional Centre should be increased.
17. The recruitment and retention of psychology staff at Macquarie Correctional Centre should be prioritised.

Hunter Correctional Centre

18. Corrective Services NSW should review the use of Hunter Correctional Centre as a location for aged and frail inmates.
19. Corrective Services NSW needs to clarify the purpose of Hunter Correctional Centre. The classification and placement of inmates to Hunter Correctional Centre should align with this purpose.
20. Progression pathways to minimum security are developed for Hunter Correctional Centre inmates that provide corresponding opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration in an environment suitable for inmates who have placement and association restrictions.
21. Inmates placed at Hunter Correctional Centre should be carefully selected.
22. Hunter Correctional Centre should take the nature of an inmate's offending into account in decisions about dormitory placement to avoid bullying and harassment between inmates.
23. Hunter Correctional Centre should ensure that strip searching practices comply with Corrective Services NSW policy and introduce body scanners.
24. Hunter Correctional Centre staff require additional training on the differences between segregation, separation and confinement to a cell for committing a correctional centre offence.
25. Corrective Services NSW should develop a policy regarding the use of Multipurpose Units in NSW correctional centres.
26. Hunter Correctional Centre requires stability of personnel occupying senior management positions.
27. Custodial staff at Hunter Correctional Centre require further training including on de-escalation, managing vulnerable inmates and respectful interactions with inmates.
28. Hunter Correctional Centre's health centre should be resourced to meet the health needs of its old and frail inmate population.
29. The availability of psychiatric and mental health nurse services at Hunter Correctional Centre should be increased.
30. Resourcing for the completion of sex offender risk assessments needs to be increased and prioritised at locations holding inmates with current sex offence convictions.
31. A play area and toys for children should be provided in the indoor part of Hunter Correctional Centre's visits area. Visitors with children should be consistently seated outdoors where possible.
32. Corrective Services NSW should review the aged and frail inmate policy to provide clarity in relation to the requirement for aged and frail inmates to work.
33. Corrective Services NSW should review the program, education and employment offerings at Hunter Correctional Centre to ensure they reflect its inmate population and overarching goals.
34. The Inspector recommends that this report is made public immediately upon being tabled in NSW Parliament, in accordance with section 16(2) of the *Inspector of Custodial Services Act 2012* (NSW).

Introduction

Inspection process

The office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (ICS) was established by the *Inspector of Custodial Services Act 2012* in October 2013. The mandate of the office is to provide independent scrutiny of the conditions, treatment and outcomes for adults and young people in custody, and to promote excellence in staff professional practice. The Inspector is required to inspect each adult custodial centre at least once every five years and report on each such inspection to the NSW Parliament with relevant advice and recommendations.⁵

Macquarie Correctional Centre (Macquarie CC) was inspected on 3 to 7 December 2019, followed by a liaison visit on 9 July 2020. Hunter Correctional Centre (Hunter CC) was inspected on 19 to 23 January 2020, followed by a liaison visit on 11 June 2020.

The inspections of Macquarie CC and Hunter CC focused on the following areas, as provided in the terms of reference:

- a. custodial conditions, including safety and security
- b. the treatment, care and wellbeing of inmates, including privacy
- c. the rehabilitation of inmates, including programs, education, and preparation for release
- d. reparation through inmate employment, and
- e. resources and systems, including the staffing and management of each correctional centre.

Both inspections were conducted by an inspection team consisting of the Inspector and three Senior Inspection and Research Officers.

Inspection provides independent information gathering and analysis concerning what is working well and which areas require improvement. During each inspection, structured and semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior management and frontline staff, including the Governor, Functional Managers, Manager of Industries, Manager of Offender Services and Programs, Offender Services and Programs staff, Education Services Coordinators and correctional officers. The inspection team also interviewed inmate representatives on the Inmate Development Committees (IDC) of each correctional centre and engaged with inmates individually and in small groups throughout the inspection. In addition to these discussions, the inspection team observed the environment and practices of each correctional centre and collected documentation.

Prior to the inspections, information was obtained from the Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network (JH&FMHN) and Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) concerning the operations of Macquarie CC and Hunter CC.

Dormitory-style correctional centres

The value of dormitory-style prisons that hold large numbers of prisoners in the same room has been the subject of much debate.⁶ International standards concerning imprisonment have contemplated the security risks and loss of privacy inherent in such an environment. These have provided minimum requirements for dormitory-style prisons that aim to maximise prisoner safety and dignity. The inspection team had regard to the following standards and requirements during the inspections of Macquarie CC and Hunter CC.

⁵ *Inspector of Custodial Services Act 2012* s 6.

⁶ See Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs, Parliament of New South Wales, *Parkele Correctional Centre and Other Operational Issues* (Report 38, December 2018) ch 5; James Peguese & Robert Koppel, 'Managing High-Risk Offenders in Prison Dormitory Settings' (2003) 65(4) *Corrections Today* 82; European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, *11th General Report on the CPT's Activities* (Annual Report, 2001) 15–16; Leslie Fairweather, 'Psychological Effects of the Prison Environment' in Leslie Fairweather & Sean McConville (eds) *Prison Architecture: Policy Design and Experience* (Routledge, 2000) 38–9.

Although the use of dormitory-style prisons is contemplated by the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Mandela Rules), they emphasise that staff vigilance and a suitable inmate population are critical elements to ensuring that dormitories are safe and secure environments. The Mandela Rules provide that:

Where dormitories are used, they shall be occupied by prisoners carefully selected as being suitable to associate with one another in those conditions. There shall be regular supervision by night, in keeping with the nature of the prison.⁷

The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment has stated that '[t]here is little to be said in favour of – and a lot to be said against – arrangements under which tens of prisoners live and sleep together in the same dormitory'.⁸ It has highlighted that large-capacity dormitories 'inevitably imply lack of privacy for prisoners in their everyday lives' and that there is a high risk of intimidation and violence among inmates. Further, dormitories may be prone to the development of 'offender subcultures' and facilitate the maintenance of organised criminal networks.⁹ Staff may find it difficult to maintain proper control of the facility and consequently have difficulty avoiding the use of 'considerable force' where a disturbance arises.

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) provides practical guidance on the implementation of the principles of the Mandela Rules. In general, the UNOPS provides that:

A prison should provide safe and secure conditions for prisoners and staff, and a decent quality of life. This depends on the provision of basic living conditions (light, water, sanitation, etc.) for an appropriate number of prisoners in a given physical living space, the necessary regulation and control of movement, and various facilities to provide an effective regime that supports the rehabilitation of prisoners.¹⁰

With respect to dormitory-style prisons, the UNOPS considers that larger dormitories 'may pose a significant control problem in the case of a disturbance' and make it difficult to prevent the spread of disease. Ideally, dormitories should be designed for a maximum capacity of 25 people with more than one toilet, single beds and allowing for 3.4m² per person.¹¹ In addition, indoor spaces should be well lit and ventilated and use bright and calming colour schemes. Where possible, windows should be situated at a height that enables inmates to look outside.¹²

The 'Rapid Build prisons'

Macquarie CC and Hunter CC are known as 'Rapid Build prisons' due to the short period in which they were constructed.

Macquarie CC and Hunter CC were constructed as part of the Prison Bed Capacity Program (PBCP), which was announced by the NSW Government in 2016. The PBCP consisted of \$3.8 billion over four years to increase the operational capacity of the NSW correctional system to address a growth in inmate numbers.¹³ Macquarie CC and Hunter CC comprise around 13% of the increased capacity under the PBCP.¹⁴

7 United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, GA Res 70/175, UN Doc A/RES/70/175 (8 January 2016, adopted 17 December 2015) rule 12(2).

8 European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, *11th General Report on the CPT's Activities* (Annual Report, 2001) 15.

9 European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, *11th General Report on the CPT's Activities* (Annual Report, 2001) 16.

10 United Nations Office for Project Services, *Technical Guidance for Prison Planning* (2016) 18.

11 United Nations Office for Project Services, *Technical Guidance for Prison Planning* (2016) 93.

12 United Nations Office for Project Services, *Technical Guidance for Prison Planning* (2016) 75.

13 See Don Weatherburn, Simon Corben, Stephanie Ramsey and Jacqueline Fitzgerald, 'Why Is the NSW Prison Population Still Growing? Another Look at Prison Trends Between 2011 and 2015' (Crime and Justice Statistics Bureau Brief No 113, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, January 2016).

14 Corrective Services NSW, Submission No 37 to Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs, Parliament of New South Wales, *Parklea Correctional Centre and Other Operational Issues* (16 March 2018) 85 [669].

The construction of both facilities commenced in August 2016. Macquarie CC became fully operational in February 2018 and Hunter CC became fully operational in March 2018. The relative speed of the construction of Macquarie CC and Hunter CC was enabled by the dormitory-style accommodation design (rather than traditional cells), pre-constructed accommodation pods, and their location on the grounds of existing correctional centres.¹⁵ Macquarie CC is located on the grounds of the Wellington Correctional Centre and Hunter CC is located on the same complex as Cessnock Correctional Centre and Shortland Correctional Centre.

The operation of Macquarie CC and Hunter CC were previously examined as part of an inquiry conducted by the NSW Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs (the Committee). The Committee found that both Macquarie CC and Hunter CC appeared to be operating effectively and that this was attributable to four features – the structured day, comprehensive security and surveillance systems, high staff levels and the careful selection of inmates.¹⁶

Physical infrastructure

Dormitories

Macquarie CC and Hunter CC have an almost identical layout. Each correctional centre can hold up to 400 inmates. The inmate accommodation is divided into four blocks (A-block, B-block, C-block and D-block) and each block is split into four dormitories, each of which can hold up to 25 inmates. Every dormitory has 25 cubicles (one inmate per cubicle), a kitchenette, eight private bathrooms (with a shower and a toilet), a courtyard, communal television and seating, and two telephones. Duress alarms are located in each bathroom and each dormitory has eight 'knock-up' intercom pads that allow inmates to communicate with correctional officers staffing the control rooms. A secure, elevated walkway overlooks the dormitories.

Each cubicle is 4.3m² and consists of a bed, an internet protocol television (IPTV) kiosk,¹⁷ a desk and a curtain that can be pulled across its entrance. Each cubicle is separated by a partition that is almost 1.5 metres tall.¹⁸ IPTV kiosks not only provide inmates with television access but also allow inmates to check if they have a visit scheduled as well as their account balance, program and education activity and sentence details. Access to personal information is protected by a pin.

There were a number of obvious drawbacks to the dormitory-style accommodation. The cubicles offer minimal privacy and little protection from noise and light. The inspection team heard that some inmates struggle to adapt to this environment and need their own space. Both Macquarie CC and Hunter CC had implemented measures to try and mitigate the impact of noise and light. Inmates were issued with earphones, earplugs and eye masks in their reception packs, which also included other essentials such as toilet paper, soap, toothbrush and toothpaste. Tarpaulin curtains had been installed to cover the entrance of each cubicle and curtains on the windows were in the process of being installed across all dormitories. However, neurodiverse inmates who experience sensitivity to light and noise, and those with generalised anxiety disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder were identified as groups who may find living in a dormitory particularly difficult.

15 Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs, Parliament of New South Wales, *Parklea Correctional Centre and Other Operational Issues* (Report 38, December 2018) 75 [5.4].

16 Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs, Parliament of New South Wales, *Parklea Correctional Centre and Other Operational Issues* (Report 38, December 2018) 93 [5.76].

17 IPTVs do not provide inmates with internet access and operate using a secure internal network: See Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs, Parliament of New South Wales, *Parklea Correctional Centre and Other Operational Issues* (Report 38, December 2018) 76 [5.5].

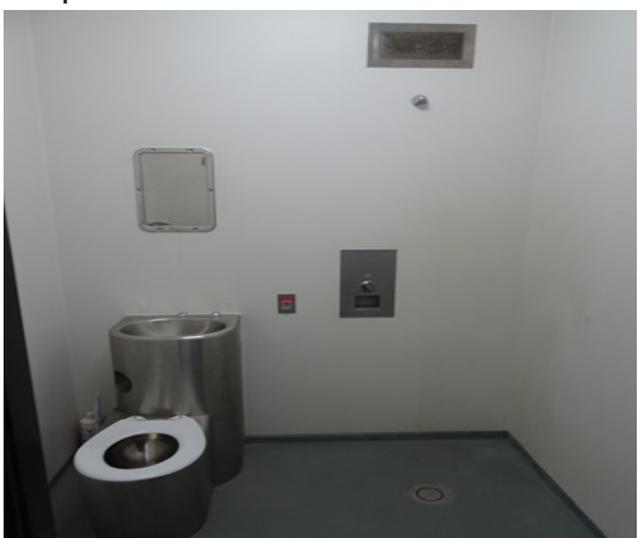
18 Corrective Services NSW, Submission No 37 to Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs, Parliament of New South Wales, *Parklea Correctional Centre and Other Operational Issues* (16 March 2018) 91 [698].



Macquarie CC inmate cubicle



Dormitory common area at Hunter CC



Dormitory bathroom at Macquarie CC



Dormitory kitchenette at Hunter CC

There were also a number of benefits to the physical inmate accommodation at Macquarie CC and Hunter CC. The inspection team observed that the dormitories provided important opportunities for peer support and pro-social interactions between inmates. This included dividing and sharing cooking and cleaning responsibilities, participating in activities together (for example, art and fitness) and providing each other with assistance where needed. This appeared to promote a sense of community.

The lockable bathrooms offered significantly greater privacy than is generally available in shared cell accommodation. To accommodate a sharp increase in the inmate population from 2012 to 2015 in the short-term, CSNSW doubled or tripled the number of beds in a number of cells across the NSW correctional system.¹⁹ This resulted in people sharing a cell designed for one, with open toilets and showers that offer no privacy from another occupant. Open, communal shower blocks are also still commonly found in infrastructure constructed in the 1800s. Consequently, most inmates in NSW will experience a lack of privacy while showering or using a toilet at some point during their time in custody. Regaining that privacy was highly valued by a number of the inmates who spoke to the inspection team. Crowding and sharing cells is also a known safety risk. It is therefore preferable for all inmates in NSW to be accommodated in either single-cell or a purpose-built double-cell accommodation, subject to a risk assessment process, to allow for greater privacy and safety. Although the PBCP has made significant progress in this regard, there is still work to be done.

¹⁹ See Inspector of Custodial Services, *Full House: The Growth of the Inmate Population in NSW* (Report, April 2015) 32; Audit Office of NSW, *Managing Growth in the NSW Prison Population* (Report, 24 May 2019) 10.

The inspection found that both dormitory-style correctional centres met the physical standards recommended by the United Nations. However, given the recognised challenges of safely operating dormitory-style correctional centres, future estate planning should provide for single-cell and purpose-built double-cell accommodation.

Recommendation: Future estate planning should focus on the provision of single-cell and double-cell accommodation.

The IPTV kiosks also provided inmates with a greater level of independence. In addition, at Macquarie CC blank forms for matters such as inmate requests and purchases were provided in the dormitories. At Hunter CC these forms were available at the oval and activities area. Easy access to blank forms and personal information may seem trivial but this encourages inmates to be self-sufficient rather than relying on busy custodial staff, thereby removing a potential source of tension between inmates and staff. It also provides inmates with a reasonable level of autonomy, which can help counteract the institutionalisation that can result from being held in custody.

Recommendation: The installation of IPTV kiosks or similar to enable inmates to check their accounts, visits and other matters should be explored across the NSW correctional system.

The high level of access to telephones was also regarded by inmates as one of the best aspects of being held at Macquarie CC and Hunter CC. The accessibility of telephones was due to the location and number of telephones and the long structured day. Inmates could use the telephones from around 6am in the morning to around 10pm every day. Each phone call could be up to 12 minutes duration, in contrast to other correctional centres where personal calls within Australia are a maximum of 6 minutes and international and legal calls are a maximum of 10 minutes.²⁰ Two telephones were located in each dormitory and there were also telephones in the activities and oval area and near inmate work areas. This exceeds the guide of one telephone per 20 inmates provided in the ICS *Inspection Standards for Adult Custodial Services in New South Wales*.²¹

The hours of telephone access provided inmates and their families and friends with significant flexibility to facilitate contact. Inmates spoke of the significance of being able to talk to their children before or after school, something they would not be able to do at other maximum security correctional centres. Further, this level of telephone access seemed to contribute to the security of Macquarie CC and Hunter CC. It removed a potential source of tension and conflict between inmates in competition for access to the telephone, and it reduced the isolation and frustration that inmates can experience when they cannot stay in contact with family.

Recommendation: All correctional centres should provide a ratio of at least one telephone per 20 inmates and ensure inmates have telephone access at times suitable for regular contact with children.

Other areas

Both Macquarie CC and Hunter CC were clean, well-presented and fit-for-purpose. The design and electronic surveillance systems facilitated efficient movements of groups of inmates and staff to all key areas. The inspection team observed that inmates at both correctional centres maintained their dormitories and common areas to high standards of cleanliness and tidiness. There was minimal graffiti, and high-use areas that are prone to becoming dirty, such as holding cells and communal bathrooms, were found to be clean and well-maintained.

The four accommodation blocks are arranged around a central hub and are connected to this hub by four separate, secure corridors. The central hub contains staff offices, six Audio Visual Link (AVL) suites and holding cells, and a chapel, library and activity rooms for inmate use. Different secure pathways connect the

²⁰ Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 8.2 Inmate Telephones* (version 1.10, 17 June 2020) 9.

²¹ Inspector of Custodial Services, *Inspection Standards for Adult Custodial Services in New South Wales* (May 2020) standard 105.2.

central hub to other areas of the correctional centre, including work locations, the programs and education building, the oval and activities area, the health centre and the visits area.

Macquarie CC and Hunter CC have extensive electronic surveillance systems that are used to monitor the dormitories and other areas, the secure perimeter and manage the movement of staff and inmates around both correctional centres. These are monitored 24 hours a day across two control rooms. These electronic surveillance systems include 360 degree cameras and thermal cameras that enable monitoring at night. All footage is recorded and retained for 31 days.

This level of electronic surveillance is important for the safe operation of dormitory-style prisons. It allows simultaneous monitoring of all areas and the ability to zoom in and view areas from multiple angles provides greater detail than what could be observed by the naked eye. The recording and retention of all footage allows for comprehensive incident reviews to occur. However, this should not diminish the focus on dynamic security, which requires staff to develop working relationships with inmates, be aware of the prison environment and proactive about any potential security risks. Both are necessary for ensuring a safe and secure environment.²²

Both correctional centres also have a Multipurpose Unit (MPU) consisting of 10 single cells. MPUs are used to hold inmates who need to be separated from the general population. Each cell adjoined a secure yard and contained a bed, shower, toilet, sink, desk, shelving and a television.

The programs and education buildings consisted of four interview rooms, a computer room, three big group rooms that could be divided into six smaller group rooms, an empty legal library that was being used as a group room and an art room. There were plans for the programs and education buildings at both locations to be expanded to double their size. Work on this expansion was underway at the time of ICS visits in June and July 2020.

The oval and activities areas in both locations were well-equipped with gym and sporting equipment, open space, showers, toilets and drinking fountains. There were also cubicles allocated for the inmate barbers to cut hair. The amenities in the oval and activities areas were observed by the inspection team to be clean, tidy and well-maintained. However, these areas lacked shade. Both Wellington and Cessnock experience high temperatures in the summer months and inmates use these facilities throughout the day. The inspection team also observed that greater seating and spaces for passive recreation were required at Hunter CC as it was holding a significant number of aged and frail inmates.



Oval and activities area at Macquarie CC



Oval and activities area at Hunter CC

Recommendation: Shade cloths should be installed in the oval and activities areas of Macquarie Correctional Centre and Hunter Correctional Centre. Adequate seating should be available in these areas.

²² Council of Europe, *Trainers' Manual on Dynamic Security* (2018) 14–18.

The inmate library facilities at Macquarie CC and Hunter CC were located in a small room in the central hub. These library spaces were insufficient for the cohorts held in these correctional centres. Although there were adequate books and other reading materials, there was no space for inmates to sit and read. This is incongruent with the overarching rehabilitative goals of both correctional centres.

The Inspector has previously recommended that libraries in correctional centres should operate in accordance with the Australian Library and Information Association's *Minimum Standard Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners*.²³ These guidelines provide that 'library floor space should be large enough to accommodate user activities, staff functions and materials storage and display [...]' including reading areas and inmate computers.²⁴ CSNSW's *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures (COPP)* provide that '[[library services, equipment and materials are to be organised and provided to the recognised professional library standards [...]' including the provision of study spaces, recreational areas and computers within the library.²⁵ Accordingly, the Inspector recommends that additional spaces are provided for the libraries at Macquarie CC and Hunter CC to comply with these standards.

Recommendation: Macquarie Correctional Centre and Hunter Correctional Centre are equipped with library facilities that comply with the Australian Library and Information Association's *Minimum Standard Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners* and Corrective Services NSW policy.



Inmate library at Macquarie CC



Inmate library at Hunter CC

Structured day

Macquarie CC and Hunter CC operated broadly similar structured days. This involved inmates spending most of the day outside their dormitories. Generally, in the morning half of the inmate population would work while the other half attended programs, education or other purposeful activities, such as time at the oval and activities area. After lunch, they switched, and those who worked in the morning attended programs, education and other purposeful activities in the afternoon and vice versa.

On weekdays, inmates woke-up at around 5.30am/6am. Inmates attended work or programs, education and activities until around 11.30am/12pm, when they returned to their dormitories for lunch. After lunch,

23 Inspector of Custodial Services, *Programs, Employment and Education Inspection* (Report, February 2020) recommendation 20; Inspector of Custodial Services, *Full House: The Growth of the Inmate Population in NSW* (Report, April 2015) recommendation 27.

24 Australian Library and Information Association, *Minimum Standard Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners* (December 2015) [6.6].

25 Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 8.4 Inmate Libraries* (version 1.1, 15 March 2019) 8.

inmates attended work or programs, education and activities until around 4.30pm/5pm, when they returned to their dormitories for dinner. From 6pm to 9pm, inmates had rotational access to the library, chapel and other activities located in the central hub.

The Inspector has previously highlighted that limited time out-of-cells and unscheduled lock-downs were 'compromising the benefits of the structured day' at some correctional centres, and having a detrimental impact on inmate participation in work, education and programs.²⁶ This was not an issue that arose during the inspections of Macquarie CC and Hunter CC. In the 12 months from October 2018 to September 2019, there were nine unscheduled lock-downs at Macquarie CC. In the 12 months from November 2018 to October 2019, there were 11 unscheduled lock-downs at Hunter CC.

The benefit of a long structured day that offers a range of activities and minimal lock-downs was evident to the inspection team. Many of the inmates who spoke to the inspection team were settled and engaged, and expressed gratitude for the range of opportunities on offer. The nature of the structured day ensured that inmates were able to balance work, education and programs while also having time to pursue other interests, such as fitness and art. Activities that some maximum security correctional centres struggle to facilitate consistently, such as access to exercise and library facilities, formed part of the structured days of Macquarie CC and Hunter CC. Ensuring that inmates were occupied with purposeful activity was integral to their ordinary operations.

However, it should be noted that a long structured day will not be suitable for all inmates. The inspection team observed that those who are aged and frail or with chronic illnesses struggled with the demands of work, programs and education. As some inmates observed, the day is never over at Macquarie CC and Hunter CC. Between the structured day and the dormitory-style accommodation there are always people around and something taking place. While this may have significant benefits for many inmates, for others this is not an appropriate environment.

The structured day, comprehensive security and surveillance systems, high staff levels and the careful selection of inmates are key to the effective operation of Macquarie CC and Hunter CC. The Committee recommended that these features, as well as the focus on employment and training aimed at equipping inmates for living in the community, remain for the life of these prisons.²⁷ In addition, the Committee considered that the NSW Government should implement the structured day model at Macquarie CC and Hunter CC across the NSW prison system.²⁸ The Inspector agrees and considers that many of the benefits of Macquarie CC and Hunter CC could be achieved in a more traditional correctional environment with thoughtful design and more time out of cells.

There are significant advantages of increasing time out-of-cells and implementing a structured day that accommodates a range of activities focused on inmate rehabilitation. In 2018–19, the average time out-of-cells for prisoners in secure custody in NSW was 7.2 hours per day.²⁹ This was the lowest average time out of cells for secure custody across all Australian jurisdictions. It is imperative that time out-of-cells is increased as a first step to facilitate greater inmate engagement with purposeful activity.

Recommendation: Corrective Services NSW increase time out of cells and introduce a longer structured day across the NSW correctional system.

26 Inspector of Custodial Services, *Programs, Employment and Education Inspection* (Report, February 2020) 86–7.

27 Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs, Parliament of New South Wales, *Parklea Correctional Centre and Other Operational Issues* (Report 38, December 2018) recommendations 5 and 6.

28 Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Legal Affairs, Parliament of New South Wales, *Parklea Correctional Centre and Other Operational Issues* (Report 38, December 2018) recommendation 10.

29 Productivity Commission, *Report on Government Services 2020: 8 Corrective Services* (29 January 2020).

Staffing profile

The staffing profiles of Macquarie CC and Hunter CC are identical and are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Macquarie CC and Hunter CC staffing profile

Area	Role	Number
Custodial	Governor	1
	Functional Managers	6
	Senior Correctional Officers	38
	Correctional Officers	125
Corrective Services Industries (CSI)	Manager of Industries	1
	Manager of Business Unit	2
	Senior Overseer	7
	Overseer	22
Offender Services & Programs (OS&P)	Manager of Offender Services & Programs	1
	Senior Services & Programs Officer	1
	Services & Programs Officer	6
	Senior Psychologist	1
	Psychologist	2
	Education Services Coordinator	1
	Assessment & Planning Officer	1
	Case Managers	9
	Classification Officer	1

Macquarie CC and Hunter CC also have a Business Manager and a number of administrative staff. Immediate Action Teams (IATs) consisting of four correctional officers are onsite for 24 hours a day.

The number of staff at Macquarie CC and Hunter CC are integral to maintaining the safety and security of dormitory-style correctional centres in accordance with international standards. Staff numbers are also important for facilitating the structured day. The Inspector believes it is crucial that staff numbers are maintained.

Custodial staff work 12-hour shifts, with the exception of CSI staff who work eight-hour shifts. This is an exception to the norm of eight-hour shifts in NSW correctional centres. Macquarie CC and Hunter CC custodial staff were generally positive about the improved work-life balance that 12-hour shifts offered. However, there were also high rates of sick leave at both correctional centres. This requires close monitoring by CSNSW to determine whether 12-hour shifts contribute to increased staff sick leave.

A clear benefit of 12-hour shifts is that they enable long out-of-cell hours. Those rostered on to the day shift start at 6am and finish at 6pm, when the night shift commences. This allows for a structured day that spans daylight hours with a full complement of custodial staff.

Recommendation: The current staffing profiles of Macquarie Correctional Centre and Hunter Correctional Centre should be maintained.

Recommendation: The implementation of 12-hour shifts is considered for other correctional centres.

Macquarie Correctional Centre

Macquarie CC was inspected on 3 to 7 December 2019. A subsequent liaison visit was conducted on 9 July 2020.

Custody

Classification and placement

Macquarie CC holds sentenced or remand inmates with A2, E1, B, E2 or C1 security classifications.³⁰ Inmates who progress to a minimum security classification while placed at Macquarie CC may remain there but minimum security inmates cannot be moved to Macquarie CC from other locations. It is also able to hold inmates on methadone or with disability. However, Macquarie CC does *not* hold inmates:

- in protective custody
- with Outlaw Motor Cycle Gang or Organised Criminal Network affiliations
- managed by the High Security Inmate Management Committee or Extreme Threat Inmate Management Committee
- who have been in segregated custody in the previous 12 months
- with a Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (JH&FMHN) alert stating they should not be transferred without psychiatric care
- who require sleep apnoea machines
- who require a single cell.³¹

Macquarie CC may hold up to 75 inmates on remand.³² At the time of the inspection, most inmates at Macquarie CC were sentenced. However, data provided showed that the number of inmates on remand had steadily increased in the months prior to the inspection. In October 2018 there were 15 remand inmates at Macquarie CC. This increased to 39 remand inmates in September 2019 and again to 48 remand inmates at 27 October 2019. According to information provided by Macquarie CC, these are long term remand inmates. Some inmates told the inspection team that they were concerned about Macquarie CC holding remand inmates as they tend to be more unpredictable and less settled.

Macquarie CC also holds a significant number of inmates managed by the Serious Offenders Review Council (SORC).³³ At 27 October 2019, it had 101 SORC inmates (30.2% of Macquarie CC's population) and 55 Pre-Release Leave Committee³⁴ (PRLC) inmates (16.5%). There were also 65 Immigration Release Notification inmates (19.5%). The most serious offence for most inmates was illicit drug offences (120 inmates), followed by homicide or related offences (86 inmates) and acts intended to cause injury (41 inmates).

30 The categories of security classification for male inmates are provided in the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014* cl 12(1).

31 Corrective Services NSW, *Inmate Classification and Placement: CSNSW Placement Guide – Male*, version 1.3.

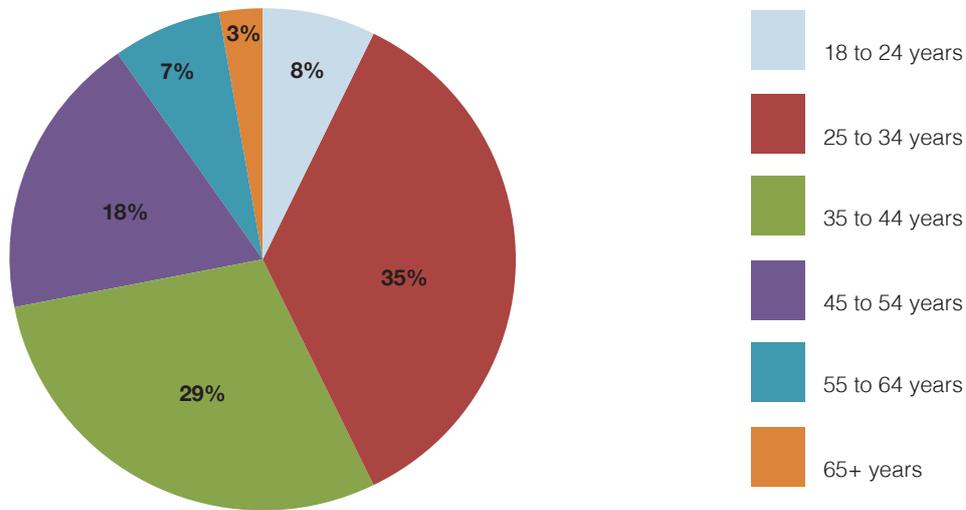
32 Corrective Services NSW, *Inmate Classification and Placement: CSNSW Placement Guide – Male*, version 1.3.

33 The Serious Offenders Review Council provides advice and makes recommendations to the Commissioner of Corrective Services NSW regarding the security classification, placement and program participation of 'serious offenders'. See *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* s 197. A 'serious offender' is defined in the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* s 3 and includes an offender serving a life sentence, who must serve at least 12 years in custody or who is required to be managed as a serious offender due to a decision of the sentencing court, the State Parole Authority or the Commissioner of Corrective Services NSW.

34 The Pre-Release Leave Committee is the division of the Serious Offenders Review Council that manages 'public interest inmates'. A public interest inmate includes one who is serving a custodial sentence for an offence which is the subject of wide public interest or that is specified in the policy: See Corrective Services NSW, *Inmate Classification and Placement: Serious Offenders Review Council (SORC) and Subcommittee Managed Inmates* (version 1.0, 25 October 2019) 19–20.

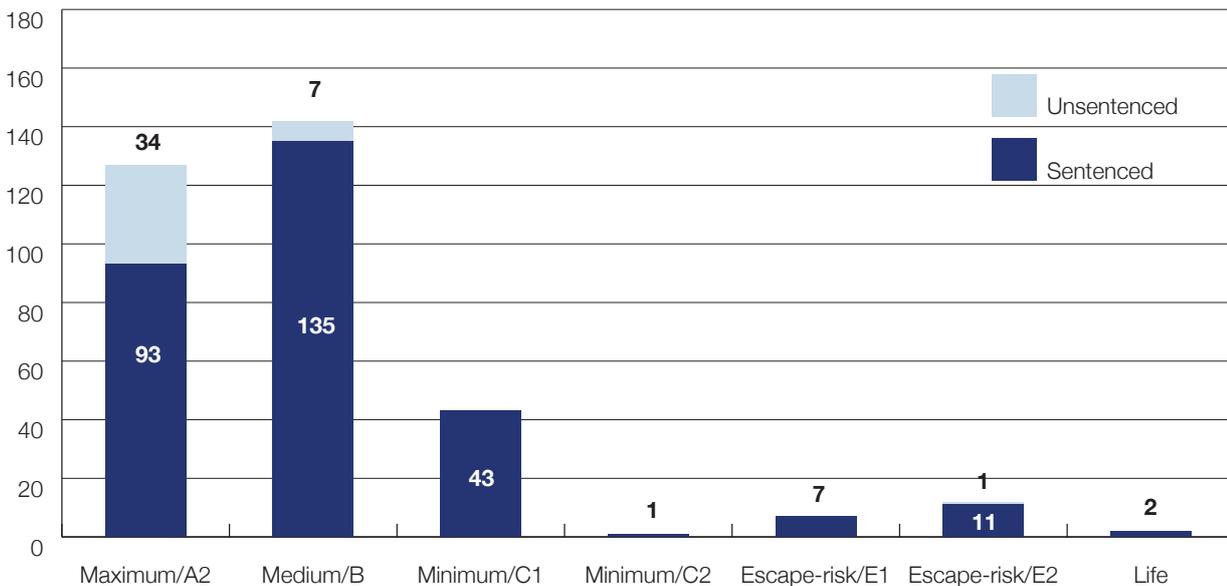
Macquarie CC also has a relatively young inmate population, as indicated in the chart below.

Inmate ages at Macquarie CC at 27 October 2019



Although Macquarie CC is a maximum security correctional centre, most inmates have a medium security classification.

Security classifications at Macquarie CC at 27 October 2019



The 44 inmates with a minimum security (C1 and C2) classification had progressed to that level while at Macquarie CC. Inmates who progress to a minimum security classification are given the option of staying at Macquarie CC or being placed elsewhere. According to staff and inmates at Macquarie CC, most inmates choose to stay. However, when inmates progress from a C1 to a C2 security classification they will be transferred to a different correctional centre.

A number of staff reported that inmates were reluctant to leave Macquarie CC when they progress to a C2 security classification. Inmates told the inspection team that even though this is technically a progression, being placed in a different correctional centre would feel like a regression or a punishment in terms of the conditions and opportunities for purposeful activity. This is problematic because Macquarie CC is a maximum security setting and it is important for inmates, particularly those managed by SORC, to experience lower security environments that can facilitate external leave opportunities to help them prepare for release into the community.

At the time of the inspection, Macquarie CC were focused on developing suitable progression pathways. Some inmates at Macquarie CC were receiving training to prepare them for placement in the Bathurst Correctional Complex Honour House to participate in the Defence Community Dogs Program. Placement at Oberon Correctional Centre as an Adult Nucleus inmate in the Young Adult Offender Program was also an option.³⁵ However, these pathways were only accessible to a small number of inmates. The Inspector considers that CSNSW needs to create minimum security environments with commensurate opportunities to support these inmates in their rehabilitation and reintegration into the community.

Recommendation: Progression pathways to minimum security are developed for Macquarie Correctional Centre inmates that provide corresponding opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration.

At the time of the inspection, Macquarie CC was holding 315 inmates and had 85 vacancies. This underutilisation was not a new problem. Data provided by CSNSW showed that at 27 October 2019 there were 334 inmates at Macquarie CC. The inspection team heard that these vacancies increase Macquarie CC's operational costs, which at the time were approximately \$225 per inmate per day.

It is critical that care is taken in selecting inmates for placement at Macquarie CC. This is consistent with the Mandela Rules and essential for maintaining safety and security in dormitory-style prisons. Inmates must have demonstrated good institutional conduct and motivation for self-development.

At the time of the inspection there were 12,496 men held in NSW correctional centres, 8,567 of who were sentenced.³⁶ In this context, the inspection team was concerned that there were a number of inmates suitable for placement at Macquarie CC and who would benefit greatly from its offerings but had not been identified during the classification and placement process.

Recommendation: Inmates placed at Macquarie Correctional Centre should be carefully selected.

Recommendation: Corrective Services NSW review the process for classifying and placing inmates at Macquarie Correctional Centre to ensure the identification of all suitable inmates.

Security

Macquarie CC was generally regarded by staff and inmates as a safe correctional environment in which relatively few incidents occurred. The inspection team heard that there was a strict 'no violence' policy and it was well-known among inmates that any violent behaviour would result in them being moved to a different correctional centre. A number of people felt that the risk of losing the opportunities available at Macquarie CC encouraged good institutional conduct.

Prior to the inspection, Macquarie CC had experienced few incidents compared with other maximum security correctional centres. At 8 November 2019, there had been no serious incidents (death in custody, riot or disturbance, serious fire, serious assault, escape or serious security breach) at Macquarie CC. In the 12 months from October 2018 to September 2019, there was one assault of a staff member, which occurred in October 2018, and 35 inmate-on-inmate assaults. During this period there were 302 breaches of correctional centre regulations. Of these, 134 (44.4%) were drug related offences, 67 (22.2%) were charges against good order and 43 (14.2%) related to fighting or assault. There were five uses of force.

Among the inmates and staff who spoke to the inspection team, drug and alcohol use was considered to be less prevalent at Macquarie CC than some other correctional centres. The drug of most concern among staff was Buprenorphine. This was confirmed by the data obtained from CSNSW which showed that in the 12 months from October 2018 to September 2019, there were 83 discoveries of contraband drugs, 48 of which were Buprenorphine and 17 were tobacco. There were also 51 urinalysis tests that returned a laboratory confirmed positive result for drugs, 43 of which detected Buprenorphine.

³⁵ Adult Nucleus inmates provide Young Adult Offender Program participants with assistance and support while they undertake that program.

³⁶ Corrective Services NSW, *Offender Population Report* (8 December 2019) 2.

Searches are used to deter and prevent the entry of contraband into correctional centres. The COPP provides that all maximum and medium security classified inmates should be searched after a visit.³⁷ It also provides that strip searches 'must be conducted with due regard to dignity and respect' and 'must be conducted in a place away from the public view and from those not directly involved in the search including [...] other inmates'.³⁸ The inspection team heard that multiple inmates were strip searched at a time, in the same room, after visits with family and friends. This practice is inconsistent with the policy and has no regard to the dignity of inmates. It should be stopped. This is the same practice we identified at Hunter CC and may indicate a broader systemic issue with compliance with strip searching procedures. The introduction of body scanners at Macquarie CC and Hunter CC would make strip searches after visits redundant.

Recommendation: Macquarie Correctional Centre should ensure that strip searching practices comply with Corrective Services NSW policy and introduce body scanners.

Multipurpose Unit

MPUs are used to hold inmates who need to be separated from the general inmate population. In a traditional correctional centre such separation may also be achieved by confining that person to their cell. However, this is not an option at Macquarie CC due to the dormitory-style accommodation and therefore the MPU is used for anyone who, for whatever reason, cannot remain in a dormitory. Separation from the general population may be required for a range of reasons, including where an inmate:

- is subject to segregation under section 10 of the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* (CAS Act)
- is subject to confinement to a cell order under section 53(1)(c) or section 56(1)(c) of the CAS Act
- is being held separately from other inmates for 'the purposes of the care, control or management of the inmate ...' under section 78A of the CAS Act
- needs to enter protective custody
- is being moved to another correctional centre.

A total of 69 segregation periods commenced at Macquarie CC in the 12 months from October 2018 to September 2019.

At the time of the inspection, four inmates were being held in the MPU. One inmate was the subject of a three month segregation order, one was the subject of a 14 day segregation order and two were confined to a cell for seven days after being involved in a fight. One of the inmates in the MPU had been temporarily transferred to Macquarie CC from another correctional centre after allegedly assaulting a staff member. During the inspection, one inmate was moved from the MPU to an observation cell in the health centre after threatening self-harm. This inmate had significant mental health problems. He was known to be concealing a weapon and disarming him required force to be used. Members of the inspection team observed this movement via surveillance cameras and considered that it was undertaken professionally with the minimum amount of force necessary under the circumstances, although it was evident that some officers lacked experience in these areas. Although the move and use of force were handled well, generally correctional officers appeared to be ill-equipped to manage an inmate with poor mental health.

The inspection team observed that some custodial officers did not have a clear understanding of the different reasons a person may be confined to the MPU, particularly the distinction between segregation and confinement to a cell as a punishment for committing a correctional centre offence. Segregation orders should be used for ensuring the safety of another person, the security or the good order and discipline of the correctional centre. Being placed on a segregation order is not a punishment and understanding the range of circumstances that can result in a segregation order is necessary for ensuring these inmates are effectively managed by staff.

³⁷ Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 17.1 Searching Inmates* (version 1.7, 20 July 2020) 11, 16.

³⁸ Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 17.1 Searching Inmates* (version 1.7, 20 July 2020) 11–12.

Recommendation: Macquarie Correctional Centre staff require additional training on the differences between segregation, separation and confinement to a cell for committing a correctional centre offence.

Organisational environment

Generally, the inspection team found staff at Macquarie CC to be open and helpful and observed respectful interactions between staff and inmates. The inmates who spoke to the inspection team considered that many of the custodial staff were committed to the culture of Macquarie CC as a correctional centre focused on the rehabilitation of inmates. Different staffing groups also reported having good relationships with each other. Non-custodial staff generally reported feeling supported in their work by custodial staff and that their access to inmates was facilitated by custodial staff.

However, the inspection team observed that some staff did not have a strong understanding that the reason Macquarie CC operates differently to other correctional centres is to provide conditions and activities aimed at reducing reoffending, confusing this with inmates having a lot of 'privileges'. The inspection team also heard some instances of unprofessional language, such as a reference to the MPU as 'the pound', which reflects the perception that segregation and placement in the MPU is a punishment. Consequently, although Macquarie CC had a generally positive staffing culture, the inspection team considered that staff would benefit from additional training that reinforces Macquarie CC's philosophy. This could include training on inmate mental health, trauma informed practice and effective communication and de-escalation, which some staff felt would be valuable.

At the time of the inspection, all custodial staff had completed approximately 95% of their mandatory training. A small number of staff were yet to complete baton re-certification and professional boundaries training. Providing additional staff training was identified by senior staff as a challenge as 12-hour shifts can make it difficult to schedule a day for training. Although staff have the option of trading days off in order to attend training, these arrangements can be made only for the training to be cancelled, for example due to trainer unavailability. The inspection team were advised that although there was a qualified trainer working at Macquarie CC, Brush Farm Corrective Services Academy (Brush Farm) required staff to travel to its campus in Sydney for training.

CSNSW has advised that there are opportunities for correctional centres in remote or regional locations to receive onsite or virtual face-to-face training upon request, when a particular training need is identified by the correctional centre. Primary training courses for new recruits are scheduled in regional locations throughout the year and nearby correctional centres may request additional training to be delivered onsite. Professional development opportunities may also be accessed through online courses and workshops.³⁹

Recommendation: Macquarie Correctional Centre provide additional training to staff focused on inmate mental health and trauma-informed practice.

Recommendation: Brush Farm Corrective Services Academy deliver staff training in remote or regional locations where required.

Care and wellbeing

Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network services

Macquarie CC's health centre was modern and well-appointed, consisting of several consulting rooms, a pharmacy where medications were packed for distribution and telehealth facilities. It was open seven days per week from 7am to 8pm, split across a morning and afternoon shift during which it was staffed by one Registered Nurse and one Enrolled Nurse. On weekdays it was also staffed by a Nurse Unit Manager and a Ward Clerk. A General Practitioner (GP) attended the health centre for two days once every three weeks, and saw around 16 to 20 patients per day. An optometrist also attended Macquarie CC around three to four times per year.

³⁹ Information provided by Corrective Services NSW on 2 November 2020.



Telehealth facility



Health centre treatment room

Inmates at Macquarie CC were able to access health services by completing a self-referral form lodged in a secure box. Health centre staff would then use the information in this form to triage those seeking assistance. Alternatively, inmates at Macquarie CC also had access to what was described as a ‘drop-in’ health centre conducted on weekends. Inmates would put their names on the list to attend the drop-in health centre and would be seen accordingly. Those not seen during the weekend would be given an appointment to go to the health centre during the following week. Staff reported that this initiative reduced the number of self-referral forms and the number of people presenting as unwell before work.

A number of health services at Macquarie CC were provided by staff based at Wellington Correctional Centre. Wellington Correctional Centre’s population health nurse attended Macquarie CC’s health centre once a week. Its drug and alcohol nurse and mental health nurse also serviced Macquarie CC however both positions were vacant at the time of the inspection. Wellington Correctional Centre’s Aboriginal Health Worker also serviced Macquarie CC. A fortnightly radiology service and a six-weekly denture clinic for Macquarie CC inmates were also conducted at Wellington Correctional Centre. Radiology services were also provided at Wellington Hospital or Dubbo Base Hospital.

Psychiatry and mental health nursing services were provided to inmates at Macquarie CC by JH&FMHN telehealth facilities. The health centre typically facilitated telehealth consultations with a psychiatrist around once a month. At the time of the inspection, 12 inmates were waiting to see a psychiatrist. Inmates had been on this list for periods ranging from 32 to 300 days. A telehealth session with a mental health nurse was also conducted around once a week.

The Macquarie CC health centre had two observation cells used for self-harm prevention and medical observation, as deemed necessary by JH&FMHN staff and staff on the Risk Intervention Team (RIT).⁴⁰ At 27 October 2019, there were 60 inmates with a mandatory notification and being managed by a RIT⁴¹ and 16 inmates with a recorded history of mental illness. In the 12 months from October 2018 to September 2019 there were six acts of self-harm. No acts of self-harm were recorded from April to September 2019.

At the time of the inspection, there were approximately 27 inmates receiving Opiate Substitution Therapy (OST). Methadone and Suboxone were distributed daily from the pharmacy located in the central hub, and in the MPU where necessary. Other medications were also distributed to inmates from the central hub pharmacy.

40 A Risk Intervention Team (RIT) consists of a RIT Coordinator (a custodial officer of Senior Correctional Officer rank or above who is designated by the Governor), a JH&FMHN staff member, and an Offender Services and Programs staff member. See *Corrective Services NSW, Custodial Operations Policy and Procedure – 3.7 Management of Inmates at Risk of Self-harm or Suicide* (version 1.2, 12 March 2020) 18.

41 A mandatory notification identifies inmates considered to be at risk of suicide or self-harm. An inmate support plan (ISP) must be developed for all inmates subject to a mandatory notification. The ISP should provide for the management of at-risk inmates following the principle of least restrictive care. A Risk Intervention Team (RIT) is convened to undertake ongoing assessments of the inmate’s risk of suicide or self-harm and develop a RIT management plan, which considers the implementation of matters detailed in the ISP. See *Corrective Services NSW, Custodial Operations Policy and Procedure – 3.7 Management of Inmates at Risk of Self-harm or Suicide* (version 1.2, 12 March 2020).

Both inmates and staff reported that Macquarie CC inmates had limited access to dental services. The Macquarie CC health centre does not include a dental suite and inmates must call a dedicated phone line to be placed on a waitlist to see a dentist.⁴² The inspection team was informed that the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia Dental Van attended Macquarie CC once per month for three days at a time, seeing approximately eight to 10 patients per day. However, at the time of the inspection there were around 130 to 140 inmates at Macquarie CC on the waitlist for dental services and this level of service was reported to be insufficient to provide that many people with timely access to dental care. JH&FMHN has advised that in November 2020 two dental clinics per month were being delivered by the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia at Macquarie CC, 107 inmates were on the waitlist for dental services and waiting times were comparable to other rural locations.⁴³

Recommendation: The availability of dental services at Macquarie Correctional Centre should be increased.

Psychology services

Psychology services in NSW correctional centres are managed by CSNSW's Offender Management and Programs branch. Macquarie CC had positions for one Senior Psychologist and two Psychologists. At the time of the inspection, both Psychologist positions were vacant and had been vacant since Macquarie CC opened in January 2018. In addition, the Senior Psychologist had recently announced she was leaving the role to take up a different position. Information provided by Macquarie CC before the inspection indicated that most (if not all) inmates with a psychology referral had been seen. There had been approximately 1,553 contact and non-contact occasions of service provided by psychologists in the 12 months from 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019.

Recommendation: The recruitment and retention of psychology staff at Macquarie Correctional Centre should be prioritised.

Inmate Development Committee

The IDC met on the third Thursday of every month. Each dormitory had an inmate representative but the IDC was constituted of one inmate representative from each accommodation block. Inmate representatives decide among themselves which of the four dormitory representatives will represent each block. The IDC also included an Aboriginal delegate.

IDC meetings were attended by the Macquarie CC's management staff, including the Governor; the Functional Managers of Accommodation, Classification, Intelligence, Security, and Structured Day; Manager of Industries; Manager of Offender Services and Programs; Education Services Coordinator; Business Manager; and the Nurse Unit Manager. One inmate was responsible for creating the agenda and completing the minutes. The agenda included new issues raised by inmates using forms that were circulated around each dormitory. The meeting minutes were displayed in each dormitory after being reviewed and approved by the Governor.

Inmates were able to buy eggs and meat and they knowingly paid inflated prices for these items. The profit was saved to be spent on amenities for inmates and Macquarie CC. Money that is not spent goes into consolidated revenue at the end of the financial year. This fund was managed through the IDC process with inmates determining how the money should be spent. Whilst the notion of encouraging self-responsibility is supported, it did raise some concerns as to why inmates were required to self-fund items such as exercise equipment and cubicle shelving that should arguably be provided by the State.

42 The Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network has a Service Level Agreement in place with the Royal Flying Doctor Service to provide dental services to Macquarie CC as a dental suite was not supported by Corrective Services NSW during the construction of Macquarie CC. Patients call the dental hotline, are triaged and placed on a waiting list according to their symptoms via the electronic Oral Health system, Titanium. This process is consistent for all public dental services in NSW and in custody as per the NSW Health Policy Directive PD2017_023 NSW Health Priority Oral Health Program: Information provided by the Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network on 3 November 2020.

43 Information provided by the Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network on 3 November 2020.

The inspection team met with a number of inmate representatives on the first day of the inspection. Most reported having been IDC representatives for over 12 months. They considered that the IDC meetings at Macquarie CC worked well and staff listened to their concerns and input. The inspection team was provided with meeting minutes from October 2018 to September 2019. These minutes indicated that nine IDC meetings had taken place over this 12 month period with meetings apparently not taking place in December 2018 and April and June 2019. Recurring issues raised at the IDC meetings in the months prior to the inspection included the lack of distance education opportunities, shelving in the cubicles for storage, curtains for the dormitory windows and legal computers and resources.

Religious, spiritual & cultural needs

Macquarie CC had a low proportion of Aboriginal inmates compared with other correctional centres in NSW. At 27 October 2019, there were 47 Aboriginal men held at Macquarie CC, comprising 14.1% of the inmate population. There appeared to be a perception among some staff that Aboriginal men disliked Macquarie CC's dormitory-style accommodation and long structured day.

The inspection team considered that the cultural competence of staff and the cultural support provided to Aboriginal inmates at Macquarie CC could be improved. For example, Aboriginal inmates were supposed to meet once per month for a yarning circle, but the inspection team heard that this had not occurred in the months prior to the inspection. It also appeared that the Aboriginal delegate had difficulty speaking with Aboriginal men in different accommodation blocks. There was also a perception that Aboriginal inmates were treated more harshly than non-Aboriginal inmates. The institutionalisation that may result from long or repeated periods of incarceration should also be acknowledged. Greater cultural competence and supports may lead to improved outcomes. Additional supports for Aboriginal men at Macquarie CC should be developed in consultation with CSNSW's Aboriginal Strategy and Policy Unit, the Aboriginal delegate and other Aboriginal men placed at Macquarie CC.

Macquarie CC had a multicultural inmate population. At 27 October 2019, most inmates at Macquarie CC were born in Australia (179 or 53.6%), followed by China⁴⁴ (19), Vietnam (14), Hong Kong (10), Iran (7) and Lebanon (7). Most inmates reported speaking English at home (224 or 67.1%), followed by Chinese/Cantonese/Mandarin (40 or 12%), Vietnamese (19 or 5.7%) and Arabic (12 or 3.6%).

The inspection team heard that bilingual/multilingual inmates were used as informal interpreters for inmates who could not speak fluent English. This practice is inappropriate, particularly in circumstances that may require the disclosure of sensitive or personal information. An interpreting and translating service should be used by staff wherever possible when communicating with inmates who cannot understand or speak fluent English.

The COPP provides that CSNSW is 'committed to ensuring inmates are able to practise their religion and to celebrate significant religious and cultural events while in custody, having due regard to the effective functioning and security of correctional centres'.⁴⁵ Lunar New Year and the Moon Mid-Autumn festival are included among CSNSW's approved days of cultural significance.⁴⁶ The catering and celebration of cultural or religious events is at the discretion of the Governor.⁴⁷

The inspection team heard that Macquarie CC had implemented a 'multicultural buy-up' list in lieu of a special buy-up list for specific events of cultural or religious significance. This multicultural buy-up list was reported to have previously raised around \$5,000 for a local Men's Shed. This approach was taken to ensure that all inmates, irrespective of their religious or cultural background, could purchase items from this buy-up list. However, the periodic basis on which these items are available to inmates does not always coincide with events of cultural or religious significance. Macquarie CC, in consultation with affected inmates, should consider how to ensure events of cultural or religious significance could be contemporaneously commemorated.

44 This figure does not include people from semi-autonomous regions such as Hong Kong and Taiwan.

45 Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 11.2 Religious and Cultural Services* (version 1.1, 12 March 2020) 4.

46 Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 11.2 Religious and Cultural Services* (version 1.1, 12 March 2020) 7.

47 Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 11.2 Religious and Cultural Services* (version 1.1, 12 March 2020) 8.

At 27 October 2019 the largest recorded religious group at Macquarie CC was Muslim (54 inmates), followed by Christianity (30 inmates). The chapel at Macquarie CC was multi-faith and facilitated Friday, or Jummah, prayers, for Muslim inmates. However, at the time of the inspection it was reported that a Muslim chaplain had not been attending Macquarie CC. The inspection team was pleased that, when raised, this issue was addressed promptly.

Access to family and friends

Access to family and friends via the telephone and in-person visits was reported by inmates to be among the strengths of Macquarie CC. At the time of the inspection, Macquarie CC offered inmates extended in-person visits with family and friends. Visits took place on weekends across four time slots. A visit could last for up to three-and-a-half hours, although it could end earlier if a visitor needed to use a bathroom or the inmate needed to move from their allocated seat.

To book a visit, visitors called a dedicated phone line on the Monday to Wednesday (or Tuesday to Thursday where the Monday is a public holiday) prior to the proposed visit. Generally, visitors could only book one visit per day. However, booking into both sessions on the same day may be permitted depending on the circumstances and availability. The inspection team were informed that some visitors travelled on the Saturday morning and visited on the Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning before returning home.

Up to 29 inmates could be visited during a session. The visits area had a capacity of 121 people and each inmate was allowed up to four adult visitors and a number of children considered manageable by staff. The visits area was equipped with an inmate-run café from which visitors could purchase food and drinks. There were tables both inside and outside. The walls featured artworks and there was an outdoor soft play area for children. In addition, there were seven spaces for inmates to have non-contact visits.

Two members of the inspection team attended Macquarie CC on a Saturday to observe the first visits session of the weekend. Conversations with visitors revealed that a number had travelled considerable distances to attend the visit. They told the inspection team that staff were generally respectful and they compared the process of visiting inmates at Macquarie CC favourably to other correctional centres, noting the café and extended visit sessions as particularly positive aspects of Macquarie CC. Given the distances travelled by some visitors, the inspection team also considered the extended visit sessions, willingness to facilitate multiple visits where possible and the amenity for visitors in the café to be highly beneficial initiatives that should be continued.

At 27 October 2019, 54 (16.2%) inmates at Macquarie CC had not received a family visit in over 12 months. For some, this may be a consequence of the location of Macquarie CC and its distance from the families of some inmates. Inmates had access to family visits via AVL once a month.⁴⁸ However, families residing in NSW were required to attend a site listed on the Family Video Contact Application form. It was observed by one inmate that for some people this is not necessarily more convenient than attending an in-person visit.



Visits area café



Visits area

⁴⁸ Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedure – 8.10 Family Video Contact* (version 1.1, 12 March 2020) 4.

Recreation

Macquarie CC had a range of recreational activities for inmates. Inmates had access to the oval and activities area for around one-and-a-half to two hours at least once per day according to a schedule that allocated times for each accommodation block. This area was equipped with gym and sporting equipment and inmates had the opportunity to participate in sporting competitions including touch football, soccer and cricket.

Inmates also had access to the library, multi-faith area and other activities in the central hub at least once per day. Each dormitory had board games and guitars and a yard with some exercise and sporting equipment. The yards adjoining the dormitories could be accessed from 6am until 9pm. Macquarie CC also facilitated an inmate band and choir. Inmates could undertake additional classes in art, music, language and craft. The inmate-staffed café in the visits area was also a source of pro-social activity for inmates. Inmates were able to purchase food from the café once per month and the inspection team observed a group of inmates enjoying their monthly meal from the café together.

Rehabilitation

At 27 October 2019, most inmates at Macquarie CC were aged 25 to 34 years (118 or 35.3%), followed by 35 to 44 years (98 or 29.3%). Although many inmates at Macquarie CC had committed serious offences and were serving long sentences of imprisonment, this young age profile suggested that many will also be released into the community. Therefore, the importance of preparing these inmates for release through participation in work, education, programs and other activities cannot be overstated.

The inspection team were impressed with the level and variety of opportunities for inmates at Macquarie CC. This was due in no small part to staff who understood the value of engaging inmates in purposeful activity. Macquarie CC had successfully implemented an ambitious structured day model that balanced half a day of work and half a day at programs or education while providing inmates with sufficient time for exercise, family contact, cooking and other activities that aligned with their interests. This level of engagement had a positive impact on the mood of Macquarie CC and the general wellbeing of inmates.

Case management

At 30 September 2019, 293 inmates at Macquarie CC had a completed case plan. The inspection team was informed that at the time of the inspection all eligible inmates had a case plan (this did not include inmates on remand or with sentences of less than three months). Case management at Macquarie CC was undertaken by a team consisting of a Functional Manager, two Senior Case Managers and seven Case Managers. At the time of the inspection one Senior Case Manager and two Case Manager positions were vacant.

Programs

The team responsible for delivering programs at Macquarie CC consisted of a Manager of Offender Services and Programs, a Senior Services and Programs Officer and six Services and Programs Officers.⁴⁹ Table 2 details the programs that were offered at Macquarie CC during 2019, at 27 October 2019.

⁴⁹ One position was vacant at the time of inspection.

Table 2: Number of inmates who participated in a program at Macquarie CC in 2019 at 27 October 2019

Program	Participants
Addictions Support Group	182
Dads and Family	22
EQUIPS ⁵⁰ Foundation	124
EQUIPS Addiction	173
EQUIPS Aggression	76
EQUIPS Domestic Abuse	23
Young Adult Satellite Program	75
NEXUS	225
Health Survival Tips	510

Additional EQUIPS Foundation and Addiction programs were scheduled for the remainder of 2019.

In 2018–19, Macquarie CC had a target to deliver 30 programs and 21 programs were delivered. In 2019–20, this target was reduced to 15 programs and 9 programs had been delivered at the time of the inspection. It was believed that Macquarie CC would likely exceed this target by the end of the financial year.

Generally, programs at Macquarie CC appeared to work well. The inspection team heard that it was rare for a program session to be cancelled or rescheduled due to a disturbance or an unscheduled lock-down. The biggest issue was finding sufficient space and it was believed that this would be resolved by the expansion of the programs and education building.

Education

Education staff at Macquarie CC consisted of an Education Services Coordinator and an Assessment and Planning Officer.

Education staff were responsible for meeting a KPI of completing 500 Core Skills Assessments per year. The inspection team considered this to be incompatible with a correctional centre population accommodating a small proportion of remand inmates. The majority of inmates had completed their Core Skills Assessment before arriving at Macquarie CC.

Table 3 details the education that was offered at Macquarie CC in the 12 months from October 2018 to September 2019.

⁵⁰ EQUIPS is an acronym for the Explore, Question, Understand, Investigate, Practice and Succeed programs.

Table 3: Education classes offered at Macquarie CC from October 2018 to September 2019

Education type	Courses offered
Foundation Skills Programs	Literacy, Language and Numeracy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level 1-CSWE - Level 1 - Level 2
Vocational Training Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Animal Studies (Certificate II) - Automotive – Detailing (Certificate II) - Automotive – Panel (Certificate II) - Business (Certificate II & Certificate III) - Cleaning Operations (Certificate III) - Construction – Carpentry (Certificate II) - Fitness (Certificate III) - Horticulture (Certificate II) - Hospitality (Certificate II & Certificate III) - Outdoor Power Equipment (Certificate II)
Skillsets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statement of Attainment – Carpentry - Statement of Attainment – Spray Paint
Workplace Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First Aid - Food Safety - White Card (CIC)
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English - Music - Art - National Rugby League refereeing

Macquarie CC was also facilitating peer-led education classes on weekends. For example, two inmates employed as artists at Macquarie CC were teaching art to a group of 10 inmates. Four inmates who had been delivering these classes had enrolled in, but not yet commenced, a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment to gain a teaching qualification. The inspection team considered this to be a positive and pro-social initiative that offered opportunities for inmates to share interests and to learn skills beyond typical educational offerings.

The relationships between Macquarie CC and local BSI Learning trainers (who delivered Foundation Skills Programs) and TAFE trainers (who delivered vocational and workplace training and skillsets) appeared to be productive and Macquarie CC as a whole seemed supportive of inmate education initiatives, particularly the Manager of Industries.

One of the limitations on the educational offerings at Macquarie CC was a lack of computers. There was one computer room in the programs and education building that was used for the Business (Certificate II & Certificate III) classes, which ran for five days per week. This meant that, at the time of the inspection, Macquarie CC had not been delivering Digital Literacy classes and was having difficulty facilitating an Accounting (Certificate III) course that two inmates were due to commence. There had previously been a computer room in the central hub area but a security issue resulted in these computers being removed and a technical issue was delaying their reinstallation.

Another limitation was a lack of distance education. The inspection team heard from inmates and staff that when Macquarie CC opened undertakings had been made about the availability of distance education that had yet to be fulfilled.

It was evident to the inspection team that there was a disconnect between the framework for providing education created through CSI Education and the particular needs of Macquarie CC. Many of the educational initiatives that impressed the inspection team were supported by Macquarie CC rather than CSI Education. It seemed this more expansive offering was necessary to support Macquarie CC's structured day and enhance inmate engagement.



Art room



Education room

Employment

CSI Business Units at Macquarie CC operated on a model of two shifts per day. Inmates in A- and D-blocks attended work in the morning and inmates in B- and C-blocks attended work in the afternoon. The exceptions to this routine were the laundry which had only one shift in the mornings, the café and Centre Services (which included ground maintenance and hygiene services). Table 4 details the work and number of positions available to inmates.

Table 4: Work opportunities and number of inmate employees at Macquarie CC

Industry	Employees	Work
Heavy Engineering	90 (45 per shift)	Produced agricultural stock equipment for an external customer. Also cell desks and security gates for CSNSW.
Light Engineering	90 (45 per shift)	Produced cell door hatches, cell desks and yard walls for CSNSW.
Furniture	60 (30 per shift)	Produced cabinets and performed joinery work for an external customer. Also work stations for CSNSW.
Food Services	30 (15 per shift)	Made inmate lunches and rethermalised frozen evening meals.
Facilities Maintenance	20 (15 per shift)	Provided preventative and corrective maintenance to Macquarie CC.
Laundry	15 (1 shift only)	Laundered the clothing and bedding of Macquarie CC inmates.
Café	25 over the day	Produced meals for staff and inmates and is used as a Hospitality course training facility.
Centre Services	70 over the day	Included ground maintenance, hygiene services, Inmate Delegates & the Librarian.

The CAS Act provides that the Governor of a correctional centre may make an order directing any convicted inmate to carry out such work as the Governor considers suitable.⁵¹ This requirement to work does not apply to inmates held in custody on remand. The *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014* (CAS Regulation) further provides that it is a correctional centre offence to contravene a direction or order made under a provision of the CAS Act⁵² or to fail to comply with the hours of work or general routine of the correctional centre in which the inmate is detained.⁵³

The inspection team heard that although inmates at Macquarie CC were expected and required to work, and many were enthusiastically engaged in work, there were some who refused to work. The inspection team observed some inmates who physically attended work locations but were not actually working.

Managing this group of inmates presented challenges for Macquarie CC. Staff reported trying to encourage and motivate people to work but noted that this was resource-intensive and detracted from those who wanted to learn. There were also concerns about the quality of work performed by people who were reluctant to work being sub-standard. Further, the dormitory-style accommodation created practical difficulties with dismissing these inmates from work. This group cannot be confined to a cell, except in the MPU, and remaining in a dormitory while others were undertaking purposeful activity was considered undesirable. Consequently, Macquarie CC managed this issue by adjusting the wages of those who refused to work. This meant that if they did not work, they would receive the unemployment wage rate of \$15.51 per week⁵⁴ and if they did work their wages were increased to reflect the work undertaken. CSNSW has advised that those inmates at Macquarie CC not interested in participating in work should be placed at a different correctional centre.

Although the industries workshops were relatively new, there were issues with the equipment and climatic conditions. The inspection team heard that the some of the machinery purchased was not fit-for-purpose and the quality of the machinery was inadequate for the increasingly technical work they were being asked to complete. For example, a brake press machine in the Light Engineering workshop had required repairs costing the equivalent of its purchase price. These repairs were reportedly due to it not being designed to perform the volume and types of work it was being used for. The type of equipment available also had a detrimental impact on preparing inmates to work in the community as they were being trained to perform tasks manually that would be automated in a different workplace. In addition, the inspection team observed that the workshops became extremely hot during summer due to a lack of air conditioning and ventilation and the physical nature of the work.



Engineering workshop



Furniture workshop

51 *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* s 6(1).

52 *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014* cl 127(b).

53 *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014* cl 39.

54 Wage rates for inmate workers are specified in Corrective Services NSW, *CSI Policy Manual: 8.2 Inmate Wages System* (July 2018).

Hunter Correctional Centre

Hunter Correctional Centre was inspected on 19 to 23 January 2020. A subsequent liaison visit was conducted on 11 June 2020.

Custody

Classification and placement

To be placed at Hunter CC an inmate must be sentenced and have an A2, E1, B, or E2 security classification.⁵⁵ Up to 50 inmates who progress to a C1 minimum security classification while placed at Hunter CC may remain there but minimum security inmates cannot be moved to Hunter CC from other locations. Hunter CC holds inmates who have previously been placed in protective custody⁵⁶ but they must sign off protection on arrival. It may also hold inmates on methadone or with disability. Hunter CC does *not* hold inmates:

- with Outlaw Motor Cycle Gang or Organised Criminal Network affiliations
- managed by the High Security Inmate Management Committee or Extreme Threat Inmate Management Committee
- subject to 'normal discipline' (that is, inmates in the mainstream population who were not in protective custody)
- who have been in segregated custody in the previous 12 months
- with a JH&FMHN alert stating they should not be transferred without psychiatric care
- who require sleep apnoea machines
- who require a single cell.⁵⁷

Hunter CC holds a significant number of inmates managed by SORC.⁵⁸ At 1 December it held 123 SORC inmates (31% of Hunter CC's population) and 204 PRLC⁵⁹ inmates (51.4%). There were also 19 Immigration Release Notification inmates (4.8%). The most serious offence for most inmates was sexual assault and related offences (267 inmates), followed by homicide and related offences (51 inmates) and acts intended to cause injury (20 inmates).

55 The categories of security classification for male inmates are provided in the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014* cl 12(1).

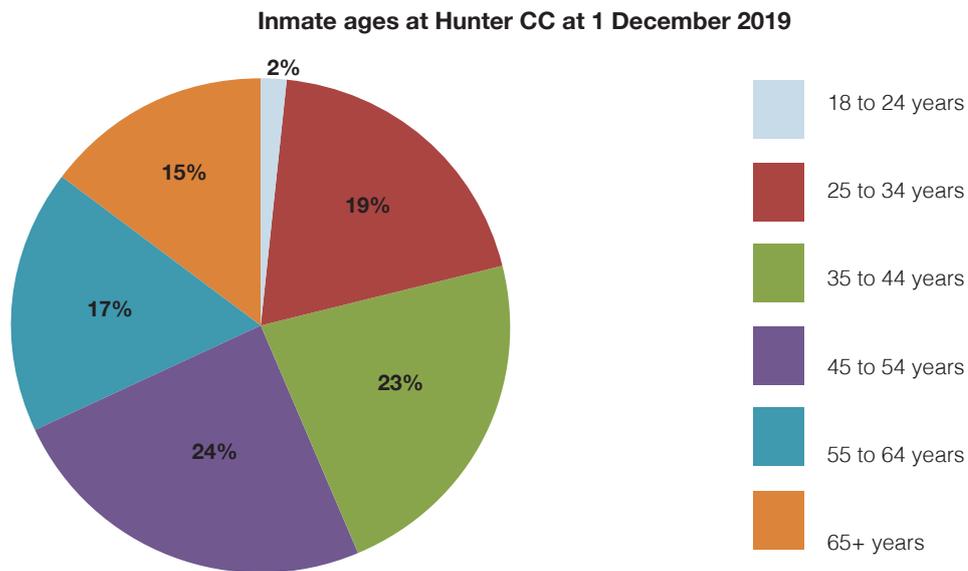
56 See Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 3.2 Protective Custody* (version 1.4, 30 October 2020); Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 3.3 Special Management Area Placement* (version 1.3, 30 October 2020).

57 Corrective Services NSW, *Inmate Classification and Placement: CSNSW Placement Guide – Male*, version 1.3.

58 The Serious Offenders Review Council provides advice and makes recommendations to the Commissioner of Corrective Services NSW regarding the security classification, placement and program participation of 'serious offenders'. See *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* s 197. A 'serious offender' is defined in the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* s 3 and includes an offender serving a life sentence, who must serve at least 12 years in custody or who is required to be managed as a serious offender due to a decision of the sentencing court, the State Parole Authority or the Commissioner of Corrective Services NSW.

59 The Pre-Release Leave Committee is the division of the Serious Offenders Review Council that manages 'public interest inmates'. A public interest inmate includes one who is serving a custodial sentence for an offence which is the subject of wide public interest or that is specified in the policy: See Corrective Services NSW, *Inmate Classification and Placement: Serious Offenders Review Council (SORC) and Subcommittee Managed Inmates* (version 1.0, 25 October 2019) 19–20.

Hunter CC had an older inmate population. The data depicted in the chart below indicates that around a third of the 397 inmates at Hunter CC's were 55 years of age or older.



CSNSW policy provides that an inmate will be considered aged and frail if they have:

- difficulty with daily living activities
- mobility issues that restrict access to areas of the correctional centre or create a falls risk
- a need for assistive devices to manage sensory or physical disabilities
- a need for alternate accommodation options, including transfer to a specialised unit or in current placement.⁶⁰

In addition, these difficulties must be caused by deteriorating health issues and age (45 years or older for Aboriginal inmates or 55 years or older for non-Aboriginal inmates). Inmates meeting these criteria can be referred to Statewide Disability Services (SDS) and/or the Aged Care Bed Demand Committee for aged care support.⁶¹

The ICS has previously considered the needs of the ageing prison population in the report *Old and Inside: Managing Aged Offenders in Custody*. This report highlighted that the physical layout and daily routine of some correctional centres can be challenging for aged and frail inmates and this group tends to rely on other inmates for care and assistance and can struggle to access specialised health services. It found that due to the increasing number of aged and frail inmates with complex needs, there will be a need for a specialised correctional centre in the metropolitan area to hold those who can no longer be managed in a mainstream correctional centre.⁶²

Hunter CC's layout was in some ways well-suited for older inmates due to its flat and even ground, wide corridors and doorways and single-bed cubicles. However, the inspection team observed that a number of inmates were frail and struggled to move around the dormitories and between the different areas. The frailest inmates had been placed in a dormitory that was not equipped with an accessible bathroom. There was a lack of clarity concerning the role of the inmate cleaners in this dormitory in providing support and care for those with high physical and psychological needs. The inspection team observed one inmate who appeared to have fallen in one of the bathrooms and required assistance. This inmate was reported to have

60 Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 3.10 Aged and Frail Inmates* (version 1.1, 12 March 2020) 4.

61 Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 3.10 Aged and Frail Inmates* (version 1.1, 12 March 2020) 4. Statewide Disability Services assesses inmates for physical, mobility and sensory impairments and advises on appropriate services and management. The Aged Care Bed Demand Committee consists of representatives from JH&FMHN and CSNSW and reviews referrals for assessments and placement options for aged and frail inmates.

62 Inspector of Custodial Services, *Old and Inside: Managing Aged Offenders in Custody* (Report, September 2015) 9–12.

panic attacks during the night, disturbing other inmates and requiring the assistance of two younger inmates in the dormitory to provide care during the night.

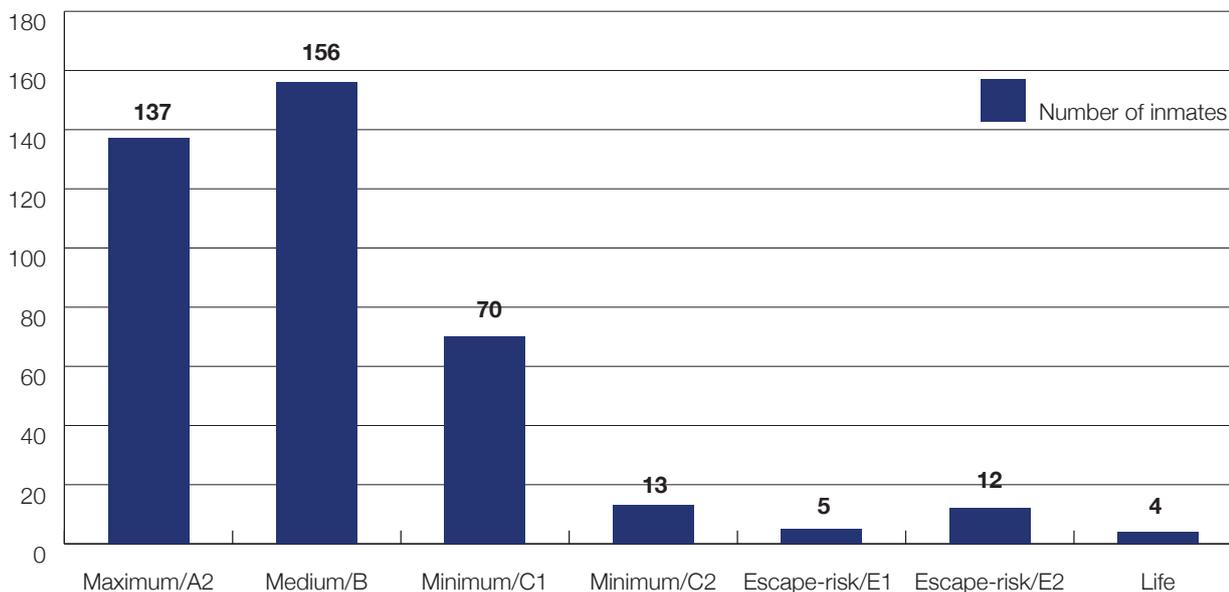
There was a clear disconnect between this older inmate population and the operation of Hunter CC. Hunter CC had the same structured day as Macquarie CC and, as highlighted above, this works well for a much younger cohort with rehabilitation needs to address their risk of reoffending. The Inspector considers that CSNSW needs to determine if Hunter CC is going to be a facility that holds aged and frail inmates or a facility that provides a structured day with rehabilitation opportunities focused on work, programs and education. If it is the former, the services and supports available need to be increased to adequately provide for an aged and frail cohort and the feasibility of the structured day for this cohort needs to be urgently reviewed. If not, aged and frail inmates need to be relocated to an appropriate facility and inmates who would benefit from the rehabilitation opportunities provided by the structured day should be prioritised for placement at Hunter CC.

Recommendation: Corrective Services NSW should review the use of Hunter Correctional Centre as a location for aged and frail inmates.

Recommendation: Corrective Services NSW needs to clarify the purpose of Hunter Correctional Centre. The classification and placement of inmates to Hunter Correctional Centre should align with this purpose.

Although Hunter CC is a maximum security correctional centre, most inmates have a medium security classification.

Security classifications at Hunter CC at 1 December 2019



Consistent with our findings at Macquarie CC, there were a lack of suitable placement options for inmates at Hunter CC who progress to a minimum security classification. Hunter CC staff reported that inmates would prefer to remain at Hunter CC with a medium security classification rather than progress and be placed elsewhere. Inmates at Hunter CC have placement and association issues and may continue to be at risk in mainstream correctional centre populations. There also seemed to be a presumption among inmates that any inmate who has been held at Hunter CC is an adult or child sex offender. It was known among the inmate population that a person held at Hunter CC had previously been in protective custody. Kirkconnell Correctional Centre and the Metropolitan Special Programs Centre at Long Bay Correctional Complex hold minimum security inmates with placement and association issues. A 240-bed minimum security expansion of Cessnock Correctional Centre has since been identified as a progression pathway for protection inmates from Hunter CC.

Recommendation: Progression pathways to minimum security are developed for Hunter Correctional Centre inmates that provide corresponding opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration in an environment suitable for inmates who have placement and association restrictions.

The inspection team was also concerned about the placement of some inmates at and within Hunter CC. An inmate's most serious offence and institutional conduct did not appear to be consistently taken into account in determining suitability for placement in dormitory-style accommodation. Neither was age or vulnerability. The focus appeared to be around protection status. Not having sufficient regard for an inmate's suitability for dormitory-style accommodation presents a risk to the safety and security of such a correctional centre, as is clear in the relevant international standards. This was compounded at the centre-level by decisions regarding dormitory placement. It was explained that this was due to concerns about creating hierarchies among different groups. However, the inspection team heard about incidents of bullying, intimidation and assault of inmates believed to be sex offenders. At the time of the inspection, two inmates had been placed in the MPU after threatening or assaulting inmates they believed to be child sex offenders and were awaiting transfer to another correctional centre.

Recommendation: Inmates placed at Hunter Correctional Centre should be carefully selected.

Recommendation: Hunter Correctional Centre should take the nature of an inmate's offending into account in decisions about dormitory placement to avoid bullying and harassment between inmates.

Security

At 4 December 2019, Hunter CC reported having two critical incidents. One was a serious assault on an inmate by another inmate and the other was a serious death threat to an officer made by an inmate. At the time of the inspection, staff at Hunter CC reported that they had not deployed chemical munitions. In the 12 months from December 2018 to November 2019, there had been one assault of a staff member, which occurred in May 2019, and 30 inmate-on-inmate assaults. During this period there were 457 breaches of correctional centre regulations. Of these, 177 (38.7%) were drug related, 154 (33.7%) were charges against good order and 41 (9%) related to fighting or assault. There were 29 uses of force.

Among the inmates and staff who spoke to the inspection team, drug and alcohol use was considered to be a relatively small problem at Hunter CC. Data obtained from CSNSW showed that in the 12 months from December 2018 to November 2019, there were 40 discoveries of contraband drugs, 19 of which were Buprenorphine. There were also 69 urinalysis tests that returned a laboratory confirmed positive result for drugs, 38 of which detected Buprenorphine.

The COPP provides that all maximum and medium security classified inmates should be searched after a visit.⁶³ It also provides that strip searches 'must be conducted with due regard to dignity and respect' and 'must be conducted in a place away from the public view and from those not directly involved in the search including ... other inmates'.⁶⁴ The inspection team heard that multiple inmates were strip searched at a time, in the same room, after visits with family and friends. This practice is inconsistent with the policy and should be stopped. This is the same practice we identified at Macquarie CC and may indicate a broader systemic issue with compliance with strip searching procedures.

Recommendation: Hunter Correctional Centre should ensure that strip searching practices comply with Corrective Services NSW policy and introduce body scanners.

63 Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 17.1 Searching Inmates* (version 1.7, 20 July 2020) 11, 16.

64 Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 17.1 Searching Inmates* (version 1.7, 20 July 2020) 11–12.

Multipurpose Unit

MPUs are used to hold inmates who need to be separated from the general population. In a traditional correctional centre such separation may also be achieved by confining that person to their cell. However, this is not an option at Hunter CC due to the dormitory-style accommodation and therefore the MPU is used for anyone who, for whatever reason, cannot remain in a dormitory. Such separation may be required for a range of reasons, including where an inmate:

- is subject to a segregation under section 10 of the CAS Act
- is subject to a confinement to a cell order under section 53(1)(c) or section 56(1)(c) of the CAS Act
- is being held separately from other inmates for ‘the purposes of the care, control or management of the inmate ...’ under section 78A of the CAS Act
- needs to enter protective custody
- is being moved to another correctional centre.

A total of 26 segregation periods commenced at Hunter CC in the 12 months from December 2018 to November 2019.

At the time of the inspection, four to five inmates were held in the MPU. During the inspection one inmate (who was subject to a segregation order) was moved from the MPU to an observation cell in the health centre after being deemed at-risk of self-harm. One inmate was subject to a section 78A order to be held separately from other inmates for ‘the purposes of the care, control or management of the inmate [...]’.⁶⁵ Two inmates were described as being in the MPU for ‘housing only’, one of whom was detoxing and one of whom had threatened to harm other inmates. One was about to enter protective custody and move to a different correctional centre after assaulting another inmate.

The inspection team observed that some custodial officers lacked a clear understanding of the different reasons a person may be confined to the MPU. This was particularly so in relation to segregation orders⁶⁶ and confinement to a cell as a punishment for committing a correctional centre offence.⁶⁷ Segregation orders should be used for ensuring the safety of another person, the security or the good order and discipline of the correctional centre. Being placed on a segregation order is not a punishment.

Further, inmates had been placed in the MPU at Hunter CC without a proper order. For example, the inmate who had threatened to harm another inmate was being held in the MPU without a segregation order. These circumstances appear to fulfil the requirements for placing an inmate in segregated custody. However, the inspection team was told that the reason a segregation order was not in place was due to ‘leniency’. The reason given for this inmate’s placement in the MPU was ‘housing only’. It was not clear what ‘housing only’ refers to, however it does not appear to relate to any of the provisions allowing for segregation, confinement or separation provided in the legislation.

Accuracy in the use of orders for placing inmates in MPUs is important for ensuring proper oversight of the practice of confining inmates away from the general inmate population. Inmates being placed in the MPU who meet the criteria for segregated custody but who are not formally placed in segregated custody will not be captured in relevant data. Further, where a Governor is exercising the functions to place an inmate in segregated custody, the legislation requires that the Commissioner of CSNSW is notified.⁶⁸ This notification will not occur where the formal process has not been undertaken.

65 *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* s 78A(2).

66 *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* s 10. The Commissioner, or a Governor exercising the Commissioner’s functions under section 10, may direct that an inmate be held in segregated custody when of the opinion that segregation is necessary to ensure the personal safety of any other person, the security of a correctional centre or the good order and discipline within a correctional centre.

67 *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* ss 53(1)(c), 56(1)(c). Where a Governor is satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that an inmate is guilty of a correctional centre offence they may confine that inmate to a cell for up to 7 days as a penalty. Where a Visiting Magistrate is satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that an inmate is guilty of a correctional centre offence they may make an order that the inmate is confined to a cell for up to 28 days as a penalty.

68 *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* s 10(2).

Although there are policies providing guidance on segregation, separation and confinement,⁶⁹ there does not appear to be an overarching policy regarding MPUs and the circumstances in which inmates may be placed in MPUs. This may provide useful guidance for the placement of inmates in MPUs and help ensure that proper processes are observed.

Recommendation: Hunter Correctional Centre staff require additional training on the differences between segregation, separation and confinement to a cell for committing a correctional centre offence.

Recommendation: Corrective Services NSW should develop a policy regarding the use of Multipurpose Units in NSW correctional centres.

Organisational environment

Over the 12 months prior to the inspection, three different Governors had been appointed to Hunter CC. It was apparent to the inspection team that these changes had impacted staff. Continuity of leadership is important for creating a strong staff culture and embedding an operational approach focused on the active engagement and rehabilitation of inmates. The inspection team observed some division between and within different staff groups. The staff culture was described by some as being ‘toxic’.

There was a belief that some custodial staff at Hunter CC did not understand the benefits of working at Hunter CC as they had no experience working in a more traditional custodial environment. There also appeared to be a divide between some custodial and non-custodial staff groups, with some non-custodial staff reporting that they had found that the culture at Hunter CC was not inclusive and did not value their roles.

The inspection team observed that some staff had a problematic attitude toward inmates. The rehabilitation opportunities at Hunter CC were described as ‘privileges’ and it seemed to be the view of some staff that inmates were given too much. This was particularly apparent in conversations regarding the opening of a café in the visits area. The inspection team heard that some staff were preoccupied with the offending of inmates and provided differential treatment of inmates on this basis. There were also reports that some custodial staff lack de-escalation techniques and resort to punishment rather than understanding if the cause of an issue is related to mental health or distress.

The inspection team witnessed some staff use derogatory and dehumanising language about and toward inmates. On two occasions, offensive language was used while issuing an inmate with instructions. In other conversations, the MPU was described as ‘the pound’ and inmates were described as ‘crims’ or ‘grubs’. This language is inappropriate and unprofessional and would not be tolerated in most contemporary workplaces.

This punitive approach to inmate management was not just disappointing to witness but was indicative of the belligerent attitude of some staff towards management, who were attempting to implement a rehabilitation philosophy aimed at reducing reoffending.

Recommendation: Hunter Correctional Centre requires stability of personnel occupying senior management positions.

Recommendation: Custodial staff at Hunter Correctional Centre require further training including on de-escalation, managing vulnerable inmates and respectful interactions with inmates.

69 Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 3.1 Separation of Inmates* (version 1.3, 30 October 2020); Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 3.4 Segregation* (version 1.3, 30 October 2020); Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 14.1 Inmate Discipline* (version 1.1, 12 March 2020).

Care and wellbeing

Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network services

Hunter CC's health centre was modern and well-appointed, consisting of several consulting rooms, a pharmacy where medications were packed for distribution and telehealth facilities. It was open seven days a week from 7am to 8pm, split across a morning shift and an afternoon shift, during which it was staffed by one Registered Nurse and one Enrolled Nurse. On weekdays it was also staffed by a Nurse Unit Manager. Inmates at Hunter CC were able to access health services by completing a self-referral form lodged in a secure box. Health centre staff would then use the information in this form to triage those seeking assistance.

Health services were delivered to inmates by a combination of in-person and telehealth consultations. In July 2020, a GP attended Hunter CC around once every four to six weeks. In November 2020, GP visits were occurring one to two times per month. There were also weekly consultations with the GP via telehealth. An optometrist attended around once a month. An aged care nurse practitioner also visited Hunter CC and provided support by phone and email. The health centre was not equipped to provide dental services to inmates. Inmates requiring dental care were transferred to the dental clinic at Shortland Correctional Centre, which is located within on the same complex as Hunter CC. A number of inmates also received Opioid Substitution Therapy.

The health centre Hunter CC had two observation cells for holding inmates at risk of self-harm and in need of medical observation, including those supervised by a RIT.⁷⁰ At 1 December 2019, there were 84 inmates with a mandatory notification and being managed by a RIT⁷¹ and 40 inmates with a recorded history of mental illness. In the 12 months from December 2018 to November 2019 there were six acts of self-harm.



Telehealth facility



Health centre treatment room

70 A Risk Intervention Team (RIT) consists of a RIT Coordinator (a custodial officer of Senior Correctional Officer rank or above who is designated by the Governor), a JH&FMHN staff member, and an Offender Services and Programs staff member. See Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedure – 3.7 Management of Inmates at Risk of Self-harm or Suicide* (version 1.2, 12 March 2020) 18.

71 A mandatory notification identifies inmates considered to be at risk of suicide or self-harm. An inmate support plan (ISP) must be developed by all inmates subject to a mandatory notification. The ISP should provide for the management of at-risk inmates following the principle of least restrictive care. A Risk Intervention Team (RIT) is convened to undertake ongoing assessments of the inmate's risk of suicide or self-harm and develop a RIT management plan, which considers the implementation of matters detailed in the ISP. See Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedure – 3.7 Management of Inmates at Risk of Self-harm or Suicide* (version 1.2, 12 March 2020).

The age profile and comorbidities of the inmate population at Hunter CC were placing considerable strain on its health services. Staff reported a high number of hospital escorts, driven largely by the health needs of older inmates. JH&FMHN have advised that between January and November 2020 there were 101 local hospital escorts. The inspection team heard there was resistance among inmates to attend medical appointments in Sydney for fear they would not be able to return to Hunter CC. Hunter CC does not have a 24-hour health centre, and hospital escorts were reported to be time consuming and expensive and occasionally occurred for matters that could have been dealt with had a GP been available. JH&FMHN have highlighted that GP waitlists are regularly monitored and the Remote On-Call After Hours Service (known as ROAMS) is available 24 hours a day to provide medical advice to nursing staff.⁷²

A number of inmates told the inspection team that they had experienced difficulty accessing health services in a timely manner. Mental health was a particular concern. Although inmates with health alerts related to psychiatric care are not placed at Hunter CC, mental health support may still be required. Unmet mental health support was an issue reported to the inspection team by both inmates and staff. The inspection team heard that there were a number of older inmates in custody for the first time struggling to adjust. The inspection team was also told of instances of inmates being taken off medication and having to wait for a telehealth appointment before it could be reinstated. It was evident to the inspection team that the Hunter CC health centre had not been resourced to meet the health needs of a significant number of older and frail inmates. This likely occurred because this was not the cohort that was initially intended for placement at a correctional centre operating a structured day of work, programs and education. Should Hunter CC continue to hold a cohort of aged and frail inmates, the health centre should be resourced accordingly.

Following the inspection JH&FMHN advised that it provides six hours per week of routine mental health nursing clinics to Hunter CC and six hours per fortnight of psychiatrist services by telehealth. These waitlists are reviewed regularly and urgent appointments are facilitated within three working days of a referral where necessary. The Primary Care Mental Health Consultation Liaison Nurse provides one clinic per month via telehealth for the assessment and case management of non-complex mental health presentations. Further, changes implemented as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have increased the services provided to inmates by virtual care pathways. Telehealth services are being provided from hub sites across the network and JH&FMHN are working closely with the Prince of Wales Hospital to replicate the work of emergency departments and specialist services.⁷³

Recommendation: Hunter Correctional Centre's health centre should be resourced to meet the health needs of its old and frail inmate population.

Recommendation: The availability of psychiatric and mental health nurse services at Hunter Correctional Centre should be increased.

Psychology services

Psychology services in NSW correctional centres are managed by CSNSW's Offender Management and Programs branch. Hunter CC was staffed with a Senior Psychologist and two Psychologist positions. At the time of the inspection, these positions were occupied. However one of the Psychologists worked part-time, meaning Hunter CC was short-staffed two days per week. The inspection team were informed that there had been some difficulty recruiting Psychologists at Hunter CC and one Psychologist position had only been recently filled.

Psychology staff were involved in the delivery of the Real Understanding of Self Help (RUSH) program and a mood management program focused on strategies for coping with anxiety and depression. There were up to 12 inmates in a group with two facilitators and eight with one facilitator. There were two mood management groups running with 10 inmates in each group. They ideally ran the mood management programs every 10 weeks (four times per year). The inspection team heard that there had been some

⁷² Information provided by the Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network on 3 November 2020.

⁷³ Information provided by the Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network on 3 November 2020.

staff resistance to psychology staff facilitating additional psychology education classes in the afternoons/evenings.

In addition, psychology staff were responsible for undertaking risk assessments for sex offenders. Where an inmate was convicted of a current sex offence, they were flagged by the Case Management Unit and sex offender programs were included in their case plan. They would then be placed on the waitlist for assessment for sex offender programs and if assessed as suitable, they would wait to receive a treatment offer. Inmates must consent to being referred for assessment and may refuse a treatment offer.

Specialist training is required to complete sex offender risk assessment tools.⁷⁴ Although the Senior Psychologist and the Psychologists had received this training, at the time of the inspection the Psychologists still required the supervision of the Senior Psychologist while completing these assessments. This additional workload had plainly not been accounted for in the psychology staffing profile at Hunter CC. Consequently, there were 187 inmates convicted of sex offences waiting for the relevant risk assessments to be finalised. This determines whether these offenders will need to undertake a Sex Offender Program. Staff across several areas highlighted that these delays create challenges in effectively managing this group of inmates.

The Inspector previously highlighted the importance of timely program participation in the *Programs, Employment and Education Inspection* report.⁷⁵ Risk assessments are used to determine an inmate's eligibility for a program. For an inmate classified as a serious offender they will need to be ineligible for the program or have completed the program before they can undertake external leave programs. In either event, the risk assessment process needs to be completed and delays in this process reduce the period of time over which serious offenders can engage in programs and other reintegration activities prior to their release on parole and in accordance with the timelines provided in the Commissioner's Guidelines for Serious Offenders. The additional qualifications required for staff to complete sex offender risk assessments means this issue particularly arises in relation to inmates with current sex offence convictions.

Recommendation: Resourcing for the completion of sex offender risk assessments needs to be increased and prioritised at locations holding inmates with current sex offence convictions.

Inmate Development Committee

The IDC at Hunter CC generally met on the last Thursday of the month. Each dormitory had an inmate representative but the IDC was constituted of one inmate representative from each accommodation block. Inmate representatives decided among themselves which of the four dormitory representatives will represent each block. The IDC also included an Aboriginal delegate. Delegates are both nominated by other inmates and selected by staff but staff may overrule a nominated candidate. IDC meetings were attended by the Hunter CC's management staff, including the Governor; the Functional Managers of Accommodation, Classification, Intelligence, Security, and Structured Day; Manager of Industries; Manager of Offender Services and Programs; Education Services Coordinator; Business Manager; and the Nurse Unit Manager.

The inspection team met with a number of inmate delegates on the Monday of the inspection and observed a regular IDC meeting on the Thursday of the inspection. The inspection team was provided with meeting minutes from November 2018 to October 2019. These minutes indicated that eight IDC meetings had taken place over this 12 month period with meetings apparently not taking place in December 2018 and April, June and July 2019.

Inmates at Hunter CC expressed some concern about the effectiveness of the IDC. When the inspection team observed the regular IDC meeting the importance of the Governor's presence was evident for resolving the agenda items. There was a sense that, in the Governor's absence, inmate ideas were dismissed by staff without due consideration and that staff were slow to respond to issues raised through the IDC process.

⁷⁴ Corrective Services NSW, *Compendium of Assessments* (4th ed, September 2016) 13, 15.

⁷⁵ Inspector of Custodial Services, *Programs, Employment and Education Inspection* (Report, February 2020) 44–6.

Recurring issues raised at the IDC meetings in the months prior to the inspection included missing laundry, faults with IPTVs and other maintenance issues, use of IDC funds, and lights in the dormitories. There was no laundry at Hunter CC so inmate clothing and bedding was placed in labelled wash bags and transferred to Cessnock Correctional Centre for laundering. However, inmates and staff reported that items of clothing that were in good condition often were not returned. Inmates had requested detergent and buckets in order to do as much of their own washing as possible. Broken or malfunctioning IPTVs were also an issue. The dormitories at Hunter CC were not fitted with light switches, so inmates needed to use the intercom system to ask the officers in the control room to switch them off.

As with Macquarie CC, inmates were able to buy eggs and meat at inflated prices with the profits to be spent on amenities for inmates and Hunter CC. This fund was managed through the IDC process with inmates determining how the money should be spent. However, there was some concern that this fund was being used for improvements that should be paid for by CSNSW, such as playground equipment for children in the visits area and fans in the oval and activities area. It may be useful for CSNSW to provide some guidance regarding how this money should be utilised.

Religious, spiritual & cultural needs

At 1 December 2019, there were 63 Aboriginal men held at Hunter CC, 15.9% of Hunter CC's total inmate population. Most Hunter CC inmates were born in Australia (302 or 76.1%); most spoke English at home (362 or 91.2%); and most did not record a religious preference or reported having no religious preference. The largest reported religious group was Christian (34 inmates or 8.6%).

At the time of the inspection, Hunter CC had an active and engaged Aboriginal delegate and several staff members who had built good relationships with Aboriginal inmates and were committed to facilitating cultural support and activities for Aboriginal men. There were initiatives to start an Aboriginal men's group and facilitate an Aboriginal parenting program and the Aboriginal Cultural Strengthening Program. The inspection team heard that a number of Aboriginal inmates met regularly and the IDC meeting minutes provided by Hunter CC included those from a Koori IDC. These inmates organised Hunter CC's NAIDOC week celebrations and generally discussed the support for and involvement of Aboriginal inmates in Hunter CC. Having a dedicated forum for Aboriginal inmates to discuss and take ownership of those matters that particularly affect them and develop relationships with staff is a positive initiative that other correctional centres should consider adopting.

The inspection team was told that some Aboriginal men at Hunter CC had difficulty accessing the Aboriginal delegate on a regular basis. This appeared to largely be a logistical issue as those Aboriginal men on a different structured day routine to the Aboriginal delegate simply did not have opportunities to interact during the day. Hunter CC staff need to be mindful of this issue and develop a strategy to ensure that Aboriginal men across all accommodation blocks have access to the Aboriginal delegate.

Access to family and friends

At the time of the inspection, Hunter CC offered inmates in-person visits with family and friends on weekends. Each visit had a duration of 1 hour and 40 minutes with sessions commencing at 9am, 11am, 1pm and 3pm. To book a visit, visitors were required to call the Hunter CC visits booking phone line, which was open on a Thursday or Friday from 9am to 12pm and 1pm to 3pm.

Hunter CC allowed for up to 19 groups of visitors per session. Each inmate could be visited by up to four adults and four children at a time. The visits area consisted of indoor and outdoor areas and was equipped with an outdoor soft play area for children. There were also seven booths for non-contact visits. Inmates also had access to family visits via AVL once a month.⁷⁶ As at 1 December 2019, 90 inmates (22.7%) had not received a family visit in over 12 months.

⁷⁶ Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedure – 8.10 Family Video Contact* (version 1.1, 12 March 2020) 4.



Visits area



Non-contact visits box

Two members of the inspection team attended Hunter CC on a Sunday to observe the final visits session of the weekend. On this day, approximately five inmates received a visit from family or friends, including a family with several young children. Information provided by Hunter CC stated that visitors could request to be seated outside at the time of making the booking but the decision regarding their placement would be made by the Senior Correctional Officer supervising visits on the day, depending on factors including risk and the weather. However, the indoor space in the visits area was not particularly suitable for visitors with children due to noise and the lack of a play area. Where possible, given potential security issues and climatic conditions, families should be seated outdoors. A space with toys should be created inside so that children have somewhere to play where this is not possible.

Recommendation: A play area and toys for children should be provided in the indoor part of Hunter Correctional Centre's visits area. Visitors with children should be consistently seated outdoors where possible.

At the time of the inspection, the inspection team was told that a café in visits would be opening at the end of the month. At a subsequent liaison visit, the café was operational and appeared to be working well. This was a pleasing development for which Hunter CC's management team should be congratulated. This will also hopefully ensure that visitors attending the final visits session on a Sunday afternoon are able to access drinks and snacks. The members of the inspection team who attended visits observed that the vending machines in the lobby of the visits area were empty by the time the final visits session commenced. For security reasons, visitors are not permitted to bring anything into a correctional centre. Therefore it is important that there is some access to food and drink, particularly for families with children and those travelling long distances to and from the correctional centre.

Recreation

Hunter CC had a range of recreational activities for inmates. The gym equipment in the oval and activities area included resistance exercise machines and weight machines, a rowing machine and an exercise bike. Table tennis equipment was located in the oval and activities area and in a games room in the central hub area. Equipment for games of touch football, soccer, volleyball and basketball in the oval and activities area was also available.

All inmates had access to the oval and activities area for one-and-a-half to two hours every weekday according to a schedule that allocates times for each accommodation block. During their allocated oval and activities time inmates were able to attend to matters including lodging buy-ups forms, sending and receiving personal mail and submitting other requests.

The yards adjoining the dormitories provided another space for outdoor activity, including racquet ball and a half-court for basketball. Inmates also have rostered access to a games room, library and computer area between 7pm and 9pm in the central hub.

Rehabilitation

Although the operation of Hunter CC was intended to align with a philosophy of rehabilitation through purposeful activity, realising this philosophy in practice was an ongoing challenge. The inspection team observed that this was due in large part to the inmate cohort at Hunter CC, which in several different ways including age and offending history, created challenges for programs, education and work. This in turn created problems for implementing the structured day at Hunter CC which relied on inmates being actively engaged throughout the day. This may have contributed to a lack of investment in the philosophy by some staff who saw their role as being responsible for efficiently moving inmates between areas over the course of a day rather than facilitating rehabilitation through purposeful activity.

Case management

At 2 November 2019, 393 inmates at Hunter CC had a current case plan. There were two Senior Case Managers, each with a case load of 25 inmates and seven Case Managers, each with a case load of 50 inmates. An assessment conducted with each inmate when they arrived at Hunter CC was used to determine their frequency of contact with their case manager. The Case Management Unit reported that they review the case plans of new arrivals and view the process of creating or reviewing a case plan is an opportunity for an inmate's input and collaboration. As Hunter CC had a generally stable and predominantly sentenced inmate population, the Case Management Unit felt that they were able to establish a good relationship with inmates and work closely with them on their case plan and goals.

Programs

The team responsible for delivering programs at Hunter CC consisted of a Manager of Offender Services and Programs, a Senior Services and Programs Officer and six Services and Programs Officers. At the time of the inspection, Hunter CC was recruiting to fill two vacancies. Table 5 details the programs that were offered at Hunter CC during 2019, at 1 December 2019.

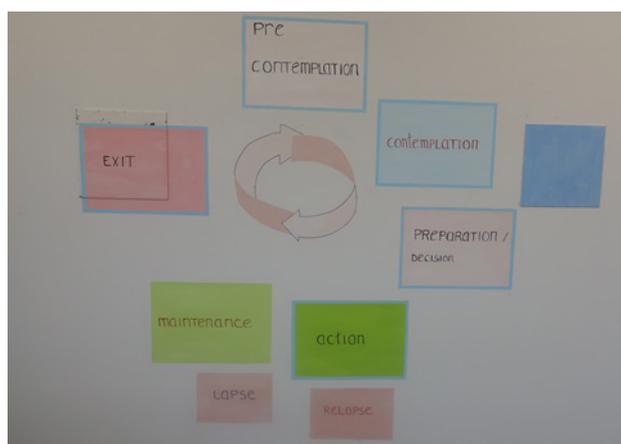
Table 5: Number of inmates who participated in and completed a program at Hunter CC in 2019 at 1 December 2019

Program	Participants
Addictions Support Group	72
EQUIPS Foundation	110
EQUIPS Addiction	146
EQUIPS Aggression	72
EQUIPS Domestic Abuse	31
Real Understanding of Self-Help (RUSH)	34
Young Adult Satellite Program	24
NEXUS	171
Health Survival Tips	697

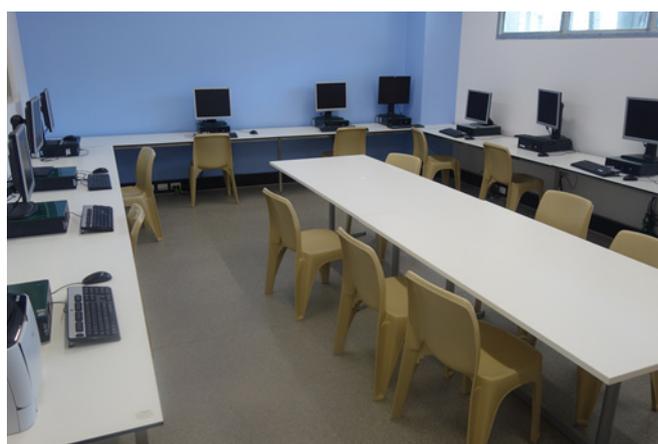
Additional EQUIPS Foundation, Addiction and Domestic Abuse programs and RUSH programs were scheduled for the remainder of 2019. In 2018–19, Hunter CC had a target to deliver 30 programs but this was reduced to 25 programs for 2019–20. Hunter CC was expecting to meet this target.

The inspection team was told that there were concerns about the appropriateness of the programs on offer for the inmate cohort at Hunter CC. As previously highlighted, a significant number of inmates at Hunter CC were older, serving long sentences and had been convicted of sex offences. The inspection team heard that in the 10-week program block prior to the inspection, Hunter CC had only been able to facilitate three EQUIPS programs because of a lack of eligible and suitable inmates. As the 'offence-mapping' (where inmates discuss their offending as part of the program) had been removed from the EQUIPS Addiction and EQUIPS Foundation programs participation by sex offenders was no longer a security risk as they would not be identified as sex offenders to other inmates. However, a significant number of sex offenders did not meet the risk assessment thresholds for EQUIPS programs and therefore were still ineligible to participate on that basis. The Offender Services and Programs team had previously placed inmates in an EQUIPS program who will not be released into the community for some time, whereas the policy generally excludes inmates with two years or more until their earliest possible release date.⁷⁷

Even more perplexing was that, despite holding a large number of inmates who had been convicted of sex offences, sex offender programs were not being offered at Hunter CC. This was due to concerns that facilitating sex offender programs would identify those inmates convicted of sex offences, placing them at risk from other inmates. The inspection team heard that in 2019, CSNSW had engaged external facilitators to deliver a moderate intensity sex offender program at Hunter CC but this was abandoned for security reasons.



Programs room



Computer room

Education

The education staff at Hunter CC consisted of an Education Services Coordinator and an Assessment and Planning Officer. Hunter CC had a Core Skills Assessment KPI of 500 per year which made little sense in the context of an inmate population that was predominantly sentenced and placed at their jail of classification and had already completed their core skills assessment elsewhere.

Table 6 details the education that was offered at Hunter CC in the 12 months from December 2018 to November 2019.

⁷⁷ Corrective Services NSW, *Policy for Implementation, Delivery and Integrity Monitoring of the EQUIPS Suite of Programs* (version 1.5, 28 July 2017) 7.

Table 6: Education classes offered at Hunter CC from December 2018 to November 2019

Education type	Courses offered
Foundation Skills Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literacy, Language and Numeracy (LLN) Level 1 and Level 2 - Digital Literacy Level 1 and Level 2
Vocational Training Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aboriginal Cultural Programs - Art - Automotive - Business - Chemical Handling - Cleaning Operations - Community Services - Construction - Engineering - Hospitality - Kitchen Operations - Music - Welding
Workplace Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First Aid - Food Safety - Test and tag

The inspection team heard that the types of education available at Hunter CC were not suitable for the inmate cohort. The LLN and digital literacy classes were considered to be ‘pitched too low’ for a number of inmates. Conversely for others in need of literacy education it was felt that the LLN classes did not meet their needs, particularly people with intellectual disability. One staff member observed that it was perhaps unrealistic to expect someone to learn to read and write or significantly improve these skills in a 10-week course and the sense of failure some experience in not meeting this expectation can be demotivating.

A number of inmates had completed tertiary and vocational education in the community prior to their imprisonment. At 1 December 2019, 29 inmates (7.3%) at Hunter CC had a university degree and a further 121 (30.5%) had a diploma or certificate qualification. Distance education was thought to be of use to this cohort and 28 inmates had registered an interest in undertaking a distance education course and several were enrolled in a distance education course, although their enrolment occurred prior to their placement at Hunter CC. Facilitating distance education is not a priority for education delivery in NSW correctional centres and staff were only able to offer limited support to inmates undertaking distance education.⁷⁸ Therefore inmates needed a person in the community who could operate an email account on their behalf and provide them with their course materials.

There were also challenges in delivering vocational education and training. The inspection team heard that Hunter CC had difficulty arranging TAFE trainers to deliver the courses approved by CSI Education to be provided in 2020. Also, there were concerns that given the number of serious offenders with long sentences, vocational training certificates may be irrelevant as qualifications by the time some inmates were released. In 2019, BSI Learning delivered a Diploma of Business that was very popular among inmates but was not approved to be offered in 2020. Some inmates had been able to undertake traineeships with 16 inmates completing a traineeship in December 2019 and 26 inmates undertaking a traineeship at the time of the inspection. CSNSW has highlighted that planning and review activities regarding vocational education and training help ensure that these offerings are relevant to the inmate population and overarching goals of each correctional centre.

⁷⁸ See Inspector of Custodial Services, *Programs, Employment and Education Inspection* (Report, February 2020) 80–1 for further discussion of this issue.

The inspection team was told that Hunter CC would like to increase the availability of hobby and inmate-led classes such as languages, creative writing and craft but there appeared to be some resistance to this among custodial staff. Language packs were popular among inmates in 2019 and were available in 12 languages through buy-ups if the inmate requests. Inmate-led creative writing and model-building classes had been scheduled for 2020. Inmates could purchase the model-building packs themselves and use the classes to learn how to assemble them. Hunter CC was also offering music and art classes via community providers.

Employment

Inmate employment at Hunter CC was managed by a team consisting of a Manager of Industries, two Business Unit Managers, seven Senior Overseers and 22 Overseers. CSI Business Units at Hunter CC operated on a model of two shifts per day. Inmates in A- and B-blocks attended work in the morning and inmates in C- and D-blocks attended work in the afternoon. Table 7 details the work and number of positions available to inmates.

Table 7: Work opportunities and number of inmate employees at Hunter CC

Industry	Employees	Work
Heavy Engineering (Fencing)	90 (45 per shift)	Produced items including shadow boards, fencing and vehicle gates.
Light Engineering	90 (45 per shift)	Produced beds for inmate accommodation, secure door hatches, metal cabinetry and metal louvres.
Upholstery	60 (30 per shift)	Produced NSW Fire duty bags, lounges for custodial centres and community corrections offices, and coverings for inmate mattresses.
Food Services	20 (10 per shift)	Made inmate lunches and rethermalised frozen evening meals. Also put together reception packs for new inmates.
Facilities Maintenance	10 (5 per shift)	Provided preventative and corrective maintenance to Hunter CC.
Ground Maintenance	30 (15 per shift)	Inmates performed tasks including lawn mowing and gardening within Hunter CC.
Vocational Training Unit	30 (15 per shift)	Inmates undertook vocational education and training including engineering, small motors, panel beating and spray painting.
General services	42 (21 per shift)	Other service industries work.
Clerks	6 (3 per shift)	Inmates provided administrative assistance.
Hygiene & recycling	20 (10 per shift)	Inmates cleaned accommodation and other areas.
Aboriginal Delegate	2 (1 per shift)	Represented Aboriginal inmates on the IDC.

The CAS Act provides that the Governor of a correctional centre may make an order directing any convicted inmate to carry out such work as the governor considers suitable.⁷⁹ This requirement to work does not apply to inmates held in custody on remand. The CAS Regulation further provides that it is a correctional centre offence to contravene a direction or order made under a provision of the CAS Act⁸⁰ or to fail to comply with the hours of work or general routine of the correctional centre in which the inmate is detained.⁸¹

⁷⁹ *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* s 6(1).

⁸⁰ *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014* cl 127(b).

⁸¹ *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014* cl 39.

The inspection team observed that the work offered in the Heavy and Light Engineering workshops was unsuitable for a significant proportion of the aged and frail inmates at Hunter CC. Although there was a mix of fitness and mobility levels among this group, the physical demands of the work in the engineering workshops was problematic for some of the men with jobs in these industries.

The COPP provides that SDS may provide advice on adapting work or programs for aged and frail inmates and CSI may advise on the suitability of work for aged and frail inmates. Further:

If work and/or programs are found to be unsuitable for an aged and frail inmate, the inmate is to be provided with any necessary adjustments, for example, reduced working hours, or with meaningful leisure activities as an alternative.⁸²

The inspection team was told that, during work shifts, those inmates who cannot work were sent to the oval and activities area or allowed to remain in the dormitories. Inmates required a medical certificate to verify that they were too sick or frail to work but this was only valid for a maximum of two days. Those inmates who were unfit to work were transferred to a different correctional centre. Those deemed able to but who refused to work were held in the holding cells in the health centre. It was clear that staff and management had little knowledge or understanding of the aged and frail policy. This had resulted in old and frail inmates attending work places in wheelchairs or with mobility aids rather than risk being transferred to another correctional centre with less amenity than Hunter CC.

Since the inspection, due to the large number of aged and frail inmates living in dormitory style accommodation, Hunter CC was identified as a high-risk location for an outbreak of COVID-19. The decision was made to protect these prisoners by separating them from other prisoners except for those held in the same dormitory. Up to 100 prisoners identified as vulnerable were moved into the same block. Prisoners had access to exercise yards adjoining the dormitories from around 6am to 10pm. Additional art and craft materials, books and games were provided in the dormitories. These types of activities are more appropriate for this cohort and akin to activities offered within an aged care setting.

Moreover, a number of inmates at Hunter CC will not return to paid employment in the community due to their age, poor physical health and length of sentence. The inspection team questioned the value of requiring these inmates to work and of investing in employment and vocational training opportunities that this group will not utilise. Greater policy guidance on the requirements of old and frail inmates to engage in work and alternatives for this group of inmates may be of assistance as correctional centres negotiate an ageing prison population. However, this should not present a barrier to work for those who may meet the definition of an aged and frail inmate but who are able and willing to work.

More broadly, there was a lack of work for inmates. Although there was some work in the engineering workshops there was not enough for all inmates to be fully occupied during their shifts. Despite this many staff seemed preoccupied that all inmates, even the old and frail, were required to go to work. The inspection team heard that a lot of work in these areas was focused on equipment and infrastructure for the PBCP but that this work would be concluding soon and external contracts were difficult to secure.

The Upholstery Business Unit had been found to work well with older inmate workers. Prior to the inspection it had been decided that the Vocational Training Unit would be repurposed as a textiles workshop. It was also thought that installing a laundry at Hunter CC would both resolve issues with missing laundry and provide suitable work opportunities for older inmates.

Following the inspection, CSNSW advised that the Engineering Business Unit at Hunter CC is closing down and will be replaced by a Textiles Business Unit, which will aim to provide ongoing, consistent work suitable for Hunter CC's inmate population. Work is also being undertaken to source additional work for aged and frail inmates at Hunter CC.⁸³

82 Corrective Services NSW, *Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures: 3.10 Aged and Frail Inmates* (version 1.1, 12 March 2020) 7.

83 Information provided by Corrective Services NSW on 2 November 2020.

Inmates with a minimum security classification at Hunter CC often worked in Ground Maintenance or Hygiene. This work required inmates to work in sterile zones of the correctional centre, where inmates with a higher security classification are not permitted to enter. However, these jobs paid less than some other industries and it had been observed that this was a disincentive to progress to a lower security classification.

At the time of the inspection, Hunter CC had partnered with Land Care on a project where inmates were seeding native plants for bush regeneration. A representative from Land Care visited periodically to monitor the seedlings and offer guidance. Inmate workers were responsible for caring for the seedlings and maintaining a log of which species they are growing and thriving. Although this was a small project, the inspection team was pleased to observe work opportunities that offer inmates a chance to contribute positively to the community.



Upholstery workshop



Ground maintenance and horticulture

Recommendation: Corrective Services NSW should review the aged and frail inmate policy to provide clarity in relation to the requirement for aged and frail inmates to work.

Recommendation: Corrective Services NSW should review the program, education and employment offerings at Hunter Correctional Centre to ensure they reflect its inmate population and overarching goals.



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