



Terms of Reference

Review of the Classification and Placement of inmates in NSW

Objective

The review will assess the current classification and placement system for adult inmates in NSW. We will consider the extent to which it is efficient and effective in ensuring inmates are placed in a correctional centre that reflects their security requirements and meets their remand or rehabilitative needs, whilst maintaining appropriate family and community contact.

Context

The NSW correctional system has over 12,000 inmates in custody held in 36 correctional centres and other facilities. Each person who enters custody in NSW must be given a security classification. This should guide their placement at a correctional centre with the appropriate level of security. Other legislative criteria must also be considered in determining placement.

Each year approximately 20,000 people enter custody requiring initial classification and placement. Classification and placement must be reviewed upon every 12 months or when an inmate is sentenced. Classification reviews may also occur for a number of reasons including if an inmate's behaviour deteriorates, and they require a higher level of security. These reviews may also result in a change of placement to another correctional centre. Changes of placement may occur for other reasons including reduction in security classification, the need for an inmate to undertake a specific rehabilitative program, or at the inmate's request.

The classification of inmates should ensure that inmates are secure, staff and inmates are safe, and that inmates can access appropriate services. For sentenced inmates, this process should ensure they can access relevant rehabilitation programs and other activities to prepare for their release into the community.

The operation of the classification and placement system has emerged as an issue during many of our inspections. The current administrative process that involves a combination of local and centralised classification teams has become administratively burdensome and is no longer achieving its objective. We consider that this area requires systemic review to ensure that it is effective and efficient and achieving its intended purpose.

Scope

This review will examine four key areas:

- Current security ratings and designations for male and female inmates and whether these remain fit-for-purpose.
- Processes for initial classification and placement decisions and classification and placement reviews, and whether these are efficient, and effective.
- The impact that the role, function, and level of security of a correctional centre has on the placement of inmates.
- The way in which placement decisions take into account the criteria for placement outlined in the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Regulation 2014*.

We may consider any other relevant matters that arise during this review.