



We have released our *Inhumane treatment in dry cells – review report 2024*. The report was the result of two years of monitoring the use of dry cells after a CO raised concerns with us in 2022.

The report was tabled in parliament and published on our website. You can ask for a copy from the Ron Barwick Prison library or read it on the R drive.

Thank you to everyone who shared their experiences of dry cells with us.

Below is a summary of some of the findings from our report.

What we found

- Your fundamental human rights should be prioritised.
- Dry cells are currently run in a punitive way.
- The light in the dry cell was sometimes left on all night. This goes against the Nelson Mandela Rules.
- There are no intercoms in the RPC reception dry cell which could put you at risk if you have a medical emergency.
- Some people were given canvas gowns and finger food when there was not a SASH risk and this is not okay.
- Limits should be placed on how long you can be kept in a dry cell.
- Women should be excluded from dry cells.

What our psychological and medical consultants said

During our mental and physical health care inspections, our consultants raised concerns about dry cells.

- The mental health of people in dry cells should be monitored.
- Conditions in dry cells should be improved.
- The frequency of in-person welfare checks should increase.
- More support is needed for people who use drugs to reduce the demand for drugs in prison.

We made three recommendations to improve practices

The first two were aimed to improve conditions for you. The third was about staff safety. The first two recommendations were about:

1. Determining if dry cells will be needed once the body scanners are being used. If they are needed, then prioritising the care and wellbeing of the people being held in them. This could be done by:
 - ensuring that the lights are not on all night
 - installing an intercom
 - limit the maximum time people can be kept in a dry cell
 - ensure you can see your separation order and know about your right to request a review.
 - making sure you have a way to pass the time (books, television etc)
2. Providing extra training for TPS supervisors on the human rights of people in prison.

TPS has already started making changes

- The lights in the cell are being turned off at night. TPS are getting curtains to block out the hallway light at night to the dry cell in RPC reception.
- TPS are working on getting an intercom for the dry cell in RPC reception.
- Mattresses will no longer be routinely removed in the morning unless there is a SASH risk.
- TPS is looking at whether a television can be put in the dry cell in RPC reception.

The Department of Justice and Department of Health's responses to our recommendations are in the report.

Got a question? Ask us –

Phone

- Log into the Unity phone
- Press **2** 'CADL'
- Press **11** 'Custodial Inspector'

Calls are free and private

Write

- GPO Box 960, Hobart TAS 7001

Mail to us is private

In person

We wear orange lanyards when we visit prison.
'Custodial Inspector' is written on them.

