

Response to question on notice

Questions on Notice Paper No 10

19 September 2025

Question No. 617

Ms Deborah Morris MLA: To ask the Minister for Corrections —

1. What assessments are conducted for all detainees upon admission to the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC), including (a) literacy and numeracy, (b) education level and vocational skills, (c) employment history and (d) health, alcohol and other drug use, and behavioural risks.
2. Based on the most recent assessments, what proportion of detainees at the AMC are assessed as having (a) low literacy and numeracy and (b) no formal qualifications beyond Year 10.
3. What education, training and behavioural programs are available at the AMC, including programs aimed at (a) literacy and numeracy improvement, (b) vocational or trade skills, (c) alcohol and other drugs and (d) violence and family violence prevention.
4. For each program identified in part (3), what were the enrolment and completion numbers in each of the past five years.
5. What evaluation has been undertaken of the effectiveness of AMC education, training and behavioural programs in reducing reoffending.
6. What reintegration supports are available to detainees on release from the AMC, including (a) housing assistance, (b) employment support and job placement services, (c) continuing education or training and (d) ongoing rehabilitation or counselling programs.
7. For each reintegration support identified in part (6), what has been the number of detainees who accessed the program in each of the past five years, and what measures are in place to track completion and outcomes.

DR MARISA PATERSON MLA - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1.

- a) Literacy and Numeracy assessments on admission are not currently available to detainees at the AMC. However, the ACT Government acknowledges the importance of basic literacy skills for people exiting custody and is seeking to increase literacy and numeracy supports at the AMC in the short to medium term. ACT Corrective Services (ACTCS) received funding from the Confiscated

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Assets Trust (CAT) to develop a literacy and numeracy learning pilot, which will include literacy and numeracy assessments. ACTCS is anticipating engaging a qualified literacy and numeracy assessor in the first quarter of 2026.

- b), c) and d) On admission, detainees are assessed to identify and address immediate physical, mental health, or safety and security risks and needs (including additional needs such as disability adjustments). Justice Health Services undertake a full health assessment on admission.

As part of the induction process, which is completed within the first five days of a detainee's arrival at the AMC, comprehensive assessments are undertaken and documented to inform the continued management and support of the detainee against their individual needs.

The AMC induction Footprint Survey collects information regarding detainee employment, and it is currently being updated to include a question about detainees' education level/vocational skills. It also identifies any stress/self-harm factors, Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) and behavioural risks to consider.

Responses to the Footprint Survey are used to inform and generate referrals that connect detainees with the relevant internal and/or external services including mental health and AOD supports.

2.

- a) As above, Literacy and Numeracy assessments are not currently available to detainees on admission and as such, this information is not readily available.
- b) This data will be collected following updates to the induction Footprint Survey which will include questions about education attainment levels.

3.

- a) In regard to literacy, a volunteer regularly attends the AMC to provide literacy support to detainees. All detainees can access this support, which is provided on a weekly basis, subject to availability.
- b) An overview of courses delivered at the AMC during the 2024-25 financial year is available in Table 13 of the [Justice and Community Safety Directorate Annual Report 2024-25](#).
- c) An overview of programs available during the 2024-25 financial year, including those focused on AOD and violence and family violence prevention, is available in Table 10 of the [Justice and Community Safety Directorate Annual Report 2024-25](#).

ACTCS continues to explore opportunities to enhance education and industry pathway offerings at the AMC and has established the Detainee Education, Industry and Rehabilitation (DEIR) Board to oversee this work, which will involve auditing current programs, assessing industry gaps, identifying and proposing improvements, reviewing staffing and exploring digital programs.

4. For each program identified in part (3), what were the enrolment and completion numbers in each of the past five years.

It would require an unreasonable diversion of resources to collate and provide complete data requested for each listed program for the past five years within the timeframe. However, it is noted the Productivity Commission's [Report on Government Services Justice](#), Corrective Services data set shows the percentage of eligible detainees participating in education and training for the past five years (in Table 8A.11). Further, the [Justice and Community Safety Directorate Annual Report 2024-25](#) provides information regarding detainee participation in education and criminogenic programs. Previous years annual reports also contain aspects of this information.

5. Evaluation of programs is undertaken via various internal and/or external processes, depending on the nature of each program. This is monitored by the ACTCS Executive Leadership Committee. For example, ACTCS is licensed to deliver the suite of criminogenic programs of EQUIPS and the Sex Offender Program (SOP). Evaluation of the effectiveness of the programs is undertaken by the owner agencies in NSW (EQUIPS) and QLD (SOP).

The ACTCS Programs and Services Committee reviews all proposals for programs and services proposed to be offered at the AMC. The Committee considers a range of factors including that programs are underpinned by evidence-based practice and include a plan for evaluation in their proposal.

6. A summary across each area is provided below:

a) housing assistance available includes:

- The Justice Housing Program (JHP): ACTCS collaborates with programs and community providers to help detainees find long-term accommodation post-release. Detainees at risk of homelessness can apply for the JHP, providing temporary accommodation as a stepping stone to permanent housing. The JHP provides transitional accommodation for approved offenders on release from custody and community accommodation support for ex-detainees on ACTCS supervised orders. St Vincent de Paul Society provides case management services to residents engaged in the program.
- Transitional Accommodation Program (TAP): The TAP also provides transitional accommodation. Many of the goals of the JHP are mirrored in the TAP, however the TAP is designed to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals in securing both short and long-term accommodation. Yedding Mura, an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation, is currently contracted to facilitate the program, supporting the transitional accommodation needs of the participants as they are released from custody, as well as culturally appropriate services, including via case management.
- Havelock House, which provides outreach to women detainees.
- The Coming Home Program through Toora provides post-release support to all women, including assistance with accommodation where required.
- EveryMan, which provides support for men exiting custody by providing accommodation and case management.

b) Detainees participating in the Transitional Release Program (TRP) are supported in obtaining employment. In addition, ACTCS has received CAT funding for a detainee Work Release Program pilot.

c) ACTCS acknowledges that there are currently no formal post-release linkages for education or training. As per Question 3, ACTCS continues to explore opportunities to enhance education and industry pathway offerings at the AMC through the DEIR Board.

d) Supports provided by ACTCS' Reintegration Unit include referrals and engagement with a range of community-based providers as relevant to the individual, including to a variety of rehabilitation or counselling programs. In addition, the following programs are delivered by ACTCS and may be offered to released detainees:

- EQUIPS Addiction
- EQUIPS Aggression
- EQUIPS DFV

Finally, The Intensive Case Management and New Beginnings (iCAN) pilot program provides support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander detainees deemed at high risk of recidivism. The program provides participants culturally and psychologically supportive transition from custody to the community, through intensive, client centric service provision, not just in the justice space, but across areas such as accommodation, employment, education, training, and ongoing rehabilitation or counselling.

7. For each reintegration support identified in part (6), what has been the number of detainees who accessed the program in each of the past five years, and what measures are in place to track completion and outcomes.

It would require an unreasonable diversion of resources to collate and provide complete data requested for the past five years within the timeframe. However, it is noted the Justice and Community Safety Directorate Annual Report 2024-25 provides information regarding detainee participation in JHP and TAP. Previous years annual reports also contain aspects of this information. The iCAN program had 16 participants in the 2024-25 financial year.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



Dr Marisa Paterson MLA
Minister for Corrections

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