

Terms of reference

The Review will inquire into and report on culture, safety and inclusion, and integrity within the Victorian custodial corrections system (“the Review”).

It will report to the Minister for Corrections through the Secretary, Department of Justice and Community Services (DJCS) and the Deputy Secretary, Corrections and Justice Services (CJS).

The Review will support a safe prison system that is free from breaches of integrity, sexual harassment and discrimination and promotes Aboriginal cultural safety and self-determination.

The Review will span both the public and private adult custodial corrections system. It will inquire into the culture of the adult custodial corrections system, focussed on two streams of inquiry – ensuring the wellbeing and safety of staff within the adult custodial system, and the safety (including Cultural safety) of people in custody. In particular, it will consider:

Stream 1 – Custodial Staff

- 1 Measures to address systemic behavioural and cultural challenges among and towards staff, impacting on staff wellbeing and safety.
- 2 The effectiveness and appropriateness of the DJCS systems and processes that prevent and respond to behavioural and cultural challenges to protect and preserve the wellbeing of all staff.
- 3 Options to drive cultural change and promote appropriate behaviour that is consistent with a culturally safe and integrity-based corrections system, including options to address workforce skills and key capabilities (including leadership capability).
- 4 Measures to ensure appropriate and effective cultural support for Aboriginal staff.

Stream 2 – People in custody

- 1 Whether systems and processes in prisons ensure that Aboriginal people in custody have the right to access and continue to practice Culture, are free from discrimination, and are consistent with Aboriginal self-determination.
- 2 The effectiveness and appropriateness of DJCS systems and processes to support the safety of people in custody (noting issues experienced by particular cohort groups such as women, Aboriginal people, LGBTI people, people with disability, elderly individuals and people from a CALD background).

Matters currently on foot regarding conduct will be dealt with in the usual way and not form part of this review. Allegations of criminal or inappropriate conduct will be passed on to appropriate bodies and will also not be investigated or responded to by the Review.

The Review will build on key achievements and initiatives already underway within DJCS, including the implementation of a range of rehabilitation focussed support programs, Corrections Victoria’s ongoing efforts to strengthen workplace culture and leadership capability, strengthening systems and responses to integrity issues and the ongoing commitment to the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement.

In inquiring into the culture of the corrections system, the Review will have regard to the Victorian Public Sector values (Responsiveness; Integrity; Impartiality; Accountability; Respect; Leadership; Human Rights), the Charter of Human Rights, Corrections Conduct and Ethics Commissioner’s Requirement and the DJCS Integrity Policy.