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Office of the  
**Commissioner**

**Queensland  
Corrective Services**

Mr Anthony Reilly  
Queensland Ombudsman and  
Inspector of Detention Services  
inspector@ombudsman.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Reilly

Thank you for your letter of 4 December 2024 about the inspection of the Southern Queensland Correctional Centre which was conducted in August 2023 under section 8(1)(b) of the *Inspector of Detention Services Act 2022*, and I also acknowledge the inclusion of the draft report.

Please find enclosed the Queensland Corrective Services submissions in relation to the proposed recommendations within the report.

If you require further information regarding this matter, please contact Superintendent Jonathan Gardiner, Acting Deputy General Manager, Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Custodial Operations on telephone [REDACTED] or via email at [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Stewart'.

Paul Stewart APM  
**Commissioner**

Enc

**SENSITIVE**

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# Southern Queensland Correctional Centre (SQCC) Draft Inspection Report – QCS Response to Proposed Recommendations

Queensland Corrective Services



Recommendations	Response
<p data-bbox="206 292 483 323"><b>Recommendation 1</b></p> <p data-bbox="206 352 517 427">Southern Queensland Correctional Centre:</p> <p data-bbox="206 456 533 699">a) review how induction information is provided to prisoners to ensure it is accessible through a wider range of formats</p> <p data-bbox="206 727 524 842">b) ensure staff can access interpreters for the induction process.</p>	<p data-bbox="562 284 2045 440">A prisoners' entry and transition into a corrective services facility is a critical period. Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) is committed to ensuring that information made available to prisoners is accessible, including to prisoners who are culturally or linguistically diverse, and prisoners who are unable to read or have impairments.</p> <p data-bbox="562 491 2045 691">Currently at the Southern Queensland Correctional Centre (SQCC), incoming prisoners are provided with an induction handbook upon arrival. The induction process begins in the prisoners' accommodation area, where they are introduced to the daily routines of their unit. Additionally, new prisoners participate in a weekly induction hub, where QCS representatives from various work areas meet new prisoners and describe the services they offer.</p> <p data-bbox="562 742 2045 941">This weekly induction hub allows prisoners to engage directly with QCS representatives, providing them with valuable opportunities for advice and support as they navigate the centre and the broader service system. QCS staff have the ability to access the Interpreter Service to facilitate the induction process for prisoners from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, ensuring that all individuals receive the necessary information and support during their transition into the correctional environment.</p> <p data-bbox="562 992 2045 1276">To enhance the induction process for women in custody, the Women's System Reform initiative is in the final stages of developing a comprehensive Women's Handbook, as recommended by Women's Safety Justice Taskforce (WSJT) Recommendation #167. This handbook aims to provide accessible, up-to-date, and easy-to-understand information tailored to the individual needs of women in custody and in the community. It will cover a wide range of topics, including women's rights, daily routines while incarcerated, how to access necessary support, preparation for release, and the complaints process. The Women's Handbook will replace the induction handbook currently provided to prisoners at SQCC.</p>



	<p>The language used in the handbook is intentionally crafted to be strengths-based and trauma-informed, and easy to read to ensure clarity. The handbook includes cultural information and considerations specific to First Nations women, developed in consultation with QCS' Murridhagun Cultural Centre. A First Nations organisation has been engaged to create artwork, illustrations, and graphics, ensuring that information is clearly displayed alongside supportive visuals. Additionally, recognising the needs of women with lower reading comprehension or those for whom English is a second language, the initiative includes the development of informative videos that will be displayed on closed-circuit TVs within the centres, with specific content tailored for the reception area and general centre information.</p> <p>The Women's Handbook will be professionally printed and distributed to every woman in QCS correctional centres, and when women transfer between facilities, they will receive the appropriate handbook for their new location.</p> <p>The Women's Handbook and will ensure relevant information is accessible to prisoners through a wide range of formats. QCS will continue to explore opportunities to improve the accessibility of information provided to prisoners in corrective services facilities.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b> West Moreton Hospital and Health Service and Queensland Corrective Services identify a more suitable location for health assessments to improve prisoner privacy.</p>	<p>QCS takes its privacy responsibilities seriously and is committed to improving the privacy of prisoners, maintaining confidentiality and ensuring the safety of all individuals in corrective services facilities.</p> <p>QCS operates within the constraints of the infrastructure and resources available in corrective services facilities, including SQCC.</p> <p>QCS will collaborate with West Moreton Hospital and Health Service to explore options to improve prisoner privacy during initial health assessments, acknowledging the limitations presented by infrastructure constraints and the procedures necessary to ensure a safe and effective reception assessment function. The nature of these constraints may limit feasible options.</p>



<p><b>Recommendation 3</b></p> <p>Southern Queensland Correctional Centre update the primary and secondary legal resources identified in the Custodial Operations Practice Directives: Prisoner Entitlements - Legal Resources and implement a regular process of checking that the women have access to the most current version of legislation available.</p>	<p>QCS is committed to providing women with access to legal resources. The QCS Custodial Operations Practice Directives (COPD): <i>Prisoner Entitlements - Legal Resources</i> requires that primary and secondary legal information be made available to approved prisoners. The COPD prescribes a list of legislation (and secondary information, such as textbooks) which must be made available to prisoners as a minimum. A formal review process occurs on a quarterly basis to ensure women have access to the current version of legislation and compliance with the COPD: <i>Prisoner Entitlements - Legal Resources</i>. In addition, changes to available legal resources may occur outside of the scheduled review process in response to significant legislative or COPD amendments (such as to implement recommendation 4 below).</p> <p>Women have access to legal resources through the onsite prisoner library at SQCC and the centre also conducts quarterly reviews of legal resources to ensure compliance with the COPD for Legal Resources.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b></p> <p>Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) update the COPD: Prisoner Entitlements – Legal Resources to include the Domestic</p>	<p>QCS is committed to providing prisoners with access to legal resources. QCS also recognises the importance of providing information relevant to domestic and family violence, given the prevalence of domestic and family violence perpetrators and victims in custody, in both male and female correctional centres in Queensland.</p> <p>QCS will amend section 9.1 of the COPD: <i>Prisoner Entitlements - Legal Resources</i> to include the <i>Family Violence Protection Act 2012</i> and the <i>Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules 2014</i>. QCS will also review the SQCC legal resource library and other Legal Resource Centres across corrective services</p>



<p>and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 and the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules 2014.</p>	<p>facilities to include the <i>Family Violence Protection Act 2012</i> and the <i>Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules 2014</i>.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b> Queensland Corrective Services amend the COPD: At-Risk to include where a decision has been made to deny a woman access to underwear or shorts as part of the risk assessment process, the assessment include strategies for managing the woman’s menstruation in a way that is hygienic, humane and dignified.</p>	<p>QCS recognises the importance of ensuring prisoners are managed in a way that is hygienic, humane and dignified, and takes its obligations under the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> seriously. QCS is also committed to ensuring it upholds its duty of care to all prisoners, particularly during periods of time where a prisoner may present a substantial risk to themselves or others. QCS is required to fulfil its duty of care by limiting access to items that could be used for self-harm.</p> <p>QCS acknowledges that this process may impact a woman’s rights to privacy and dignity, however, it is emphasised that such measures are taken only in the most exceptional circumstances, following a thorough risk assessment and consideration, and only when no alternative options exist to safeguard the individual’s life. Typically, decisions to deny access are only made when a woman is assessed to be at extreme risk of suicide or self-harm and has demonstrated a propensity to use these items for harmful purposes which may pose a risk to their safety.</p> <p>Section 7.5 of <i>COPD: At Risk Management</i> indicates that “individualised assessments must be conducted when considering a prisoner’s access to sanitary items (sanitary pads, tampons) and underwear, and must consider the least restrictive options available. If removing access to one or all of these items is critical to safety, a human rights impact assessment must be completed and the identified risk and assessment must be recorded in the relevant Initial Response Plan (IRP) or At-Risk Management Plan (ARMP).” (Version 09).</p>





At the time of the inspection, QCS was already providing a range of options for menstruating women assessed at high risk of suicide or self-harm, with sanitary items distributed on an as-needs basis. Typically, at-risk women who are menstruating receive sanitary pads, while the type of underwear provided—either regular or paper—is dependent on the individual’s risk profile. Although tampons pose a higher risk due to potential misuse, their provision may still be considered based on an individual assessment.

In instances where issuing sanitary products or underwear are assessed as posing an unacceptable risk due to extreme at-risk behaviours, the affected woman will be subject to constant staff observation. During the period of time where the risk assessment determines that issuing sanitary products or underwear is unsafe, staff will encourage the relevant individual to utilise available toilet paper, soap, and water to maintain hygiene. Continuous risk assessments are conducted to determine when the provision of sanitary products and/or underwear can be safely reinstated.

QCS is committed to exploring policy and practice changes where these can be implemented in a way that safeguards the prisoner’s life. QCS has initiated significant changes regarding the distribution of sanitary products to women identified as at risk, fulfilling the duty of care by limiting access to items that could be used for self-harm.

- QCS is collaborating with a university to design a safer underwear option that can accommodate sanitary pads, thereby enhancing the available resources to mitigate assessed risks of self-harm. In March 2024, then Deputy Commissioner Gary McCahon met with representatives from the Human Rights Commission (HRC) to discuss enhancements to QCS practices concerning the issuance of sanitary items to women at risk of self-harm, an area identified as a priority by the HRC. On March 12, 2024, Ms. Fulton from the HRC expressed support for these positive developments.
- In April 2024, COPD amendments supported by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) were implemented, requiring individualised assessments be conducted when restricting a female prisoner’s access to sanitary items.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The WSJT Project Team in line with Recommendation #139 are currently reviewing and updating COPDs to ensure they are trauma-informed, gender-specific, and culturally safe, with plans to develop gender-specific COPDs to address the complex needs of women in correctional facilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 6</b></p> <p>Southern Queensland Correctional Centre should ensure there is always one female officer rostered in each of the safety and detention units.</p>	<p>QCS is committed to ensuring the safety and dignity of women in custody, including those identified as at-risk.</p> <p>QCS recognises the importance of recruiting and retaining a workforce that reflects the diversity of the prisoner population. The challenges of achieving and sustaining a diverse workforce is not isolated to QCS and is experienced by other public sector agencies delivering services to diverse client groups.</p> <p>Notwithstanding these challenges, QCS has successfully implemented attraction, recruitment and retention strategies to attract key critical capabilities. Between December 2020 and December 2024, the total number of female custodial correctional officers increased from 875 to 1406. Female custodial correctional officers comprise 41 per cent of all custodial correctional officers at SQCC. QCS recognises that continuing this journey towards greater workforce diversity will increase the capability of the workforce</p>





	<p>to more effectively and appropriately manage women in prison. Specific initiatives to recruit and ensure female staff are always rostered in particular positions, such as the safety and detention units, may require exemptions under the <i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1992</i>.</p> <p>QCS also recognises that the right to life under the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> includes a positive duty on the State to take appropriate steps to protect the right to life. QCS has an overarching duty of care to ensure that prisoners who are at risk of self-harm or harm to others are appropriately monitored both physically and via CCTV. Inadequate observation can lead to tragic outcomes, including preventable deaths in custody. Rostering decisions are made within this context.</p> <p>Within the constraints presented by the proportion of female CCOs employed at SQCC, efforts are made to roster and operate in a way that allows for the management of women’s dignity and privacy. These practices include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts are made to ensure at least one female CCO is rostered to work in the Safety Unit.</li> <li>• Removal of clothing searches are prioritised when female CCOs are on duty.</li> <li>• At least one female CCO is allocated to an external escort when a woman requires assessment and/or treatment in a hospital, noting that a women’s assessment and/or treatment may require her to be partially or full unclothed at times.</li> <li>• Additional information regarding expectations of staff and the protection of women's dignity and privacy is outlined below in Recommendation 7.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 7</b> Queensland Corrective Services clearly indicate their</p>	<p>QCS recognises there is a critical need to balance the protection of women's dignity and privacy with the imperative of ensuring their safety through proper observation. Although efforts are made to have female CCOs on roster and present when during times such as showering and toilet use, there are instances</p>



<p>expectation of how custodial correctional officers manage observations of prisoners of the opposite gender when undertaking duties in a safety unit, detention unit or similar with reference to the relevant Custodial Operations Practice Directives.</p>	<p>when male CCOs may inadvertently observe women undressed due to the limitations of the current rostering practices and operational constraints.</p> <p>QCS has clear expectations for how custodial correctional officers manage observations of prisoners of the opposite gender when undertaking duties in a safety unit or detention unit. In situations where a woman undresses or uses the toilet while a male CCO is monitoring via CCTV, the protocol requires the officer to remove the image from the monitor and avert their gaze from the monitor while requesting the woman to dress. QCS is committed to enforcing and ensuring staff comply with this practice and is currently exploring ways to formalise it through Local Instructions or COPDs.</p> <p>CCOs assigned to the Safety Unit undergo specialised trauma-informed training, which is delivered by a Senior Psychologist and focuses on the unique behaviours and needs of the women in their care. This training equips staff with the skills to handle the unique challenges presented by the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the women they supervise. This training emphasises the importance of compassion, respect, and integrity, reinforcing QCS's commitment to maintaining a professional environment. All staff are expected and required to perform their duties with respect and compassion, and they are monitored for professionalism and integrity.</p> <p>CCOs assigned to the Safety Unit also undergo specialised trauma-informed training, which is delivered by a Senior Psychologist and focuses on the unique behaviours and needs of the women in their care. This training equips staff with the skills to handle the unique challenges presented by the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the women they supervise. This training emphasises the importance of compassion, respect, and integrity, reinforcing QCS's commitment to maintaining a professional environment. All staff are expected and required to perform their duties with respect and compassion, and they are monitored for professionalism and integrity.</p> <p>To enhance the capacity of staff to work in a gender-specific and culturally safe manner the QCS Women's Trauma Informed Practice Framework is being developed to provide comprehensive support for staff</p>
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	<p>working with women in custody. This framework will help ensure that the unique needs of women are met with sensitivity and respect, ultimately improving their care and outcomes within the correctional system.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 8</b> Queensland Corrective Services prioritise the delivery of specialist mental health and trauma support for women at Southern Queensland Correctional Centre.</p>	<p>QCS acknowledges that many women in the criminal justice system have experienced abuse and trauma, and services for women in custody, including mental health services, need to be delivered through a comprehensive, trauma-informed approach.</p> <p>QCS, in collaboration with Queensland Health (QHealth), is committed to ensuring the timely delivery of health services for prisoners and acknowledges the distinct vulnerabilities and needs of prisoners. QHealth provides specialist mental health services for prisoners (Prison Mental Health Services), and QCS employs psychologists and correctional counsellors to provide psychological services that promote mental health, wellbeing and safety of individuals in custody and to support their progression in custody.</p> <p>Upon admission to custody, each prisoner undergoes an assessment by a QCS mental health professional to identify immediate risks and needs. Individualised interventions and referral pathways are established based on these assessments. Vulnerable prisoners or those at higher risk of suicide receive specialised case management support through the Prisoner of Concern (PoC) and Elevated Baseline Risk (EBLR) processes. QCS clinical staff are provided with ongoing training to enhance their trauma-informed practices.</p> <p>QHealth undertakes assessments of prisoners upon reception to confirm immediate physical and mental health needs. Prisoners are able to access QHealth primary and specialist mental health treatment at any time during their incarceration through self-referral. QCS may also refer people for QHealth mental health treatment. The partnership between QHealth and QCS emphasises the importance of addressing the mental health and trauma needs of prisoners, particularly women, through a multidisciplinary approach that includes case management and collaboration with PMHS (QHealth).</p>



SQCC has established a dedicated accommodation unit (S1) specifically for vulnerable prisoners with complex mental health needs. A multidisciplinary team evaluates the suitability of prisoners for placement in this unit, allowing for more consistent and flexible support. This co-location of prisoners facilitates regular access to services while maintaining opportunities for participation in external activities. Consistent staffing in the unit fosters trust and rapport, enabling officers to better understand individual behaviors and needs.

An informal review of the unit's management has indicated positive outcomes, while also highlighting areas for ongoing improvement. In alignment with the WSJT Recommendation #139, QCS is implementing ongoing competency-based training for staff, focusing on trauma-informed, gender-responsive, and culturally capable practices. This training aims to equip staff with the skills necessary to manage women who have experienced various forms of violence, including child abuse and domestic violence.

The trauma-informed framework established by QCS is built on core principles such as safety, respect, collaboration, cultural identity, accountability, and empowerment. This framework guides the development of programs and services tailored to the unique needs of women in custody, acknowledging the complexities of their experiences and the factors contributing to their involvement in the criminal justice system.

In response to WSJT Recommendation 147, QCS is reviewing existing rehabilitation programs for women, with the goal of enhancing the availability and quality of gender-specific services. This includes improving continuity of care between correctional facilities and the community. Additional funding from WSJT will support the expansion of rehabilitation programs and the recruitment of internal program delivery staff.



<p><b>Recommendation 9</b></p> <p>Queensland Corrective Services implement a process for the decision-making and recording of the considerations when limiting human rights for individual prisoners placed on safety orders or separate confinement orders and that this process is accurately reflected in the relevant Custodial Operations Practice Directives.</p>	<p>QCS takes its obligations under the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> seriously and acknowledges that there are several factors which must be considered in assessing whether a limitation on a human right by an act or decision is reasonable and justifiable. QCS also recognises that the placement of prisoners on safety orders or other decisions which may result in prisoners being accommodated separately from other prisoners may limit several of their rights under the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i>. QCS also considers a decision to place a prisoner on a safety or other order may also promote the rights of the prisoner, or other prisoners/individuals in a corrective services facility.</p> <p>Accordingly, QCS commits to considering and exploring methods to ensure the consistent documentation of human rights considerations when making decisions around safety orders and separate confinement orders.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 10</b></p> <p>Southern Queensland Correctional Centre ensure records from all Prisoner Advisory</p>	<p>QCS recognises its recordkeeping obligations and the importance of transparent communication with prisoners. SQCC conducts regular Prisoner Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings and has also recently established a First Nations Committee to address the growing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners at the facility. Both types of PAC meetings are documented via detailed minutes. The minutes capture prisoner requests along with the corresponding outcomes and are distributed during the meetings to ensure that all prisoners are informed and aware of the discussions and decisions made.</p>



<p>Committee meetings accurately document the outcomes from requests by prisoners and these outcomes are communicated and this is documented.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 11</b> Southern Queensland Correctional Centre ensure all prisoner requests, no matter how they are received, are accurately documented including the date the request was received, the subject, who it was tasked to and when it was completed.</p>	<p>QCS recognises its recordkeeping obligations and accepts it is necessary to ensure prisoner requests are appropriately documented and managed. This reinforces the values of respect and trust within the correctional environment, ultimately aiming to enhance the overall experience and outcomes for women in custody at SQCC.</p> <p>QCS recognises that SQCC currently lacks a unified system for managing prisoner request forms and is exploring digital solutions to address this gap. SQCC has been selected as a trial site for the implementation of the Prisoner Request System (PRS), which is scheduled to commence in 2025 following the successful completion of user acceptance testing. This initiative represents a significant investment in information and communication technology, aimed at enhancing service delivery and improving the management of prisoner requests. At the conclusion of the trial, a decision will be made on whether to rollout the trial or explore alternative options to capture prisoner request forms.</p>





**Recommendation 12**

Southern Queensland Correctional Centre implement a process to ensure blue letters are correctly categorised as a complaint, request, compliment or enquiry, and timeframes for the resolution of complaints are improved.

SQCC maintains a comprehensive Blue Letter Register that systematically captures all incoming blue letter correspondence. The Blue Letter Register at SQCC plays a crucial role in ensuring that prisoner complaints are systematically documented, tracked, managed, acknowledged, and resolved in a timely manner, thereby promoting transparency and accountability within the correctional facility.

The key components recorded in the Blue Letter Register include:

- Blue Letter Number: A unique identifier assigned to each piece of correspondence.
- Complaint Management System Number or Request: A reference number linked to the QCS Complaints Management System, known as Resolve, which facilitates the tracking of complaints.
- Date Received: The date on which the correspondence is received by the centre.
- Date of Letter: The date indicated on the letter sent by the prisoner.
- Name: The name of the prisoner submitting the correspondence.
- Issue: A brief description of the matter being raised in the correspondence.
- Target Date for Response: A specified deadline for responding to the correspondence, set at 14 days from the date of the letter.
- Responsible Officer: The staff member designated to address the issue raised in the correspondence.
- Date of Acknowledgment Letter/Email Sent: The date on which an acknowledgment of receipt is sent to the prisoner, which is required to be done within 5 days of receiving the correspondence.
- Outcome: The final resolution or response to the issue raised in the correspondence.

QCS recognises that improvements could be made to more clearly specify the category of the matter and amend the Blue Letter process to include an additional 'category' to capture whether it is a complaint, request, compliment or enquiry. This enhancement would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the complaint management process.

It is important to note that while complaints are recorded in the Blue Letter Register, they are managed through the QCS Complaints Management System, Resolve. This dual system ensures that all complaints



	<p>are tracked and addressed appropriately, maintaining a clear and organised approach to prisoner correspondence and complaint resolution.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 13</b>          West Moreton Hospital and Health Service implement a complaints management system for Southern Queensland Correctional Centre to allow for the appropriate categorisation of complaints, reporting of complaint data, and monitoring of service delivery improvements</p>	<p>Recommendation for West Moreton Hospital and Health Service. QCS will engage with West Moreton Hospital and Health Service as required.</p>



required.	
<p><b>Recommendation 14</b></p> <p>Southern Queensland Correctional Centre implement an audit process for disciplinary hearings not requested to be reviewed, to address areas such as considerations and consistency in decision-making, and the conduct of hearings to promote good practice and identify areas for improvement.</p>	<p>QCS is committed to ensuring decisions are made in a consistent, transparent and fair way.</p> <p>QCS will explore the feasibility of establishing an audit process of non-reviewed matters to ensure consistent practice.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 15</b></p> <p>Southern Queensland Correctional Centre ensure that, prior to the application of restraints, an individualised assessment is</p>	<p>SQCC is dedicated to ensuring the safety and well-being of prisoners during internal escorts while simultaneously advancing the training and procedural frameworks necessary to support the unique needs of women in custody. QCS acknowledges that the application and use of restraints may also impose limitations on prisoners' rights under the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> and decision making must be compatible with human rights.</p> <p>At SQCC, prisoners who are escorted internally have been identified as a potential risk, prompting the implementation of a thorough assessment process prior to any movement. This assessment evaluates the necessity of appropriate restraints based on the prisoner's known risk factors and presenting</p>



<p>undertaken to assess the risk of self-harm or harm to others to reduce the over-application of restraints on women when escorted internally.</p>	<p>behaviours. For women being escorted, the use of restraints is specifically addressed and documented in a Deliberate Action Plan, which is designed to ensure the safety of both the prison and others during the escort process.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 16</b> Southern Queensland Correctional Centre cease reissuing worn-out, torn, and stained clothing and commence a program of replacing all such uniforms. This should include implementing the recording of requests for uniform exchange to allow for oversight of such requests.</p>	<p>QCS acknowledges that prisoners should be issued with clothing that is an acceptable condition, and this promotes their right to humane treatment when deprived of dignity under the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i>.</p> <p>A comprehensive review of the current clothing stock at SQCC is being conducted with the assistance of prisoner employment to ensure that all items are in acceptable condition. This review will identify clothing that may require replacement.</p> <p>SQCC has an established process for capturing clothing exchange requests and managing the clothing inventory. SQCC relies on other correctional facilities to manufacture clothing for women through their respective industry areas. This approach creates industry opportunities, supports the operational needs of SQCC and fosters inter-centre cooperation. QCS will review the process to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.</p>



<p><b>Recommendation 17</b></p> <p>Queensland Corrective Services update its Food and Nutrition Guidelines 2009 as a priority prior to the next review of the statewide menu due, in 2024. The finalised menu should reflect endorsement by a dietician.</p>	<p>QCS implements a statewide approach to food and nutritional service delivery to ensure prisoners are receiving adequate, low allergen, nutritionally balanced meals, from a menu developed in consultation with a registered dietitian. QCS also caters for standard and alternative prisoner menus for cultural, religious or medical reasons.</p> <p>QCS has recently established a centralised role to strengthen strategic oversight of custodial industries, including food service delivery. Recruitment into this role is expected to be finalised by March 2025. This recommendation will be considered in the next centralised review of the Statewide Prisoner Menu.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 18</b></p> <p>Southern Queensland Correctional Centre record deviations from the statewide menu to ensure the women are receiving a variety of protein options, especially when the identified protein option in the statewide menu is not available, to reduce the overreliance on</p>	<p>SQCC has maintained strict adherence to the Statewide Prisoner Menu, with no identified deviations to date. Further to QCS' response to recommendation 17, adherence to the statewide menu ensures prisoners are receiving adequate, low allergen, nutritionally balanced meals. The recommendation will be considered in the next centralised review of the Statewide Prisoner Menu.</p> <p>QCS recognises that circumstances may arise that could require adjustments to the statewide menu, particularly in instances where the procurement of specific protein sources becomes challenging. This may be in circumstances such as a natural disaster or issue with a supplier/shortage of produce. In such cases, any deviations from the established menu will be carefully documented to ensure transparency and accountability in dietary management. QCS considers that this approach not only maintains the integrity of the menu but allows for flexibility in responding to unforeseen supply issues while continuing to prioritise the health and well-being of those in custody.</p>



<p>chicken as a substitute and ensure their nutritional needs are being met.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 19</b></p> <p>Queensland Corrective Services update the COPD: Leave of Absence to include:</p> <p>a) Written notification as to the outcome of an application must be provided to the prisoner.</p> <p>b) The written notification must include information about the prisoner's right to review and the process for requesting a review.</p>	<p>QCS recognises its recordkeeping obligations and the importance of transparent communication with prisoners.</p> <p>QCS confirms that the <i>COPD Escorts: Leave of Absence</i> and associated administrative form will be amended to include processes for the written notification of prisoner applications and inform the prisoner of their right to review.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 20</b></p> <p>That Queensland Corrective Services review the prisoner</p>	<p>QCS acknowledges the valuable role education plays in rehabilitation and reducing recidivism for prisoners and aims to foster an environment that prioritises education as a fundamental component of rehabilitation and reintegration. QCS is committed to enhancing educational opportunities for women in custody by increasing both staffing levels and outsourced service delivery and aims to improve access to education and reduce barriers to participation.</p>





<p>remuneration rates to ensure:</p> <p>a) special provision for women unable to participate in work due to pregnancy</p> <p>b) consideration is given to promoting study by providing equitable levels of remuneration for women engaged in full-time education and training.</p>	<p>To further support this goal and in response to WSJT Recommendation 152, QCS is considering the introduction of further prisoner employment roles, such as peer support workers and increased full-time student positions, which will be compensated at levels designed to incentivise participation. This strategy aligns with QCS' recent review of the Incentive Payment Scheme, specifically focusing on peer tutor and student wages. The review highlighted that raising wages for peer tutors and students, along with increasing the number of available roles, would effectively encourage more prisoners to engage in educational programs.</p> <p>Additionally, in response to WSJT Recommendation 154, QCS will conduct a comprehensive review of the current employment, wages and working conditions for all women in custody, including those on remand and those serving sentences in Queensland. This review aims to ensure that the allowances, employment, wages and working conditions for all women in custody, including those on remand and those serving sentences in Queensland. This review aims to ensure that the allowances, employment opportunities, and remuneration provided to these women are consistent with human rights standards and relevant industrial requirements.</p> <p>Through these initiatives, QCS seeks to create a more supportive and equitable environment for women in custody, promoting their educational and employment prospects while upholding their rights and dignity.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 21</b></p> <p>The West Moreton Hospital and Health Service increase access for women to medical, dental and mental health services until waitlists are reduced and</p>	<p>Recommendation for West Moreton Hospital and Health Service. QCS will engage with West Moreton Hospital and Health Service as required.</p>



<p>preventive health care can be put into practice, equivalent to community expectations.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 22</b> West Moreton Hospital and Health Service develop a strategy for recruitment and retention of nursing staff to ensure the provision of an overnight nurse for Southern Queensland Correctional Centre.</p>	<p>Recommendation for West Moreton Hospital and Health Service. QCS will engage with West Moreton Hospital and Health Service as required.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 23</b> Queensland Corrective Services examine making medication such as paracetamol and ibuprofen available for prisoner purchase on the canteen list, allowing prisoners to</p>	<p>QCS acknowledges prisoners have complex health needs which may require access to immediate pain relief and recognises the value of autonomy in prisoners self-managing medication as they would be expected to do in the community. The purchase of paracetamol and ibuprofen is now available to prisoners through the canteen list at SQCC and is supported by a Local Instruction.</p>



<p>demonstrate their capacity to self-manage medication needs as they would be expected to do in the community.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 24</b></p> <p>The West Moreton Hospital and Health Service increase women's access to allied healthcare, including physiotherapy and podiatry.</p>	<p>Recommendation for West Moreton Hospital and Health Service. QCS will engage with West Moreton Hospital and Health Service as required.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 25</b></p> <p>To ensure that women have access to health services, the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service resolve jurisdictional issues and refusals to provide health services based</p>	<p>Recommendation for West Moreton Hospital and Health Service. QCS will engage with West Moreton Hospital and Health Service as required.</p>



<p>on the classification of prisoners.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 26</b> Queensland Health address delays in prisoner access to acute mental health facilities because of the perception that they are receiving the required mental health care and support in a prison.</p>	<p>Recommendation for West Moreton Hospital and Health Service. QCS will engage with West Moreton Hospital and Health Service as required.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 27</b> Queensland Corrective Service introduce body-scanning technology as a priority for women's prisons to remove the need for routine strip (removal of clothing) searching.</p>	<p>In alignment with WSJT Recommendation 136, QCS is conducting a trial of non-invasive screening technology in Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre. This technology minimises the need to conduct routine removal of clothing searches. The outcomes of this trial will serve as the foundation for rollout of this technology to the remaining two women's correctional centers at SQCC and Townsville Women's Correctional Centre.</p> <p>While the outcomes of the trial are pending, QCS is implementing trauma-informed policies, procedures and practices to ensure removal of clothing searches are compatible with human rights, in accordance with guidance from the Queensland Human Rights Commission and as outlined in WSJT Recommendation 137.</p>



<p><b>Recommendation 28</b></p> <p>To allow for increased enrolments and reduce the waiting lists, Southern Queensland Correctional Centre increase the availability of educational courses or the capacity of the current programs.</p>	<p>QCS acknowledges the valuable role education plays in rehabilitation and reducing recidivism for prisoners and aims to foster an environment that prioritises education as a fundamental component of rehabilitation and reintegration.</p> <p>In response to WSJT Recommendation 152, QCS is committed to enhancing educational opportunities for women in custody by increasing staffing levels (as outlined in Recommendation 20) and expanding outsourced service delivery. This initiative aims to create a comprehensive educational pathway tailored specifically for women, which will significantly improve access to, and participation in, education and training programs.</p> <p>By establishing this new educational framework, QCS seeks to facilitate not only the acquisition of essential skills and knowledge while incarcerated but also to create viable pathways to post-release employment. This strategic approach recognises the importance of education in reducing recidivism and promoting successful reintegration into society, ultimately empowering women to build better futures for themselves.</p> <p>The proposed expansion of educational services is scheduled for the 2026-27 financial year, reflecting QCS' long-term commitment to improving the education landscape for women in correctional facilities. Commencing in the 2024-25, QCS has also received three years of increased Vocational Education and Training (VET) funding from the Department of Trade, Employment and Training. This funding increase will provide an additional 240 hours of VET, as well as Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) courses.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 29</b></p> <p>Queensland Corrective Services investigate the implementation of in-cell technology to</p>	<p>In-cell technology aims to provide greater prisoner access to a broad range of services, including prisoner which may include communications, legal resources, prisoner purchasing and television. In-cell technology may also provide opportunities to enhance health and educational services available to prisoners, particularly in response to WSJT Recommendation 152. QCS will be implementing in-cell technology for prisoners at Lockyer Valley Correctional Centre, which is due to be commissioned in 2025.</p>



<p>support the completion of self-paced education programs and reduce the lengthy waitlists.</p>	<p>Any subsequent rollout of in-cell technology to other correctional centres would require additional government funding and need to be technically and commercially viable given the infrastructure and information communication technology limitations of the centre.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 30</b></p> <p>To ensure the continuing connection to their cultures, Southern Queensland Correctional Centre make a broader range of cultural items available on the buy-up list to all women.</p>	<p>QCS recognises the importance of culturally safe correctional practices. QCS also acknowledges that all persons with a particular cultural background must not be denied the right, in community with other persons of that background to enjoy their culture, and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold distinct rights under the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i>.</p> <p>SQCC has established a First Nations Committee, allowing prisoner participants to inform the selection of cultural items available for purchase throughout the facility, while also ensuring that the broader Prisoner Advisory Committee can make recommendations to capture and promote cultural recommendations to capture and promote cultural diversity more comprehensively within the centre.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 31</b></p> <p>Queensland Corrective Services and Southern Queensland Correctional centre improve the Parental Support Unit for women and their children by:</p>	<p>QCS is committed to the continuous improvement of the Parental Support Unit for women and children at SQCC. QCS also recognises the importance of equipping mothers with essential life skills and appropriate supports and activities for their children. SQCC has a dedicated PSU that provides comprehensive pre- and post-natal support to women in custody. This unit is designed to address the unique needs of mothers during and after pregnancy, ensuring that they receive the necessary care and resources to support both their health and that of their children. Resident children are also supported in attending the local early learning centre, which offers a range of programs including nurse and toddlers, pre-kindergarten, and kindergarten. SQCC is dedicated to catering to the diverse age groups of children residing in the PSU, ensuring that appropriate activities are available to support their developmental needs.</p>





<p>a) making the unit child-friendly through the installation of a shaded outdoor play area and adding colour through murals or artwork to the unit</p> <p>b) installing cooking and washing facilities to support the women in developing cooking and managing-hygiene skills to support them on release</p> <p>c) introducing a variety of child-related programs, services and activities to support the development of resident children.</p>	<p>SQCC are currently considering the suggestions made as to how the PSU environment can be improved.</p> <p>In line with WSJT Recommendation 134, QCS has updated the COPD: Female Prisoners and Children as of 1 July 2024, to include the provision of essential items free of charge for pregnant women and women with children in custody. The essential item provided by QCS encompass a maternity bag for use during hospital stays, a nappy bag for newborns, and a comprehensive range of essential items such as nappies, wipes, clothing, footwear, cots, linen, baby food, medicine, dummies, formula, breast milk pumps and bottles. These provisions are designed to support the daily care and well-being of both mothers and their children. Additionally, a new Appendix FEM2 has been developed as part of the COPD update, outlining the specific essential items that QCS will provide to female prisoners who are pregnant, have given birth, or have a child accommodated with them in custody.</p> <p>In response to WSJT recommendation 133, QCS is set to redesign the parenting program for incarcerated mothers, with the aim of enabling them to maintain a connection with their children and to care for them safely following their release from custody. This redesign will consider expanding the availability and eligibility of the Shine for Kids parenting program, which is currently offered, while addressing existing constraints such as the lack of transport for children, the absence of post-release or virtual service delivery, and the need for greater recognition by Child Safety to facilitate reunification.</p> <p>The program will also focus on the specific needs to First Nations women, ensuring that it aligns with the findings of the WSJT report, the objective of the Women’s System Reform Program, the QCS Domestic and Family Violence Strategy, and the QCS Interim Women’s Strategy. The enhanced parenting program will provide a culturally safe, trauma-informed, and gender-centric approach to support incarcerated mothers and their children.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 32</b> Queensland Corrective Services and Southern</p>	<p>QCS recognises the value of providing women with the opportunity to improve their parenting skills and opportunities for engagement with their children following their release from custody. QCS also</p>



<p>Queensland Correctional Centre investigate and implement additional parenting programs to provide women with the opportunity to enhance their parenting skills and improve their opportunities for engaging with children post-release.</p>	<p>acknowledges that pursuant to the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i>, families are the fundamental group unit of society and are entitled to be protected by society and the State.</p> <p>SQCC is dedicated to providing mothers with access to the Shine for Kids programs, which are designed to support children and young people in thriving despite the challenges of parental incarceration. These programs offer valuable resources and activities that foster healthy development and strengthen the bond between mothers and their children. Additionally, residents of the PSU benefit from the services of a QHealth child health nurse, who conducts weekly home visits for mothers and their children, starting from newborns and continuing as the child grows. The frequency of these visits gradually decreases as the child's health stabilises, ensuring that both the mother and child receive the necessary health support. The child health nurse performs regular health checks, maintains the child's personal health record (commonly referred to as the "red book"), and facilitates any required referrals to other health services. Furthermore, the nurse conducts informative sessions on a wide range of topics tailored to the needs of PSU residents, equipping them with the knowledge and skills required to care for their children effectively.</p> <p>In response to WSJT Recommendation 133, QCS is committed to redesigning the parenting program for incarcerated mothers to facilitate the maintenance of connections with their children and to ensure safe caregiving following their release from custody as outlined in Recommendation 31. Additionally, as part of the program redesign, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be established between QCS and the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety. This MOU will ensure that the parenting program and its subsequent delivery are fully aligned with Child Safety requirements for the reunification of mothers and their children. By fostering collaboration between these agencies, QCS aims to create a comprehensive support system that not only addresses the immediate needs of incarcerated mothers but also facilitates a smoother transition for families seeking to reunite after a period of separation. This holistic approach underscores QCS's commitment to improving outcomes for women in custody and their children, ultimately contributing to healthier family dynamics and stronger community ties.</p>
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**Recommendation 33**

Southern Queensland Correctional Centre introduce a process to screen mothers returning to the centre immediately post-childbirth, to identify postnatal support needs, including mental health care needs, with follow-up reviews conducted at regular intervals until no longer required.

The PSU established at SQCC provides comprehensive pre- and post-natal support to women in custody. This unit is designed to address the unique needs of mothers during and after pregnancy, ensuring that they receive the necessary care and resources to support both their health and that of their children.

Following childbirth, mothers are supported by the services of a QHealth child health nurse, who plays a crucial role in monitoring maternal and child health. The child health nurse employs the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale to assess any mental health needs of the mother, providing an important screening tool to identify those who may require additional support. Depending on the results of this assessment, a counsellor or psychologist may be engaged to offer regular welfare and counselling services, ensuring that mothers have access to the mental health resources they need. Additionally, mothers have the option to make self-referrals for welfare and counselling support through the centre's qualified counsellors or psychologists, promoting a proactive approach to mental health care.

The PSU is overseen by a correctional counsellor, whose primary responsibility is to provide a high level of welfare assistance, counselling, and approved programs to women in custody more broadly. This oversight ensures that mothers receive consistent support tailored to their individual circumstances. A counsellor visits the PSU at least once a week to check on the well-being of both mothers and their children, facilitating open communication and addressing any concerns that may arise. This regular engagement is vital for fostering a supportive environment where mothers feel empowered to seek help and guidance as needed.

From a holistic perspective, SQCC currently conducts a fortnightly PSU meeting that includes a multidisciplinary team of staff from various levels within the facility. This meeting serves as a platform for the ongoing monitoring of the well-being of mothers and children residing in custody, allowing for collaborative discussions and coordinated care strategies. Furthermore, this forum acts as the Accommodation of Children Panel, where decisions regarding the care and accommodation of children are made, ensuring that the best interests of the children are prioritised.



	<p>By integrating various professional perspectives and expertise, SQCC aims to create a comprehensive support system that addresses the complex needs of mothers and their children, ultimately fostering healthier family dynamics and enhancing the overall rehabilitation process for women in custody.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 34</b> Queensland Corrective Services develop and prioritise the implementation of the framework for managing women in correctional environments including training for staff working with women experiencing acute mental health issues in high-risk settings such as the safety and detention units.</p>	<p>QCS is currently in the design phase of developing a Trauma Informed Practice Framework tailored specifically for working with women in both correctional and community settings. This initiative is particularly relevant to SQCC, where staff assigned to the safety unit and detention areas receive specialised training titled "Understanding and Working with Trauma." This training covers essential topics, including the definition of trauma, its development, symptoms, its impact on the brain and behaviour, and effective management strategies. Initially, the training was delivered by a Senior Psychologist from another facility; however, SQCC has since trained its own Senior Psychologist to conduct these sessions, allowing for a more localised and consistent approach. The training will also be expanded to include officers in the vulnerable unit and correctional supervisors, enhancing the overall capability of staff in handling trauma-related issues.</p> <p>In addition to this training, the Women's Trauma Informed Practice Framework, as outlined in Recommendation 7, will further influence the implementation of these practices.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 35</b> Queensland Corrective Services increase the recruitment of female correctional staff to</p>	<p>QCS values and fosters diversity within the workforce and is constantly exploring innovative ways to break down traditional gender stereotypes in the custodial environment and attract more women to CCO roles. Between December 2020 and December 2024, the total number of female custodial correctional officers increased from 875 to 1406. Female custodial correctional officers comprise 41 per cent of all custodial correctional officers at SQCC. QCS recognises that continuing this journey towards greater workforce diversity will increase the capability of the workforce to more effectively and appropriately manage women</p>



<p>achieve a 70% female to 30% male staff ratio at Southern Queensland Correctional Centre.</p>	<p>in prison. Specific initiatives to recruit and ensure female staff are always rostered in particular positions, such as the safety and detention units, may require exemptions under the <i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1992</i>.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 36</b>                  Queensland Corrective Services and Southern Queensland Correctional Centre improve the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people employed at the centre by:</p> <p>a) developing a recruitment strategy to attract and retain First Nations people as correctional and or support staff</p> <p>b) establishing a Cultural Development</p>	<p>QCS recognises that having a diverse workforce is essential to providing services and programs that are culturally safe and responsive. QCS is committed to improving service delivery to First Nations people and creating a culturally safe environment. QCS’s Reframing the Relationship Plan 2024-2033 outlines how QCS will transform its approach to the humane containment, supervision and rehabilitation of offenders to ensure they are culturally appropriate. Among other things, the QCS Reconciliation Action Plan (July 2024-July 2026) seeks to increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed by QCS, including by exploring the need to introduce preparatory programs for First Nations applicants, reviewing roles, simplifying criminal history and waiver processes, diversifying recruitment material and reviewing procedures to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.</p> <p>The QCS Murrighagan Cultural Centre (MCC) provides advice and support to QCS staff around required cultural protocols when engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations. MCC also provides mentoring and cultural support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, including the cultural teams, and support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff around cultural events.</p> <p>Allocating additional cultural resources at SQCC would require additional resources and the current funding model imposes significant limitations. QCS recognises it is imperative to explore avenues for increased collaboration and support from MCC.</p>



<p>and Advisory Position to support the work of the cultural team.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 37</b> Queensland Corrective Services review the current recruitment strategy to attract and retain psychologists and trade instructors.</p>	<p>QCS is cognisant of the challenges in recruiting psychologists across the sector. QCS has been working to address these challenges over a number of years and is committed to continuing efforts to address these complex system and sector wide issues. In June 2023, QCS launched its first major Government Advertising and Communication Committee campaign. The campaign targets custodial operations, psychology and allied health, industries and trades, case and sentence management, rehabilitation and reintegration program officers, as well as administration. QCS is also launching an Allied Health Recruitment Campaign to attract psychologists, social workers, and occupational therapists to frontline mental health roles within correctional facilities, thereby strengthening the overall mental health support framework.</p> <p>The Psychological Services Redesign Project is set to implement a new mental health services workforce model that expands the role of psychologists to include other qualified allied health professionals, such as social workers and occupational therapists. This new model aims to enhance recruitment opportunities and will be rolled out in 2025, with SQCC expected to begin implementation around mid-2025.</p> <p>The QCS Psychological Services Strategic Workforce Planning Project is finalising recommendations aimed at enhancing the attraction and retention of mental health professionals. QCS has also recently received approval from the Public Sector Commission to offer attraction and retention initiatives for psychologists.</p>





