

Inspector of Custodial Services publishes three reports

The Inspector of Custodial Services (ICS) has tabled three reports:

- *Inspection of Clarence Correctional Centre 2024*
- *Review of Segregation and Other Measures which Confine and Separate Prisoners*
- *The Unannounced Inspections of Six Youth Justice Centres 2025*

Inspection of Clarence Correctional Centre 2024

Clarence Correctional Centre, located near Grafton, is Australia's newest and largest prison and by October 2026, will be the only privately operated prison in NSW. It provides high quality accommodation, uses state-of-the-art technology, and has pioneered innovation in custodial tools and practices. However, its performance has been hampered by several factors: challenges in recruiting and retaining staff in custodial, health and other disciplines; the increase in its remand population. Under-resourcing of the health service was a major concern. The report contains 46 recommendations.

Review of Segregation and Other Measures which Confine and Separate Prisoners

This thematic inspection examined the management of people in custody under arrangements which restrict their time out of cells and isolate them from other inmates. These include segregation, protective custody, separation, confinement (a punishment for misconduct) and the use of assessment cells (for people at risk of self-harm or suicide).

These procedures are necessary tools to manage safety, security and good order but can result in prisoners spending extending periods confined to a cell alone. International research has consistently found that this can significantly harm mental health, particularly when it exceeds two weeks. Correctional centre staff must ensure that prisoners remain under these arrangements for no longer than is necessary. The review found Aboriginal people, people with disabilities and people with mental health concerns are overrepresented in many of these arrangements.

The report containing 33 recommendations highlights concerns including compliance with legislation and policy, support for Aboriginal people and other vulnerable groups, strategies to manage prisoners requiring protection, staff training, and the use of fit-for-purpose accommodation.

The Unannounced Inspections of Six Youth Justice Centres 2025

This is the fifth report concerning youth justice centres and the first time we have conducted unannounced inspections of all six youth justice centres.

The inspections found an overall reduction in the use of restrictive practices, but this was uneven across locations. Ongoing concerns include the need to increase time out of rooms, the rate of assaults, punishment practices following misbehaviour, and access to effective complaints processes. The report contains 32 recommendations.

About the Inspector of Custodial Services

The ICS was established in October 2013 to provide independent oversight of the NSW custodial system. The ICS is required to inspect each adult custodial facility in NSW every five years and may also examine and review any custodial service at any time. The ICS must report to the NSW Parliament on each such inspection, examination, or review. The ICS does not investigate individual complaints. The reports are available at <https://inspectorcustodial.nsw.gov.au/reports-and-publications/inspection-reports.html>.
