

Environmental Health and Hygiene Inspection Report

Inspection of Adult Custodial Services in
Tasmania, 2021



Produced by the Tasmanian Custodial Inspector

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From the Custodial Inspector

The purpose of the Custodial Inspector is to provide independent, proactive, preventative and systemic oversight of custodial centres. A custodial centre is defined as a prison within the meaning of the *Corrections Act 1997*, and a detention centre within the meaning of the *Youth Justice Act 1997*.

The *Custodial Inspector Act 2016* requires me to carry out a mandatory inspection of each custodial centre at least once every three years and to report on my findings and recommendations to the responsible Minister and to Parliament.

To meet my legislative obligations using the limited resources available, the Custodial Inspectorate undertakes themed inspections of custodial centres focussing on particular inspection standards. At the end of a three year cycle, all aspects of custodial centres will have been inspected against the entire set of standards.

I am required by section 15 of the *Custodial Inspector Act 2016* to prepare a report to the responsible Minister outlining my findings and recommendations in relation to each mandatory inspection. I report directly to the Minister responsible for the custodial centre and the Minister is required to table a copy of my report in each House of Parliament. In this way, inspection findings and recommendations become a public record. After tabling, all inspection reports are published on [my website](#)¹.

In February and March 2021, an unannounced inspection against the Environmental Health and Hygiene standards (Appendix 1) was undertaken at all adult custodial centres. This is the second time this suite of inspection standards has been considered. The first inspection was undertaken in 2017, with findings and recommendations forming part of my *Inspection of Adult Custodial Services in Tasmania, 2017: Care and Wellbeing Inspection Report*.

The 2021 inspection considered the Environmental Health and Hygiene theme only, and I now present this report detailing the findings of and the recommendations resulting from the inspection.

Prior to publication of this report, the Department of Justice was consulted and invited to correct any factual inaccuracies and to provide a written response to the recommendations included in this report. Some minor changes have been made to this Report to reflect the Department's response.

Richard Connock
Custodial Inspector

10 February 2022

¹ Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania, Office of the Custodial Inspector, Hobart, <https://www.custodialinspector.tas.gov.au/>



Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Ms Helena Bobbi, Ms Hollie Zimmerman, and Ms Durga Gopala-Krishnan, Environmental Health Officers from Public Health Services, Department of Health, who consulted on this inspection and joined the inspection team to supplement their internal expertise. Ms Bobbi, Ms Zimmerman, and Ms Gopala-Krishnan's consultant report is Appendix 2.

I sincerely thank Ms Bobbi, Ms Zimmerman, and Ms Gopala-Krishnan for their expert advice and assistance, which has added greatly to the work of my office.

Acknowledgment and appreciation is also extended to all staff at the Department of Justice and Tasmania Prison Service who supported the inspection.

I would also like to thank the prisoners in the TPS who shared their experiences with the inspection team.



Executive summary

Tasmania Prison Service (TPS) is managed by the Department of Justice, and is responsible for providing care and custody, at various levels of security, for prisoners and people remanded in custody in Tasmania².

A significant amount of time has elapsed between the inspection and the publication of this report. Reasons for this have included time delays due to COVID-19, which impacted on the receipt of the consultant's report, and turnover of staff at the Custodial Inspectorate. My inspection team recognises that in the 12 months since the inspection, TPS may have already implemented some of the recommendations included in this report.

Relevant to the Environmental Health and Hygiene inspection, the inspection standards for adult custodial services cover themes such as:

- the provision of clean and suitable bedding;
- the provision of safe food and clean water; and
- the provision of facilities and services necessary to maintain health and hygiene.

For the most part, compliance with the Inspection Standards for Adult Custodial Services in Tasmania (Adult Inspection Standards) was assessed by my inspection team during onsite visits over a number of days in February and March 2021. The inspection team visited the five adult custodial centres, comprising Risdon Prison Complex (RPC), Ron Barwick Prison (RBP), Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison (MHWP), Hobart Reception Prison (HRP), and Launceston Reception Prison (LRP).

During the inspection, a number of evidence sources were used to assess the custodial centres against the inspection standards. These included:

- onsite visits;
- meetings with senior management;
- individual interviews carried out with staff, service providers and external stakeholders;
- conversations with prisoners;
- review of documentation; and
- observation by inspectors and the expert consultants.

² For the purposes of this report, a reference to the term prisoner includes people that are remanded and detained in custody.



About Tasmania Prison Service

Tasmania Prison Service (TPS) is responsible for providing care and custody, at various levels of security, for prisoners and people remanded in the five adult custodial centres in Tasmania.

As noted five adult custodial centres, with their capacities,³ are:

1. Risdon Prison Complex (RPC), located at Risdon, 12 km from the Hobart CBD, comprises the medium and maximum security precincts. The medium and maximum security precincts have the capacity to house 250 and 133 prisoners respectively.
2. Ron Barwick Prison (RBP) is located at Risdon, and has the capacity to house 278 prisoners including in the O'Hara Cottages.
3. Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison (MHWP) is a maximum-rated facility which houses maximum, medium and minimum rated units within the complex. It is located at Risdon and has the capacity to house 81 prisoners, including in the Dr Vanessa Goodwin Cottages).
4. Hobart Reception Prison (HRP). This facility is located in the Hobart CBD and has the capacity to house 62 prisoners.
5. Launceston Reception Prison (LRP). This facility is located in Launceston CBD and has the capacity to house 38 prisoners.

³ Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania, Capacity Utilisation Review 2021, Office of the Custodial Inspector, Hobart, https://www.custodialinspector.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/640387/Capacity-Utilisation-Review-2021.pdf



Summary of recommendations

The following recommendations are made to the Tasmania Prison Service:

- Recommendation 1:** As it was in my 2017 Care and Wellbeing report, it is again recommended that the TPS implements processes to ensure that staff regularly inspect mattresses, doonas and pillows for defects, moisture and mould and replace where necessary.
- Recommendation 2:** That the TPS implements processes to clean a doona if a prisoner formally requests it for verifiable health and wellbeing reasons, prior to the scheduled washing cycle.
- Recommendation 3:** That the TPS implements processes to ensure that thermometers are calibrated at least every 12 months.
- Recommendation 4:** That the TPS implements processes to ensure that service equipment is regularly maintained and that service stickers or service records are also maintained.
- Recommendation 5:** That the TPS implements processes to ensure that the cleaning of all service equipment is checked and recorded.
- Recommendation 6:** That the TPS produce policy document(s) to reflect the drinking water testing and water filter changing currently listed as action items on the TPS Maintenance Schedule. The policy should reflect both the drinking water testing procedure and the process for addressing results that indicate contamination.
- Recommendation 7:** That the regular water testing undertaken by the TPS include testing for the metals detected in the original testing.
- Recommendation 8:** That the TPS produce policy document(s) to reflect the need to inform all prisoners and staff of the need to run taps for 30 seconds prior to using the water for drinking, washing and preparing food, and brushing teeth.
- Recommendation 9:** That the TPS introduce policies to ensure everyone who works in the kitchens, including food handlers and cleaners, undertake food safety courses.
- Recommendation 10:** That the TPS introduce policies that ensure all prisoners are given basic food safety training.
- Recommendation 11:** That the older kitchenettes in RBP be upgraded to the same standard as those already refurbished.



- Recommendation 12:** That the TPS implements a policy to provide existing prisoners in RPC with a sun hat if they haven't already been provided with one.
- Recommendation 13:** That the TPS document procedures to inspect all cells in RBP and HRP regularly and leave unoccupied those identified as having visible condensation or mould or identified as excessively hot.
- Recommendation 14:** That the TPS address the hygiene issues caused by in-cell toilets with no lids.
- Recommendation 15:** That the TPS produce policy document(s) to reflect the cleaning and disinfection required for hair and nail clippers that are used by multiple prisoners, and that this policy is made available to all relevant custodial officers.
- Recommendation 16:** That the TPS provide infection control education for prisoners who clean their own hair and nail clippers.
- Recommendation 17:** That the TPS investigate issues with the showers, including inadequate drainage and smelly and/or blocked drains.
- Recommendation 18:** That the TPS investigate the provision of appropriate cleaning products available for cleaning cells and common areas in units.
- Recommendation 19:** That the TPS investigate the introduction of recycling into some, if not all, sections of the TPS.
- Recommendation 20:** That the TPS examines the possibility of introducing a rest break at Campbell Town Police Station for prisoners and staff during transportation between Launceston and Hobart.
- Recommendation 21:** That the TPS examine the use of a juice-box like container for the drink given to prisoners during transportation between Launceston and Hobart.
- Recommendation 22:** That the TPS document, and put into place, a cleaning schedule for the Hobart-Launceston escort vehicle.



Inspection standards

The *Inspection Standards for Adult Custodial Centres in Tasmania* provide the structure for reviewing and assessing the performance of custodial centres in relation to the treatment of, and conditions for, prisoners in Tasmania.

The standards were developed taking into account the full range of relevant international treaties and covenants, and the then *Standard Guidelines for Corrections in Australia, Revised 2012*.

The standards are closely aligned to both the New South Wales and Western Australian inspection standards for adult custodial services, providing an element of harmonisation across multiple Australian jurisdictions. The Custodial Inspector consulted with TPS and other stakeholders throughout the drafting process of the inspection standards.

Independent monitoring and assessment is important to ensure custodial services are meeting standards. An independent perspective can identify issues – both shortcomings requiring improvement and strengths that can be better utilised – that may not be immediately apparent to the custodial centre, thereby providing a continuous improvement framework.

The inspection standards are publicly available on the [Custodial Inspector's website](#)⁴. The inspection standards relevant to this report are Appendix I.

Inspection methodology

All inspections of adult custodial centres are conducted against the Adult Inspection Standards.

Inspection provides independent, external evaluation of custodial centres against the Adult Inspection Standards. It is based on gathering a range of evidence that is evaluated against an inspection framework. The inspection team ensures that evidence is first hand and based on direct observation of processes and conversations with prisoners and staff.⁵

After an inspection is completed, inspection reports are tabled in Parliament by the relevant portfolio Minister. Prior to tabling, Department of Justice is consulted, and invited to correct any factual inaccuracies in the report. The Department's response to recommendations made in this report in Appendix 3.

⁴ Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania, *Standards and guidelines*, Office of the Custodial Inspector, Hobart, https://www.custodialinspector.tas.gov.au/standards_And_guidelines

⁵ First-hand wherever possible, and if not a direct observation, the information relied on will be fact checked and confirmed by another reliable source.



Environmental Health and Hygiene

Environmental health and hygiene definitions

Environmental health and hygiene are intertwined concepts.

Environmental health is defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as all the physical, chemical and biological factors external to a person, and all the related factors impacting behaviour. It is targeted towards preventing disease and creating health-supportive environments.⁶ Environmental factors that can contribute to human mortality and morbidity include air quality, drinking water quality, food safety, chemical use, and soil and groundwater contamination.⁷

Hygiene is the science which deals with the preservation of health.⁸ Hygiene at a personal level includes food and water, sleep, and personal cleanliness; while at a public level it includes soil, arrangement of dwellings, heating and ventilation, and prevention of disease.⁹

Therefore, good human health requires a healthy surrounding environment, and recognising that hygiene involves many facets, not just personal cleanliness.

Other reviews regarding environmental health and hygiene

A systemic scoping review of environmental health conditions in penal institutions identified that environmental health factors were a risk for adverse health outcomes in prisoners.¹⁰ These risk factors included the intake of contaminated food prepared or handled in the prison kitchen; poor environmental conditions in prison kitchens, toilets and showers; inadequate laundry services or lack of clean clothes and linen; overcrowding, inadequate ventilation, and lack of soap and other sanitary products.¹¹

The risk factors highlighted by this scoping review are relevant to TPS, and many are covered as part of this Environmental Health and Hygiene inspection

⁶ Environmental Health Standing Committee (enHealth) of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee 2020, *Strategic Plan 2020-2023*, [https://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/723987C5357A0ADECA257BF0001C68ED/\\$File/Strategic-Plan-2020-2023-enHealth.pdf](https://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/723987C5357A0ADECA257BF0001C68ED/$File/Strategic-Plan-2020-2023-enHealth.pdf)

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ 'hygiene' 2022, in Macquarie Dictionary, Macmillan Publishers, Australia, https://www.macquariedictionary.com.au/features/word/search/?search_word_type=Dictionary&word=hygiene#

⁹ 'Hygiene', 2017, in Encyclopedia Britannica Online, <https://www.britannica.com/science/hygiene>

¹⁰ Guo, W, Cronk, R, Scherer, E, Oommen, R, Brogan, J, Sarr, M & Bartram, J 2019, 'A systemic scoping review of environmental health conditions in penal institutions', *International Journal of Hygiene and Environmental Health*, vol. 222, no. 5, pp. 790-803, viewed 7 January 2022, DOI 10.1016/j.ijheh.2019.05.001.

¹¹ Ibid.



Environmental Health and Hygiene Inspection

Beds and bedding

Inspection Standard 75 specifies that prisoners should be provided with a bed and bedding suitable for the climate and adequate to keep them in good health.

All prisoners are provided with a single mattress and bed. The bedding arrangement in cells is comprised mostly of single occupancy or double occupancy, with some triple occupancy. During the inspection, my staff were provided with feedback by prisoners regarding the bunk beds in double occupied cells. In RPC Medium some mattresses did not fit on the top bunk, and in RPC Maximum some prisoners had difficulty accessing the top bunk so they have put their mattress on the floor and sleep there. The non-observance of human rights standards by installing additional bunk beds in single cells that are designed to accommodate one prisoner has also been raised in my 2021 Capacity Utilisation Review report.

Mattresses and bedding should be clean, in good order, and washed regularly.

TPS has indicated to the inspection team that it currently undertakes daily cell inspections, and that some facilities use a paper-based daily cell check template. My inspection team has sighted this template, and it indicates that bedding, mattress and mattress cover, are to be checked daily. The feedback from prisoners in RBP, RPC Medium, RPC Maximum, with the exception of Mersey, and MHWP is that there are few or no cell hygiene checks by correctional staff, particularly with regard to inspecting mattresses, doonas, pillows and bedding. This situation is unchanged from that reported in my 2017 Care and Wellbeing Inspection report. The recommendation included in the 2017 Care and Wellbeing Inspection report for staff to routinely inspect mattresses, doonas and pillows for defects, moisture and mould and replace where necessary does not appear to have been implemented.

At the LRP, prisoners alert the wardsman about mattresses that need to be checked; the wardsman checks the mattress, then refers the issue to correctional officers for a decision regarding whether to replace. The condition of bedding is reported to the wardsman in the same way.

The Inspection Standard requires that mattresses and bedding should be durable and meet health and safety requirements.

The issue of mould on mattresses has improved with more frequent changeover of mattresses since the 2017 Care and Wellbeing inspection. Prisoners in RBP and MHWP advised that mattresses had been replaced. In RBP antifungal mattresses are being introduced as mattresses require replacing, and my inspection team recognise this proactive approach to the ongoing mould issue. However a number of mouldy mattresses were sighted during the inspection in RBP, RPC, MHWP and HRP (Images 1-4). This underscores the need for routine mattress inspections, as mould is associated with health problems including respiratory symptoms such as nasal congestion, sneezing, coughing,

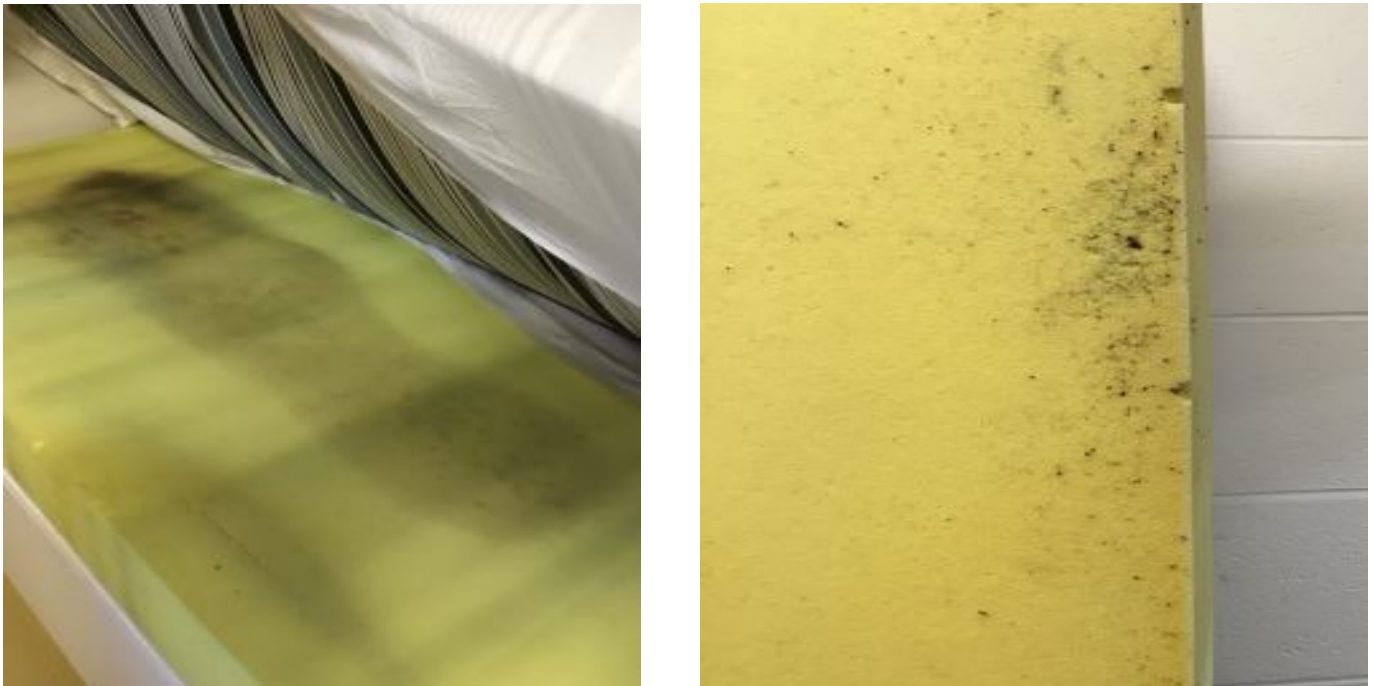


wheezing, respiratory infections and worsening asthma and allergic conditions.¹² Some people are more susceptible to these problems than others, including those with weakened immune systems, allergies, severe asthma, and chronic, obstructive or allergic lung disease.¹³

Images 1 & 2. RPC Maximum - mouldy mattresses, one without mattress cover



Images 3 & 4. RPC Medium (left) and HRP (right) – mouldy mattresses, both without covers



¹² Department of Health, *Mould and your health*, Department of Health, <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/mould-and-your-health#how-does-mould-affect-health>

¹³ Ibid.



Some prisoners in RPC Medium had placed salt under their mattress, presumably in an attempt to reduce moisture and the likelihood of mould developing (Image 5). Prisoners in RPC Medium and MHWP also reported mattresses that were missing covers. Again, this underscores the need for routine inspections of mattresses by staff, as this could have been detected and rectified before this inspection.

Image 5. RPC Medium – salt sachets placed under mattress



TPS has stated that in accordance with Operating Manuals, staff in each facility are to inspect the mattress's condition on a prisoner's admission and discharge from a cell. This includes completion of *Form 5BD – Prisoner/Detainee Cell Check Admission and Discharge Form* (sighted by the inspection team) which prompts for wear and tear of the mattress as well as the hygiene of the mattress cover. Prisoners in RBP said that used mattresses were being distributed to new prisoners. The inspection team assumes that this is occurring after the mattress has been cleaned.

It is suggested that a personal household mattress should be cleaned several times a year,¹⁴ but the inspection team recognises that this would be onerous for the TPS, given the large number of mattresses in use. At a minimum however, mattresses should be cleaned prior to being issued to a new prisoner, especially as some mattresses are lacking the protection provided by mattress covers.

Sheets are able to be washed on a weekly basis; prisoners in some LRP cells are able to access fresh bedding more often if required, for example, if a prisoner experiences excessive sweating. Some

¹⁴ American Sleep Association nd, *How often should you change your bedding?*, American Sleep Association, <https://www.sleepassociation.org/blog-post/how-often-should-you-change-your-bedding/>



prisoners in RPC Medium advised that they wash their own sheets, as they claimed their sheets would be stolen if they sent them to the laundry for washing. My staff have sighted *Form 9B bedding laundry Chit Form* which daily accounts for incoming and outgoing towels, sheets, pillowcases, doona covers, doona inners and mattress covers which are sent to laundry.

Doonas may be washed less often than sheets, depending on the prisoner's location. Prisoners in RBP said that there is no system in place for doonas and pillows to be washed; the prisoners have to put a request form in to get doonas cleaned, and staff decide if the doona will be washed or not. Prisoners will not get the same doona back after it has been sent to be washed.

Doonas in RBP are washed after a prisoner is released. Prisoners in RPC Medium have indicated that doonas are not washed for current prisoners or between prisoners, i.e. before issuing a doona from stores to a new prisoner. Prisoners in RPC Maximum - Mersey indicated that doonas are washed whenever needed. It is suggested that a personal household doona should be cleaned every few months.¹⁵ The Department takes a different view to this Report regarding whether doonas are clean before being reissued to new prisoners, however my inspection team heard from numerous prisoners that doonas were sometimes not cleaned between prisoners.

I recognise that washing on request would be onerous for the TPS, given the large number of doonas in use. At a minimum however, doonas should be cleaned before being issued to a new prisoner, and consideration should be given to cleaning a doona if a prisoner formally requests it for verifiable health and wellbeing reasons, prior to the scheduled washing cycle.

Recommendation 1: As it was in my 2017 Care and Wellbeing report, it is again recommended that the TPS implements processes to ensure that staff regularly inspect mattresses, doonas and pillows for defects, moisture and mould and replace where necessary.

Recommendation 2: That the TPS implements processes to clean a doona if a prisoner formally requests it for verifiable health and wellbeing reasons, prior to the scheduled washing cycle.

COVID-19

The consultants accompanying my inspection team noted the range of measures in place to assist in maintaining a COVID-19 safe environment across all TPS sites. These included the presence of Check in TAS QR codes, floor decals encouraging 1.5m separation, readily available hand sanitiser, and signage at entrances to remind all persons about not entering if unwell, physical distancing and hand and personal hygiene (see Images 6 and 7). The World Health Organization has identified that prisoners are likely to be more vulnerable to the COVID-19 outbreak than the general population¹⁶. The TPS COVID-19 Safety Plan indicates that control measures have continued to be reviewed, and

¹⁵ American Sleep Association nd, *How often should you change your bedding?*, American Sleep Association, <https://www.sleepassociation.org/blog-post/how-often-should-you-change-your-bedding/>

¹⁶ World Health Organization nd, *Prevention and control of COVID-19 in prisons and other places of detention*, WHO, <https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-determinants/prisons-and-health/focus-areas/prevention-and-control-of-covid-19-in-prisons-and-other-places-of-detention>

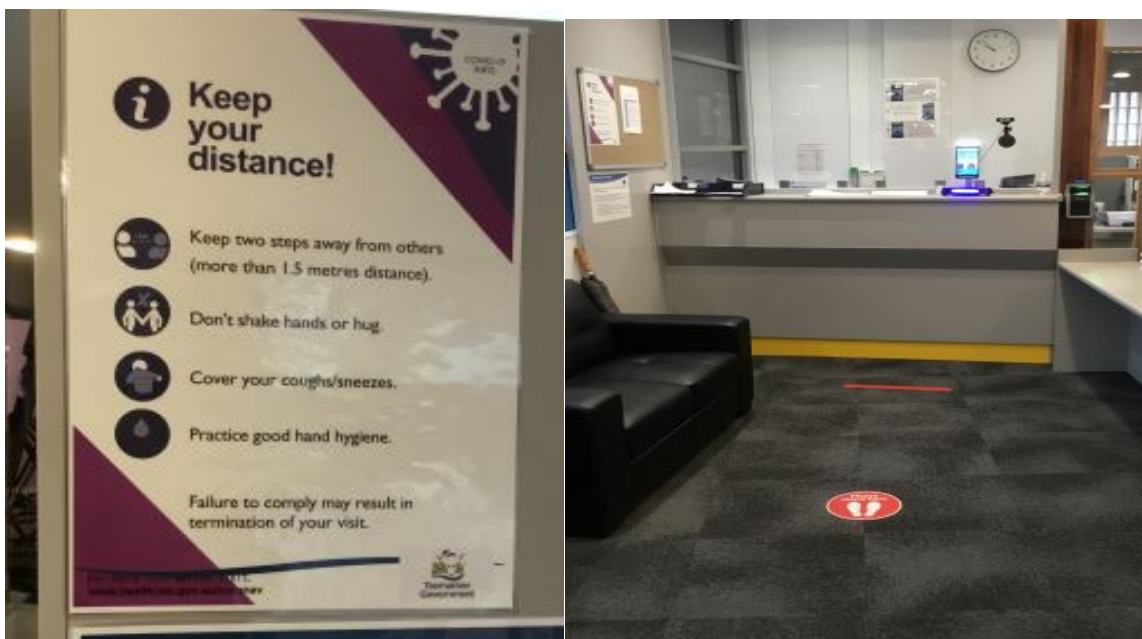


any areas requiring improvement have been addressed.¹⁷ The TPS's continued commitment to ongoing COVID-19 safety and required control measures indicate its awareness of the vulnerability of the TPS population to COVID-19.

The COVID-19 situation in Tasmania has changed since the inspection took place. With the opening of the state border on 15 December 2021 there has been an increased likelihood that community transmission of COVID-19 would occur, and in fact it has. On 11 January 2022, it was reported that COVID-19 had entered the prison, with two prisoners and 16 staff testing positive.¹⁸ In response to the changing COVID-19 situation in Tasmania, the TPS has instigated some changes to limit the number of people entering prison facilities. This has included moving personal visits to Zoom or phone calls, and moving professional visits to Zoom, phone calls or boxed visits.¹⁹

My inspection team found that the TPS complied with the Tasmanian Government's COVID-19 requirements at the time of the inspection.

Images 6 & 7. COVID-19 safety features at HRP



¹⁷ Department of Justice 2021, *COVID-19 output safety plan*, DOJ, Hobart.

¹⁸ Kempton, H 2022, 'Inmate visits cut as virus hits jail', *The Mercury*, 12 January, p. 7.

¹⁹ Department of Justice 2022, *Visit a prisoner/remandee*, Department of Justice, <https://www.justice.tas.gov.au/prisonservice/contact-and-visits/visiting2>



Environmental Health Regulations

Inspection Standard 73 specifies that prisons must comply with good public health practices.

My inspection team found that all locations were compliant with relevant environmental health regulations, specifically the requirement to register as a food business with the relevant local council as required under the *Food Act 2003*.

The Risdon Prison Kitchen (RPK) and the Vegetable Processing Shed (VPS) located in the RBP are registered as food businesses with Clarence City Council in accordance with the *Food Act 2003*. The RPK and VPS are Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) audited annually, the most recent audit being 10 February 2021, where both were found to be generally compliant. Certification for both HACCP and council food licenses cover the entire Risdon site, including MHWP.

The HRP kitchen is registered as a food business with the City of Hobart. I reported in the 2017 Care and Wellbeing Inspection that the HRP kitchen was not registered as a food business. TPS has since actioned this registration requirement.

The LRP kitchen is registered as a food business with the City of Launceston.

The HACCP and council food licences for all locations were sighted by the inspection team.

My inspection team found that the TPS complied with the relevant environmental health regulations at the time of the inspection.

Service equipment maintenance and cleaning

The Inspection Standards require that service equipment for refrigeration, cooking and laundry must be properly maintained and regularly cleaned.

My inspection team used the following definition of 'service' to identify appropriate equipment to inspect:

"the organised system apparatus, appliance, employees, etc., for supplying a public need".²⁰

Therefore only service equipment that is part of an organised system and supplies a public need has been included under this standard. This excludes equipment used directly by prisoners and staff for personal use, such as refrigerators, cooking appliances and washers and dryers in prison units and staff tea rooms.

The inspection team discussed calibration of the food thermometers used in the VPS and the RPK with VPS and RPK supervisory staff. The HACCP audit of both the VPS and the RPK noted that calibration of food temperature probes had not been conducted, and that food temperature probes required replacement every six months as part of the food safety program (FSP). Both VPS and RPK supervisory staff advised that food temperature probes and temperature gauges batteries are replaced

²⁰ 'service' 2022, in Macquarie Dictionary, Macmillan Publishers, Australia, https://www.macquariedictionary.com.au/features/word/search/?search_word_type=Dictionary&word=service

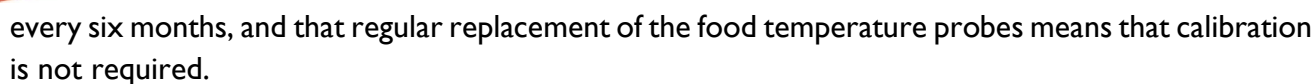


Figure 1. Thermometer calibration and check record

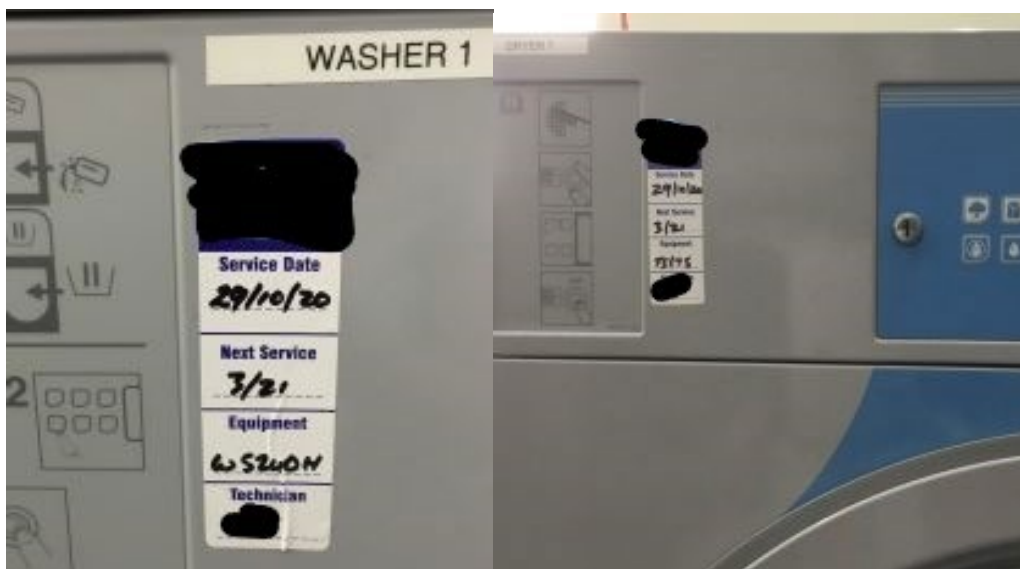
The Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code provides that a food business must ensure that the thermometer “is maintained to an accuracy of at least $\pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$ ”. Thermometers should be calibrated regularly to ensure accuracy; as an indication, this should be at least once every 12 months.²¹ There was no record of calibrations for the food thermometers (laser temperature gun and temperature probe). Figure I shows a section where calibration results could be recorded (Ice Point and Operating Temperature). An external refrigeration and air conditioning company tested and calibrated the cool rooms, freezer rooms and general refrigeration in September 2020 and September 2021. My inspection team have sighted these calibration certificates indicating compliance.

Environmental Health and Hygiene Inspection Report – Adult Custodial Services



Maintaining equipment involves keeping it in due condition and operation, and unimpaired.²² ‘Service stickers’ were sighted on some equipment by the inspection team; in RPC Medium on washer 1, washer 2, dryer 1, and dryer 2 and in MHWP on two washers and two dryers (Images 8 – 10). The equipment not displaying ‘service stickers’ is therefore assumed to have not been serviced, and included equipment used in the RPC Medium commercial laundry, RBP kitchen, RBP bakery, MHWP Kitchen, HRP Kitchen, HRP laundry, LRP kitchen, and LRP laundry. TPS provided reports to the inspection team from an external provider, indicating that the kitchen canopy, flue and fan were cleaned in RPK, RPC bakery and MHWP in May 2020 and May 2021.

Images 8 & 9. Service stickers - RPC Medium washer and dryer



Images 10. Service stickers - MHWP washers



²² ‘maintain 2022, in Macquarie Dictionary, Macmillan Publishers, Australia, https://www.macquariedictionary.com.au/features/word/search/?search_word_type=Dictionary&word=maintain



Equipment cleaning is clearly being done, as areas are clean and tidy, and listed as such on checklists. A Weekly Pre-Operational Checklist used in the TPS kitchens records that all areas are clean, including equipment (Image 11).

The Daily Kitchen Hygiene Tasks in MHWP lists cleaning equipment such as oven, fridge and microwave as part of daily tasks (Image 12). However, there do not seem to be records of this cleaning being done and signed off by the person(s) cleaning.

Image 11. RPK kitchen weekly pre-operational checklists

Corrective System Division, Prison Services

Quality Assurance & Food Safety Manual

Week Beginning: 8/2/21

WEEKLY PRE - OPERATIONAL CHECK LIST - Chillroom

AREA/CRITERIA TO BE CHECKED	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Hand sanitiser, soap and paper towel available	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Hair nets, gloves etc. available	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Pests, drip curtains, clean & in good condition	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Pest control measures correct	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Monitoring forms available	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Hot water available	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
No broken bags/damaged product	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
All products identified, stored correctly	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Non-conforming product identified	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE
All areas clean, free from food scraps (walls, equipment, ceiling, floor)	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Facility security maintained	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Lights and switches clean	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Drains, external & internal clean, free from food scraps	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Lined clean rubbish bins available	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Staff/Inmates compliant with personal hygiene and GMP	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Stock Rotation Evident	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
All equipment in safe working order	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Amenities/Toilets clean and tidy	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Bulk storage, clean, free from dust and dirt	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Scales, Clean and working correctly	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Exhaust system operational and clean	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Image 12. MHWP daily kitchen hygiene tasks

DAILY Kitchen Hygiene Tasks

- **EMPTY bin** and place new liner in it;
- **ALL washing up completed**, dried and placed in appropriate cupboards neatly;
- **ALL bench surfaces** wiped free of debris/food scraps etc, then washed down and sanitized;
- **SWEEP and MOP floor**, this includes under oven, fryer etc;
- **ENSURE** gloves and hairnets are well stocked;
- **TAKE** washing to laundry and sort clean towels, rags and oven mitts;
- **CLEAN** any kitchen equipment used that day.

Daily cleaning includes:

Sunday	Remove and wash shelves from oven. Scrub out oven (this needs to be done in the early afternoon).
Monday	Wipe down all cupboards
Tuesday	Take food out of fridge and scrub fridge floor
Wednesday	Clean out deep fryer and change oil (if needed) ask Leading Hand.
Thursday	Clean all splashbacks, tiles, powerpoints etc.
Friday	Clean microwave and small fridge.
Saturday	Ask Leading Hand what needs to be done (if unsure about anything ask Leading Hand).

Please take note:

Random swab tests are conducted by TPS Catering Services staff. THEREFORE, it is extremely important that high standards of cleanliness and hygiene are maintained in the kitchen to ensure meals and services continue to be delivered from the MHWP Kitchen. Remember if you are unsure about anything just ask or speak to a staff member.



- Recommendation 3:** That the TPS implements processes to ensure that thermometers are calibrated at least every 12 months.
- Recommendation 4:** That the TPS implements processes to ensure that service equipment is regularly maintained and that service stickers or service records are also maintained.
- Recommendation 5:** That the TPS implements processes to ensure that the cleaning of all service equipment is checked and recorded.

Drinking water quality

The Inspection Standards specify that prisons must ensure good drinking water quality and food safety, and protect prisoners from any environmental hazards that may pose a risk to health.

At the time of the inspection, there were no TPS policy documents regarding drinking water sampling, as requiring monitoring to ensure good drinking water quality.

Drinking water testing was added to TPS Maintenance schedules in 2018 and is a biannual action item on the Schedule. The water filters at MHWP are also a scheduled item, and are changed in the same months as the water sampling takes place (March and August). Sampling is conducted by an external plumbing contractor at 56 prison locations state-wide. Two samples are taken at each point; the first sample is collected, then the second sample is taken after letting the tap run for a full 30 seconds.

This ongoing water testing reflects the recommendation in my 2017 Care and Wellbeing Inspection for further water sampling at all custodial centres. The TPS is to be commended on its continued commitment to this water testing.

The initial water testing was completed by an independent service, who identified no biological matter, but did identify high levels of some metals (cadmium, copper, nickel, lead and zinc). Subsequent testing has been performed by another independent service, who have performed microbiological and chemical testing. The chemical testing panel performed by this second independent service only included copper from the metals detected during the initial water testing, and the copper levels have remained below the recommended level in the testing reports sighted by the inspection team. The biological testing conducted alongside the chemical testing did not detect *Escherichia coli*, a bacteria regarded as the most specific indicator of recent faecal contamination.²³ The TPS indicated to the inspection team that none of the tested samples had come back with contamination, and that the testing laboratory will identify if the water is unsafe.

My 2017 Care and Wellbeing Inspection recommended that the TPS advise prisoners to run the taps for 30 seconds prior to water use. While the TPS does not have any policy documents regarding this, signage was placed at drinking water outlets in MHWP and Medium RPC for a trial period (Image 13). It was noted at the time of the inspection that some of this signage has been removed; TPS indicated

²³ National Health and Medical Research Council, National Resource Management Ministerial Council (2011) Australian Drinking Water Guidelines Paper 6 National Water Quality Management Strategy. NHMRC, NRMCC, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra



that this has been done by prisoners. The TPS has indicated to the inspection team that the TPS will ensure signage that has been removed will be replaced.

Image 13. Signage in MHWP regarding drinking water



Recommendation 6: That the TPS produce policy document(s) to reflect the drinking water testing and water filter changing currently listed as action items on the TPS Maintenance Schedule. The policy should reflect both the drinking water testing procedure and the process for addressing results that indicate contamination.

Recommendation 7: That the regular water testing undertaken by the TPS include testing for the metals detected in the original testing.

Recommendation 8: That TPS produce policy document(s) to reflect the need to inform all prisoners and staff of the need to run taps for 30 seconds prior to using the water for drinking, washing and preparing food, and brushing teeth.

Food safety

The effect of food-borne disease in Australia is significant with an annual estimated 4.1 million people infected in Australia at an annual cost estimated at \$1.2 billion.²⁴ Therefore food safety is an important part of environmental health and preventing illness.

²⁴ OzFoodNet Working Group 2021, *Monitoring the incidence and causes of disease potentially transmitted by food in Australia: Annual report of the OzFoodNet network, 2016*, [https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/5c71fabf639650f6ca2586520081286b/\\$file/monitoring_the_incidence_and_causes_of_disease_potentially_transmitted_by_food_in_australia_annual_report_of_the_ozfoodnet_network_2016.pdf](https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/5c71fabf639650f6ca2586520081286b/$file/monitoring_the_incidence_and_causes_of_disease_potentially_transmitted_by_food_in_australia_annual_report_of_the_ozfoodnet_network_2016.pdf)



Prisoners who work in all TPS kitchens handling food are trained in food safety. It was recommended in the 2017 Care and Wellbeing Inspection that MHWP be covered by the food safety program, and the inspection team recognises that this has been acted on by the TPS. Each kitchen job has a specific Statement of Duties and all new workers are inducted into their role and are 'buddied up' with a senior worker. This is a good way for new workers to gain an understanding of their role and to reinforce their training with the guidance of a more experienced worker.

'Ready to eat' meals continue to be delivered hot from the RBP to prisoners in RPC Maximum. 'Ready to eat' meals continue to be delivered cold from the RBP to prisoners in all other areas - RPC Medium, MHWP, HRP and LRP. These meals only require reheating if inmates choose to store and eat later. The procedures in place for the delivery and distribution of meals to prisoners continue to be considered compliant with food safety requirements (such as Australia New Zealand *Food Standards Code*).

For prisoners not working in the kitchen, basic knowledge covering where and when food is delivered and where to heat it, is provided to prisoners but information regarding refrigerating food, hygiene, or washing hands is not.

The inspection team felt that some prisoners had sufficient knowledge of food safety to enable them to safely reheat meals and cook food bought from the canteen. Given the significant burden from food-borne disease, basic food safety would be a valuable skill for all prisoners to learn.

My inspection team sighted however, an example of poor food safety during the inspection. In RPC Medium some spare silverside salads were bought down from the kitchen at approximately 10:15 am, these salads were sighted and photographed by the inspection team at 11:45 am, they had not been refrigerated and were sitting on the bench at room temperature.

Image 14. RPC Medium – spare silverside salads sitting at room temperature





Lack of temperature checking of equipment, including refrigerators, continues to pose a health risk. The 2017 Care and Wellbeing Inspection Report recommended that “TPS should ensure that temperature checks of fridges in units and divisions in all custodial centres are occurring on a regular basis”, and the TPS response to this indicated that it would be implemented. Information provided to the 2020 Food and Nutrition Inspection team indicated that visual checks of the fridges would be undertaken as part of daily operation, but this would not involve the recording of temperatures, and that the fridges are only for temporary storage of food and other goods. Prisoners mentioned that fridge temperatures are not being monitored and do go up and down. The Consultants supporting my inspection team recommended that, as prisoners store food in refrigerators in their areas, periodic checks of refrigeration take place to verify that potentially hazardous food is kept at or below 5°C.

Risdon Prison kitchen

Kitchen infrastructure is aged, however funding has been approved for construction of a new kitchen complex. The paint issues which are in RPK, particularly in the cereal room, which were identified in the 2017 inspection are the same. TPS kitchen staff advised that the new kitchen facility will address these issues.

The Food Safety Assessment undertaken by Clarence City Council also highlighted areas of the RPK in poor condition, including rust and mould on upper structures, passage way walls damaged and requiring repair, and paint in several areas needed repair and repainting (Images 15 and 16).

Images 15 & 16. RPK damaged passage way walls





RBP kitchenettes

Inspection Standard 74 specifies that prisons must provide the facilities, services and items necessary for the maintenance of environmental health and general hygiene.

The 2017 Care and Wellbeing inspection noticed that the kitchenettes in divisions 2, 3 and 4, were in poor condition and required upgrading. The current inspection noted the condition of the kitchenettes used by prisoners for reheating and cooking varies (Images 17-19). In yards one to seven of RBP, some kitchenettes have been upgraded (divisions 1, 5 and 6), however a number remain in poor condition (divisions 2, 3 and 4 have yet to be upgraded). The Department have indicated in their response to this Inspection Report that the kitchenette upgrades in RBP have now been completed. Some fridges in RBP did not seem to be keeping temperature and were room temperature when opened. The Consultants supporting my inspection team indicated that the fridge appeared to be keeping food at room temperature.

Images 17-19. Kitchenette facilities in division 3 (top left and right) and division 5 (bottom)





RBP Canteen

The canteen fit-out is appropriate for its current use. As identified in 2017, increased storage would enable more efficient ordering processes. The 2017 Care and Wellbeing inspection recommended that microwave containers should be available for all prisoners to purchase. The current inspection noted that there were numerous red microwave containers visible in the units. Prisoners confirmed that they could purchase these containers on canteen. The recommendation that eggs for sale are stored in a cool place or refrigerated as per manufacturer's instructions also continues to apply. 100-180 dozen eggs are delivered on a Friday, stored at room temperature, and processed out on Monday and Tuesday. Temperature fluctuations should be avoided to ensure egg safety, and refrigerated eggs should not be left out for more than two hours. A cold egg left out at room temperature can sweat, and this can facilitate growth of bacteria that could contaminate the egg.²⁵

Images 20 & 21. Microwave containers - RPC Medium (left) and RPC Maximum (right)



MHWP Kitchen

Fit-out of the MHWP kitchen is appropriate for its current use, which is distribution of reheated 'ready to eat' dinners and preparing hot lunches for prisoners in this area.

All kitchen workers who prepare food have completed food handler training. However, kitchen cleaners don't undertake this training, and subsequently don't understand kitchen hygiene and food safe handling.

Prisoners told the inspection team that the kitchen cleaning "hasn't been good enough", and that the schedule is either not being filled in or not being done. The inadequate cleaning is demonstrated by the poor results obtained from the protein swabs collected by kitchen workers. Protein swabs are used to test the cleanliness of food equipment surfaces by detecting protein residues left behind after cleaning.²⁶ The kitchen staff have gathered the cleaners together to show them they need to clean under the fridge, fridge doors, etc.

The Consultants' report did note that oversight of cleaning and general kitchen usage by dedicated prison staff would be beneficial. TPS have indicated that processes are in place for correctional staff to review the cleanliness of the kitchen on a daily basis. I commend this proactive approach by TPS.

²⁵ Australian Eggs, Why should eggs be refrigerated?, Australian Eggs, <https://www.australianeggs.org.au/facts-and-tips/handling-eggs>

²⁶ HACCP Plus, Rapid protein hygiene swabs for cleaning validation, HACCP Plus, <https://haccplus.com.au/index.php/product/pro-clean-hygiene-swabs/>



The TPS told the inspection team that pregnant women are entitled to no processed meats, however prisoners in MHWP said that pregnant prisoners are still receiving cold meat including ham and processed meats from RPK. Cold processed meats are a higher risk food for pregnant women due to the bacteria *Listeria*. Infection with *Listeria* in pregnant women can lead to serious complications including miscarriage, premature labour, or stillbirth.²⁷

HRP Kitchen

Staff and prisoners rostered to the kitchen have the appropriate skills and knowledge to undertake the food handling activities at this site, as a result of having completed food handler training.

The temperatures for fridge 1 and 2, the freezer, and the Convotherm oven were all recorded daily.

LRP Kitchen

Staff and prisoners working in this area have appropriate skills and knowledge in food handling. All wardsmen working in this area have completed food handler training as those working in the RPC kitchen.

The fit-out of the kitchen is appropriate for its current use. The kitchen was very clean, and the food preparation equipment appeared to be in good condition. The temperatures for the coolroom/fridge 1 and 2, freezer 1 (COVID) freezer and fridge, and the Convotherm oven were all recorded. The wardsmen said these temperature logs were sent to the RPK on a weekly basis.

Recommendation 9: That the TPS introduce policies to ensure everyone who works in the kitchens, including food handlers and cleaners, undertake food safety courses.

Recommendation 10: That the TPS introduce policies that ensure all prisoners are given basic food safety training.

Recommendation 11: That the older kitchenettes in RBP be upgraded to the same standard as those already refurbished.

Sun protection

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Each year almost 2,000 Australians die from this almost entirely preventable disease.²⁸ Protecting skin from the sun reduces the risk of skin cancer. The Cancer Council recommend a combination of sun protection measures, including sunscreen and wearing a hat.²⁹

²⁷ NSW Food Authority 2014, *Listeria and pregnancy*, NSW Food Authority, https://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/_Documents/foodsafetyandyou/listeria_and_pregnancy.pdf

²⁸ Cancer Council nd, *Sun safety – reduce your skin cancer risk*, Cancer Council, <https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety>

²⁹ Cancer Council nd, *Preventing skin cancer – how to protect your skin from the sun*, Cancer Council, <https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety/preventing-skin-cancer>



At the time of this inspection, my inspection team noted that a lot of prisoners in RPC Medium were sunburnt; while sunscreen was readily available, no hats were issued to prisoners, and this should be rectified.

TPS policy regarding the provision of sun hats and other UV protective measures available to inmates includes the following:

- Sun screen is available in common areas in all facilities and replaced by staff when required.
- Prisoners are provided with sun hats on arrival at MHWP and RBP. Hats can be replaced on an as needs basis using a request form.
- Prisoners in RPC who are working group prisoners, such as gardeners, are provided with sun hats, however non-working group prisoners are not. Sun hats are available to these prisoners through the canteen. The TPS has now rectified this and will supply a sun hat to all prisoners inducted into RPC, and will review the provision of hats to existing prisoners. Not being issued hats, and being required to buy them, was raised by prisoners with the inspection team, so this was a timely action by the TPS.

My inspection team found that the TPS has a procedure in place regarding sun protection for prisoners in most parts of RPC.

Recommendation 12: That the TPS implements a policy to provide existing prisoners in RPC with a sun hat if they haven't already been provided with one.

Thermal conditions

The 2017 Care and Wellbeing Inspection highlighted staff and prisoner concerns regarding the humidity and temperature at RBP and LRP. To repeat the monitoring performed at the previous inspection, LogTag humidity and temperature recorders were placed by the inspection team in HRP, LRP and RBP and the results are in Table 1.

Table 1. LogTag humidity and temperatures recordings

Custodial Centre	Monitoring dates	Location	Temperature (°C)		Humidity (%)	
			Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest
HRP	24-31 March 2021	Level 4	19.5	23.8	37.3	67.7
		Level 3	14.6	23.9	38.9	89.7
LRP	24 February – 3 March 2021	Wardsman	18.8	28.0	36.6	67.8
		Women's (Cell 21)	18.8	29.4	32.7	54.7
RBP	9-16 February 2021	Division 2 (Cell 32)	16.1	32.5	38.8	76.8
	2-8 February 2021	Division 3 (Cell 32)	18.8	24.3	44.3	84.6
	3-9 July 2020	Division 3 (Cell 33)	7.5	18.7	50.6	84.9
	2-8 February 2021	Division 5 (Cell 21)	11.1	21.8	46.8	70.3
	9-16 July 2020	Division 5 (Cell 37)	9.8	17.3	50.9	73.0



The current inspection was able to monitor an increased number of custodial centres and locations for temperature and humidity. The monitoring for the 2017 inspections took place between 5 and 19 January 2018 in LRP and 29 June and 20 July 2017 in RBP. Direct comparison of the results from this inspection with 2017 results are not appropriate, as monitoring occurred at different times of the year and are likely to be affected by outside temperatures and humidity levels. However, the monitoring from this inspection demonstrated ongoing issues with thermal conditions in the TPS custodial centres.

The adaptive thermal comfort model relates indoor acceptable temperature ranges to outdoor temperatures.³⁰ The acceptable temperature ranges for each monitoring period in this inspection were calculated according to the adaptive approach.³¹ Table 2 outlines the acceptable temperature ranges for the monitored locations.

Table 2. Mean temperature and humidity measures and acceptable temperature range

Location	Monitoring dates	Mean temperature (°C)	Mean humidity (%)	Adaptive comfort temperature range
Launceston CBD	February 2021 ³²	18.0	60.5	19.9 – 26.9
	March 2021 ³³	16.4	63	19.4 – 26.4
Hobart CBD	July 2020 ³⁴	8.6	Not available	17.0 – 24.0
	February 2021 ³⁵	17.7	56	19.8 – 26.8
	March 2021 ³⁶	16.5	58.5	19.4 – 26.4

The monitoring results showed that 61.1% of the temperature measurements were outside the adaptive comfort temperature range; 27.3% were higher than the comfort range and 72.7% were lower than the comfort range.

³⁰ American Society of Heating, Refrigerating & AC Engineers (ASHRAE) 2020, *ANSI/ASHRAE Standard 55-2020: Thermal Environmental Conditions for Human Occupancy*, ASHRAE, Peachtree, Georgia.

³¹ Albatayneh, A, Alterman, D, Page, A & Moghtaderi, B 2019, 'The significance of the adaptive thermal comfort limits on the air-conditioning loads in a temperate climate', *Sustainability*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 328, DOI 10.3390/su11020328

³² Bureau of Meteorology 2022, Launceston, Tasmania, February 2021 daily weather observations, Bureau of Meteorology, www.bom.gov.au/climate/dwo/202102/html/IDCJDW7025.202102.shtml

³³ Bureau of Meteorology 2022, Launceston, Tasmania, March 2021 daily weather observations, Bureau of Meteorology, www.bom.gov.au/climate/dwo/202103/html/IDCJDW7025.202103.shtml

³⁴ Bureau of Meteorology 2020, Tasmania in July 2020: driest for the state since 1957, Bureau of Meteorology, www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/month/tas/archive/202007.summary.shtml

³⁵ Bureau of Meteorology 2022, Hobart, Tasmania, February 2021 daily weather observations, Bureau of Meteorology, www.bom.gov.au/climate/dwo/202102/html/IDCJDW7021.202102.shtml

³⁶ Bureau of Meteorology 2022, Launceston, Tasmania, March 2021 daily weather observations, Bureau of Meteorology, www.bom.gov.au/climate/dwo/202103/html/IDCJDW7025.202103.shtml



Controlled humidity levels between 30 and 60% are ideal.³⁷ The monitoring results in Table I showed that 88.9% of the humidity measurements were higher than the recommended 60%.

Higher humidity can increase the probability of condensation on cooled surfaces, which leads to increases in moisture on adjacent surfaces which encourages growth of moulds.³⁸

Australia has no national thermal standards or guidelines regarding the design of custodial centres or management of prisoner's conditions. Some correctional institutions in the United States have defined a range of 'optimum' thermal conditions or have specific policies relating to 'heat-sensitive' prisoners.³⁹ Recommendations from literature regarding designing thermal environments are unlikely to apply in custodial centres due to a number of assumptions that are made. Recommendations are based on studies involving healthy, fit men and women and are mainly used to assess working environments. This is in contrast to prisoners, who may experience poor physical and mental health, combined with varying physical fitness levels and levels of activity undertaken. The other issue is that prisoners have a reduced ability to engage in the discretionary behaviours recommended to address thermal discomfort, including altering clothing, altering activity, changing the thermostat setting, opening a window or leaving the space.⁴⁰ This reduced ability to engage in discretionary behaviours by prisoners needs to be part of the Department of Justice's consideration when seeking options to address the thermal conditions.

High temperatures not only affect thermal comfort, but may also stimulate prisoner misconduct or even aggressive behaviour. Harsh physical conditions have also been shown to affect staff well-being and sick leave.⁴¹

The thermal conditions in the older infrastructure sections of TPS are acknowledged by the TPS. The inspection team acknowledges the challenges associated with older infrastructure within TPS, including that RBP is an old, open-air building, with a design based on an American prison located in a warmer climate, and therefore not designed to withstand the cold Tasmanian climate.

Recommendation 13: That the TPS document procedures to inspect all cells in RBP and HRP regularly and leave unoccupied those identified as having visible condensation or mould or identified as excessively hot.

³⁷ McGowan, MK 2018, 'Don't sweat it: comfort conditioning can increase thermal comfort, decrease energy use' *ASHRAE Journal*, <https://ashrae.org/news/ashraejournal/comfort-conditioning-and-thermal-comfort>

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Grant, E, Williamson, TJ & Hansen, A 2012. 'Design issues for prisoner health: thermal conditions in Australian custodial environments' https://researchgate.net/publication/237150225_Design_issues_for_prisoner_health_Thermal_conditions_in_Australian_custodial_environments

⁴⁰ Grant, E, Williamson, TJ & Hansen, A 2012. 'Design issues for prisoner health: thermal conditions in Australian custodial environments' https://researchgate.net/publication/237150225_Design_issues_for_prisoner_health_Thermal_conditions_in_Australian_custodial_environments

⁴¹ Dogbeh, A, Jomaas, G, Bjarløv, S & Toftum, J 2015, 'Field study of the indoor environment in a Danish prison', *Building and Environment*, vol. 88, pp. 20-26



Vermin and pest control

At the time of the inspection, there were no TPS policy documents regarding the pest management program/policy that applies to MHWP. The 2017 Care and Wellbeing Inspection noted that rabbits appeared to be in plague proportions at the Risdon site. The recommendation that TPS reduce and control the rabbit population has been actioned. Pest management services are engaged on a monthly basis at the MHWP for rodent control, and at any other time as required for rabbits and insects. My inspection team sighted pest control certificates for the period January 2020 - January 2021.

The inspection team did sight one rat near the vegetable garden, not an unexpected occurrence given the semi-rural setting of MHWP. The rabbit population appeared to be under control. No rabbits were sighted at RPC Medium, and very few rabbit holes were visible.

My Inspection Team found that the TPS is proactively undertaking pest control at MHWP.

Toilets

The 2017 Health and Wellbeing Inspection Report highlighted the hygiene issues associated with toilets that have no lids.

Flush toilets produce toilet plume aerosols containing bacteria; these aerosols contaminate toilet seats and lids, the surrounding floors, and the nearby surfaces.⁴² These aerosols are known to be a potential source of transmission of infectious microorganisms, including norovirus and potentially COVID-19.⁴³

RPC Maximum, HRP and LRP all have toilets with no lids, and therefore these continue to be a potential source of infection for prisoners. Prisoners in these units are locked in their cells during meal times, and therefore they have to eat these meals while sitting in close proximity to the toilets. This is both degrading and unhygienic. The 2017 Health and Wellbeing Inspection Report recommended that TPS should explore options to address the hygiene issues caused by in-cell toilets with no lids. This continues to be an ongoing issue, therefore the inspection team repeat this recommendation in this inspection report.

Recommendation 14: That the TPS address the hygiene issues caused by in-cell toilets with no lids.

⁴² Johnson, DL, Mead, KR, Lynch, RA & Hirst, DVL 2013, 'Lifting the lid on toilet plume aerosol: a literature review with suggestions for future research', *American Journal of Infection Control*, vol. 41, no. 3, pp. 254-258, DOI 10.1016/j.ajic.2012.04.330

⁴³ Schreck, JH, Lashaki, MJ, Hashemi, J, Dhanak, M & Verma, S 2021, 'Aerosol generation in public restrooms', *Physics of Fluids*, vol. 33, DOI 10.1063/5.0040310



Images 22 & 23. Un-lidded and unscreened toilets in RPC Maximum (left) and HRP (right).



Hair and fingernail clippers

The 2017 Care and Wellbeing Inspection found access issues for both hair clippers and fingernail clippers. This appears to be an ongoing issue.

Sharing hair clippers in prison is a risk factor for blood borne virus transmission.^{44,45} Supporting activities that reduce the risk of blood borne virus spread include using trained prisoners or hairdressers from the community. Educating prisoners on how to reduce cross-infection should include cleaning barbering equipment with disinfectants, and not allowing metal combs to touch the scalp, i.e. having plastic safety guard in place on electronic hair clippers.⁴⁶

RPC Maximum and RPC Medium

RPC Maximum has no barber position, everyone does their own hair using the hair clippers kept at the officer's station. The inspection team has sighted an email dated September 2020 advising that officers must clean the hair clippers with hand sanitiser after each individual haircut, and place them in the UV sanitiser each night (Images 24 and 25). The consultant highlighted in their report the importance of wiping the blades in addition to UV sanitising, and that the UV sanitising does not replace the need to wipe the blades with detergent or detergent wipe.

⁴⁴ Jack K 2021, 'Hepatitis C virus infection risk factors and test uptake in an English prison', *Gastrointestinal Nursing's* Liver Nursing Supplement, December 2020/January 2021.

⁴⁵ Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM) 2020, Correctional officers and blood borne viruses, ASHM, Darlinghurst

⁴⁶ Ibid.



Images 24 & 25. Wipes and UV steriliser for RPC Maximum hair clippers.



RPC Medium has two barber positions, however only one is currently filled. There is another prisoner who does haircuts but isn't employed as a barber yet. Prisoners advised my inspection team that when they request a haircut it's usually done within a week; they prefer the official barber as he "cuts hair better", but sometimes they don't have a choice. Prisoners expressed concern about cleanliness of hair clippers and their understanding was that they were not sanitised between each use; some prisoners were very aware of the risk of blood borne virus infections.

RPC prisoners can access nail clippers from the officer's station. Some prisoners said they won't use them as they are worried about contracting Hepatitis C.

RBP

The TPS advised that barber services are not provided at RBP. Prisoners are permitted to have their own hair clippers, and they are responsible for cleaning these. Prisoners can ask staff for cleaning supplies.

Prisoners rely on family and friends to send them hair clippers. Prisoners told the inspection team that if family or friends can't afford to send hair clippers, and "you don't have a mate who can cut your hair, then you can't have a haircut". It was suggested that there could be a set of hair clippers that prisoners can borrow.

RBP prisoners are able to access nail clippers through canteen. There were complaints to the inspection team that they are a poorer quality than they used to be, as suppliers have recently been changed.

MHWP

MHWP has a civilian hairdresser who comes to the facility to perform haircuts. It is the responsibility of the hairdresser to suitably clean their own equipment.

HRP

General hands or a volunteer undertake haircutting in HRP. HRP require wardsmen to sterilise all hair equipment before and after use, in accordance with the facility's Operating Manual.



LRP

LRP has no specific procedure for hair grooming tools and equipment; this will be incorporated in an updated Operating Model.

Recommendation 15: That the TPS produce policy document(s) to reflect the cleaning and disinfection required for hair and nail clippers that are used by multiple prisoners, and that this policy is made available to all relevant custodial officers.

Recommendation 16: That the TPS provide infection control education for prisoners who clean their own hair and nail clippers.

Laundry

Laundry is washed every day; prisoners' bag their washing up and put it out in the morning and it is received back in the afternoon. Prisoners reported problems getting laundry done when they are locked down so often, laundry may not get processed for two to three days. This is particularly an issue where units have no laundry facilities, such as RPC Maximum and RPC Minimum.

There were a number of complaints regarding laundry and laundry facilities across RPC. These complaints were made to my inspection team multiple times in different units and asserted that:

- white clothing goes grey;
- washing comes back wet;
- lots of items go missing, particularly high value items that are available on canteen, such as singlets, Bonds underpants, shirts, thermals and ankle socks, which are not replaced by TPS as they are not prison issue.

Issues with quality control and theft were also highlighted in the 2017 Care and Wellbeing inspection.

Showers

Showers were raised as an issue in a number of custodial centres.

RPC Maximum and RPC Medium

RPC Maximum Apsley unit cells had a lot of water running out of the shower into the main 'living' area of the cell.

RPC Maximum and RPC Medium had some units where the showers appeared to be poorly graded for water run-off. Water was pooled on the floor outside the shower cubicle, with prisoners using towels to mop up or stop the flow of water (Images 26 and 27).



Images 26 & 27. Towels mop up/stop water RPC Maximum (left) and Medium (right).



RBP

Prisoners in RBP complained that some showers had no shower curtain, no shelf or storage in the shower, and smelly or blocked drains that cause water to pool in the base of the shower.

Recommendation 17: That the TPS investigates the issues with the showers, including inadequate drainage and smelly/blocked drains.

Cleaning

Paid wardsmen undertake cleaning duties in all prisons, while prisoners have a responsibility to keep their own cell clean and tidy. Overall, the cleanliness of units and cells varies, however cleanliness in most areas could be improved.

RPC Maximum and RPC Medium

In RPC Maximum the floors in the kitchens and common area were not very clean (see Images 28 and 29).

Prisoners in the Derwent unit told the inspection team that the time available when cells were open was too short to do a proper, thorough cleaning. Prisoners in the Huon unit told the inspection team that they didn't have an opportunity to maintain cell hygiene or could only do it every few weeks. The rubbish from their cells comes out when the prisoners come out.

At the time of the inspection the Mersey Crisis Support Unit cells had food, blood and faeces splattered very high up the walls and onto the ceiling. The wardsmen cannot reach to clean properly and wouldn't be able to do so in any event without the use of safety equipment such as ladders, scaffolding, etc. This also applies to forensic cleaners as well. Any mess that can be reached by the wardsmen with a mop falls back on their heads/face.

Some toilets have lots of calcium build up in them. Prisoners only have a brush to clean, however they can get disinfectant from officers or buy toilet duck. Prisoners can't spend any private earnings on cleaning items.



Images 28 & 29. RPC Maximum – dirty kitchen floor (left) and spilt milk in microwave (right)



A number of RPC Medium unit kitchens only had window cleaner; there was no disinfectant or multipurpose cleaner (Images 30 and 31). The window cleaner had to be used to clean kitchen surfaces and kitchen appliances, including non-stick surfaces on sandwich toasters etc. Prisoners said they used to be supplied with a multipurpose cleaner with an antibacterial component, but are now just given generic window cleaner. The inspection team did see a scourer cleanser for hard surfaces in some kitchens. The kitchen areas only had paper towels for cleaning, there were no cleaning cloths. This paper towel had to be shared between the kitchen and the bathroom for cleaning. It wasn't clear how the bathroom surfaces can be cleaned with paper towels given the lack of cleaning cloths.

Images 30 & 31. Cleaning products in RPC Medium kitchens.





RBP

Prisoners are able to use the vacuum to clean their cells when they want to.

MHWP

Prisoners asserted that staff are not making inmates do their jobs, and there could be a week go by between cleanings, for example, the showers.

Prisoners advised that recycling had never been introduced and stated that “the waste is soul destroying, each person a day has two milk cartons and the breakfast pack has two lots of plastic cutlery”.

Recommendation 18: That the TPS investigate the provision of appropriate cleaning products available for cleaning cells and common areas in units.

Recommendation 19: That the TPS investigate the introduction of recycling into some, if not all, sections of the TPS.

Escort vehicles

The Consultants indicated that the use of inmate transport vehicles should be reviewed to ensure inmates are transported without unnecessary delay, and have access to drinking water and sanitary provisions. This should include procedures that are in place to clean and sanitise pods between inmates and also the transport of laundry.

The trip from the Southern TPS sites to the Northern TPS site can take up to four hours. The current transport route starts at RPC, then goes to MWHP, RBP, Stores, VRC, and HRP then on to LRP.

Prisoners are given a 600mL bottle of water to drink on the journey. Due to safety and security issues the escort vehicle is currently unable to stop to provide rest breaks for prisoners, and this makes the journey difficult for them, particularly females. This has resulted in male prisoners urinating in the transport cell/pod, or urinating into the empty water bottle. Vomit bags can be given to female prisoners to urinate in, however this is not easy and they don't like to urinate on camera. If prisoners are urinating in to their empty water bottles, transport staff have highlighted that there is a potential that it could be used as a weapon and injure staff.

The 2017 Care and Wellbeing inspection recommended that TPS introduce procedures to clean the prison escort vehicle pods after every use. At the time of the inspection, escort vehicles were cleaned on varying schedules. Previously the prisoner pods in the Hobart-Launceston escort vehicle were hosed out weekly using water only, and pods cleaned if contaminated. Additional cleaning was instigated by TPS in response to COVID-19, and schedules developed to ensure the appropriate cleaning of escort vehicles. The North-West escort vehicle is marked on the LRP COVID-19 weekly cleaning schedule to be cleaned daily at 16:30. There is no relevant cleaning schedule for the Hobart-Launceston escort vehicle. Every effort is made to clean and sanitise the pods between uses. This isn't able to be done for the local escort vehicle due to time constraints getting prisoners to Court, however it is cleaned on a daily basis.



The Department's response to the Inspection Report noted a revised Director's Standing Order (DSO) regarding External Escorts, Medical Appointments and Hospital Admissions. This DSO was issued on 17 February 2022 and therefore postdates this inspection. It outlines that a minimum requirement is that escort vehicles must be cleaned daily or 'as used'.

The 2017 Care and Wellbeing inspection noted that dirty laundry was transported in the pods, and that these pods were not cleaned before prisoners were then transported in them. The current inspection noted that TPS had changed the process for transporting laundry to RPC for laundering, and dirty laundry is now transported in the luggage compartment of the escort vehicle.

Recommendations 20 and 21 have been further discussed with TPS. Discussions with Tasmania Police and TPS have determined that Campbell Town Police Station is not a possibility due to the staffing model. TPS have made enquiries with all Australian jurisdictions through the Corrective Services Administrators' Council (CSAC) directorate regarding recommendations 20 and 21, and hope to have collated responses soon.

Recommendation 20: That the TPS examine the possibility of introducing a rest break at Campbell Town Police Station for prisoners and staff during transportation between Launceston and Hobart.

Recommendation 21: That the TPS examine the use of a juice-box like container for the drink given to prisoners during transportation between Launceston and Hobart.

Recommendation 22: That TPS document, and put into place, a cleaning schedule for the Hobart-Launceston escort vehicle.



Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Term or Acronym	Definition
HRP	Hobart Reception Prison
LRP	Launceston Reception Prison
MHWP	Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison
RPC	Risdon Prison Complex
RBP	Ron Barwick Prison
TPS	Tasmania Prison Service



Appendix I – Inspection Standards

Hygiene and Environmental Health

72 Prisoners should be provided with a bed and bedding suitable for the climate and adequate to keep them in good health

- 72.1 All prisoners should be provided with a single mattress and bed.
- 72.2 Mattresses and bedding should be clean, in good order, and washed regularly.
- 72.3 Mattresses and bedding should be durable and meet health and safety requirements.
- 72.4 Mattresses and bedding should be fire retardant.
- 72.5 Mattresses should be replaced when necessary to ensure cleanliness and good health

73 Prison environments must comply with good public health practices.

- 73.1 Prison infrastructure must be compliant with all relevant environmental health regulations.
- 73.2 Service equipment for refrigeration, cooking and laundry must be properly maintained and regularly cleaned.
- 73.3 Prisons must ensure good drinking water quality and food safety, and protect prisoners from any environmental hazards that may pose a risk to health.
- 73.4 Appropriate precautions should be in place to minimise hazards to health such as mosquitoes, bed bugs, flies, head lice and bacteria such as legionella, E coli and listeria among many.
- 73.5 Vermin and pests should be controlled.
- 73.6 Smoking is prohibited in all prison facilities. Additionally, there is to be no smoking anywhere on prison property, including outside grounds.

74 Prisons must provide the facilities, services and items necessary for the maintenance of environmental health and general hygiene.

- 74.1 Prisoners should be provided with suitable facilities and opportunities to maintain their own hygiene.
- 74.2 Information promoting good hygiene practices should be made available to prisoners.
- 74.3 Prisons must implement practices to ensure the day-to-day cleaning necessary to maintain proper standards of hygiene.



Appendix 2 – Consultants' Report

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PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

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Mr Richard Connock
Custodial Inspectorate
GPO Box 960
HOBART TAS 7001

Dear Mr Connock

Findings from planned inspections of Tasmanian custodial centres – hygiene and other environmental health issues - 2021

As requested by the Office of the Custodial Inspectorate, an Environmental Health Officer (EHO) from this department, Helena Bobbi, assisted you with an inspection of a number of Tasmanian custodial centres in February 2021. Inspections were conducted in accordance with section 13 of the *Custodial Inspector Act 2016*. Additional assistance was provided by Durga Gopala Krishnan and Hollie Zimmermann, also EHOs from this department.

The sites covered included: Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison (RBMS), Risdon Prison Complex (RPC), Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison (MHP), Hobart Reception Centre (HRC), Launceston Reception Centre (LRC) and Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC), with inspections undertaken between 16 February and 3 March. The inspection findings from AYDC have been submitted to you in a separate report dated 20/10/2021 and as such are not included in this current report.

The focus of these inspections was hygiene and environmental health, within the framework of the *Tasmanian Inspection Standards for Adult Prisoners*, the *Public Health Act 1997* and *Food Act 2003*, as a follow-up to an initial round of inspections conducted in May and June 2017 and the subsequent recommendations.

A review of food safety for allergen management and medical dietary requirements (for example for people with celiac disease (gluten free), or diabetes) were also included.

Food Safety

- All kitchens where food is prepared for the prison population are routinely audited under the Australian and New Zealand Food Standards Code Standard 3.3.1 by a Department of Health approved regulatory food safety auditor. This audit had taken place the month prior to the inspection visit by Public Health Services.



- Satisfactory and suitable procedures are in place to manage food safety for allergen and medically indicated diets within the kitchens.
- Access to free, online food safety courses such as Do Food Safely and Allergen Awareness would be beneficial to everyone working in the kitchens.
- As prisoners store food in refrigerators in their areas, it is recommended that periodic checks of refrigeration take place to verify potentially hazardous foods may be kept at or below 5°C. Refrigerators may require periodic adjustment and maintenance.
- The Risdon Prison Kitchen (RPK) and the Vegetable Processing Facility located in the RBMSP are registered as a food business by Clarence City Council in accordance with the Food Act 2003. An appropriate food safety program is also in place that is audited annually by a Tasmanian Department of Health approved regulatory auditor.
- Processes and procedures are in place and continue to be well documented and associated records maintained. While this includes appropriate details of allergen management and protocols for identifying/screening inmates for food allergies when first taken into custody, inmates at the MHWP - described situations where their allergies and medically required dietary requirements had not been actioned at intake. This included a person diagnosed with celiac disease prior to admission to MHWP who was self-managing her gluten free diet by volunteering to work in the kitchen for a period of 3 months.
- Plans are in place to construct a new kitchen complex to replace the current aged infrastructure.
- The condition of the kitchenettes in yards one to seven of RBMSP that are used by inmates for reheating and cooking varies. While some have been upgraded, a number remain in poor condition. To continue to ensure food safety, it is recommended that these remaining kitchenettes be upgraded to the same standard of those already refurbished.
- In general, inmates in RBMSP had sufficient knowledge of food safety to enable them to safely reheat meals and may access food from the canteen to cook.
- Meals continue to be delivered from the RBMSP 'ready-to-eat' (hot) to inmates in Risdon Prison Complex and Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison. These meals only require reheating if inmates choose to store and eat later. The procedures in place for the delivery and distribution of meals to inmates continue to be considered compliant with food safety requirements (as per the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code).

Risdon Prison, Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison (RBMSP), Canteen

- The fit-out of the canteen is appropriate for its current use, although as identified in 2017, increased storage area would enable more efficient ordering processes and storage. The recommendation that eggs for sale are stored as per manufactures instructions – stored in a cool place or refrigerated also continues to apply.

Risdon Prison Complex (RPC)

- The RPC includes both medium and maximum security areas for inmates. In general kitchenettes provided in these areas are appropriate for their use.
- As identified in 2017, the kitchenettes in medium security would benefit from extra shelving /storage space for dry goods such as cereals/pasta and breakfast ingredients.



Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison (MHWP)

- The current safety program covers processes and procedures conducted in this kitchen to ensure food safety.
- The fit-out of the kitchen in MHWP is appropriate for its current use. It is used to distribute 'ready to eat' (hot) meals delivered from the RBMSP to inmates and designated inmates also prepare and reheat hot lunches in this kitchen for inmates in this area.
- Inmates working in this kitchen require appropriate food safety skills and knowledge. While food handler training is provided to inmates working here, oversight of cleaning and general kitchen usage by dedicated prison staff would be beneficial.

Hobart Reception Centre (HRC)

- The HRC kitchen is registered as a food business with Hobart City Council.
- Prison officers and inmates have the appropriate skills and knowledge to undertake the food handling activities at this site, as achieved through food handler training.
- Daily unit and cell inspections are conducted and include identification of equipment such as microwave ovens, fridges and toasted sandwich presses that are damaged or are missing. The recommendation remains in place that damaged or removed, these items should be repaired and/or replaced as soon as possible.

Launceston Reception Centre (LRC)

- The LRC kitchen is registered as a food business with City of Launceston (Council).
- The fit out of the kitchen is appropriate for its current use. Inmates and correctional staff working in this area have appropriate skills and knowledge in food handling. All yards-men working in this area have completed food handler training as at RPK.

Drinking water quality

- Metal concentrations exceeding the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG) were detected in water samples during the initial round of inspections of the custodial centres in 2017. These exceedances included nickel in the Mary Hutchins Women's Prison and the Risdon Prison Complex, lead in the Mary Hutchins Women's Prison, and cadmium in the Launceston Reception Centre.
- Recommendations made in 2017 included advising inmates to run taps for 30 seconds before drinking, preparing food and brushing teeth and that further sampling be conducted at all facilities.
- While some signage was noted during the current inspections at the MHWP reminding staff and inmates to run taps before using the water for these purposes, this was not in place across all parts of all custodial facilities. In addition, while records of further monitoring of the water distribution systems across the sites was requested, including monitoring efficacy of the water filter installed at MHWP, they were not provided upon request and therefore cannot be verified.

Other environmental health issues and recommendations

All areas

- It is noted that the recommendation that mattresses, doonas and pillows be routinely inspected for defects, moisture and mould and replaced where necessary is in place. Overall, mattresses and bedding were found



to be in good condition and staff willing to assist inmates in their requests for replacements as deemed appropriate.

- It is noted that the recommendation that inmates should have access to their own set of nail clippers rather than only those shared in a set yard/area is in place.
- Currently hair clippers are limited to one or two sets per yard/area. It is preferable for single use clipper blades to be used, however re-useable blades should be cleaned between use with detergent and water or a detergent wipe. Bench top ultra-violet cabinets do not “sterilise” equipment and do not replace the need to clean and or wipe them down. These re-useable items should not be used in such a way that there is any risk of them becoming contaminated with blood.
- The use of inmate transport vehicles should be reviewed to ensure inmates are transported without unnecessary delay, have access to drinking water and sanitary provisions. This should also include procedures that are in place to clean and sanitise pods between inmates and also transport of laundry. Measures should also be reviewed to minimise nuisance behaviour that impacts staff and on other inmates being transported in different pods of the same vehicle at the same time. This includes inmates urinating on the floor inside pods and if provided with receptacles to relieve this issue, using these receptacles as objects to throw at and harm others.
- While outside the formal scope of this inspection, officers also noted the range of measures in place to assist in maintaining a COVID-19 safe environment across all sites. These included the presence of Check in Tas QR codes, floor decals encouraging 1.5m separation, signage to remind all persons arriving at the entrances to not enter if unwell, get tested and stay at home, physical distancing and hand and personal hygiene. Hand sanitisers were also readily available.

Risdon Prison, Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison (RBMSP)

- While the RBMSP is the oldest section of buildings on the Risdon Prison site, concerns of condensation as raised by inmates and staff are addressed both routinely and on a case-by case approach. Should a cell be found to retain moisture or experience more pronounced variation in ambient temperature, measures are taken to address these issues. Cells are inspected both routinely and when brought to the attention of staff by an inmate. Those identified with any visible condensation or mould are left unoccupied. Complaints of inmate thermal discomfort are addressed through additional heating, additional bedding and/or by leaving the cell unoccupied.

Launceston Reception Centre (LRC)

- It is noted that there has been no change to the lack of access to natural daylight or fresh airflow for inmates at LRC. The Inspection Standards for Adult Custodial Centres in Tasmania, Standard 99.1, states that “prisoners should be able to exercise in open air for at least two hours every day, weather permitting. This minimum standard is applicable to all inmates including those under protected or segregated punishment.”
- A number of cells identified in 2017 as subject to extreme heat during the summer months are no longer used to house inmates. This satisfies the recommendation made that these cells remain unoccupied.
- It is anticipated that plans for the construction of a new prison in the north of the state will eventuate and enable inmates to reside in modern facilities that meet the Tasmanian Inspection Standards for Adult Prisoners.



While outside the formal scope of this inspection, officers also noted the range of measures in place to assist in maintaining a COVID-19 safe environment across all sites. These included the presence of Check in Tas QR codes, floor decals encouraging 1.5m separation, signage to remind all persons arriving at the entrances to not enter if unwell, get tested and stay at home, physical distancing and hand and personal hygiene. Hand sanitisers were also readily available.

I would like to thank you in facilitating the Department's investigation as well as assistance from prison officers across all sites.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on 6166 0698 or Helena Bobbi on 0418 439 173 if you would like to discuss any of these details further.

Yours sincerely

Paul Hunt

State Manager Environmental Health Services

20 October 2021



Appendix 3 - Department of Justice response to recommendations

Department of Justice Comments regarding this inspection

The Department of Justice (the Department) appreciates the work undertaken by the Custodial Inspector and his staff in relation to the Environmental Health and Hygiene Inspection Report. The Department also acknowledges and thanks the Environmental Health Officers from Public Health Services, Department of Health, who were consulted and provided expert advice and assistance to the Custodial Inspector.

The Department supports that the management of a range of environmental health factors is paramount in the prevention of adverse health outcomes in prisoners. The Department works closely with Correctional Primary Health Services to ensure continuous improvement in health outcomes for prisoners and, in accordance with the *Guiding Principles for Corrections in Australia*, that prisoners are provided a standard of health care equal to services that are available in the community. The release of this report provides further opportunity to make necessary changes to improve the well-being of prisoners and we are committed to working with the Custodial Inspector to address the findings of the report.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to provide comment on the draft Report. Given the passage of around 12 months since the initial inspections, there have been a number of matters that have been reviewed and updates provided as part of our response outlined below.

COVID-19 Response

In line with the Tasmanian Government's COVID-19 requirements, and consistent with Public Health advice, various measures remain in place to deal with the coronavirus pandemic and its potential impact on the health and wellbeing of prisoners and staff. Such strategies include isolation and testing processes for anyone coming into custody, temperature and Rapid Antigen testing for people entering facilities, and increased cleaning and hygiene awareness practices.

Other measures which were able to be activated during periods of high risk include the cessation of contact visits (with all visits moved to virtual visits), restrictions on the number of people entering the prison (limited to essential workers only), and the implementation of static team rosters for staff.

The Tasmania Prison Service (TPS) has established COVID-19 Outbreak Management Plans for every TPS site, as well as site-specific, 24-hour response guides to describe key initial response actions.

Additionally, the rollout of the TPS COVID-19 vaccination program commenced in April 2021. This program was available for all prisoners, staff and key stakeholders. Vaccination clinics continue to be rolled out to prisoners on a regular basis.

In December 2021, the Department implemented the requirement for all staff and visitors to be double vaccinated before they are permitted to enter TPS sites.

The Department appreciates the positive comments made by the Custodial Inspector regarding the management of the COVID-19 response by the TPS.



Policy Development

As part of the Director's Standing Order (DSO) renewal project, the TPS is reviewing a number of policies and procedures relating to environmental health and hygiene for prisoners, communicable diseases and Health Services, which will be incorporated into a new Health DSO. The release of this report will greatly assist in the timely development of these documents.

The Health DSO will operate in conjunction with relevant response policies, including TPS Action Plans for influenza, the COVID-19 Pandemic and other emerging diseases. Clearly defined inspection and cleaning processes together with resources for promoting prisoner hygiene and well-being will be added as appendices to the policy.

Infrastructure Updates and Future Planned Improvements

It is pleasing to now report that the kitchenette upgrades in the Ron Barwick Prison have been completed. These works have resulted in more contemporary spaces for prisoners to utilise; they include upgraded flooring and stainless steel benchtops to improve cleanliness standards, new fridges and appliances, and installed racks and other safety requirements.

The Department continues to explore future infrastructure upgrades to kitchen facilities in the O'Hara Cottages, the Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison and the Hobart Reception Prison. All of these upgrades currently form part of the Department's Strategic Infrastructure bid and will be considered through the usual budget processes.

It is also noted that the Government has provided an additional \$15 million for a new kitchen to be built on the Risdon Prison site and construction is expected to commence later this year. In the meantime, necessary improvements will be made to the current main kitchen, in line with scheduled maintenance works.

The infrastructure budget process as mentioned above also includes a submission for a new, purpose built, standalone store which will go a long way in managing the capacity to hold more items.

Bedding and Doonas

The TPS has set procedures for the regular laundering of prisoners bedding (weekly) and clothing (daily). Laundering is either undertaken through the industrial laundry at the Risdon Prison Complex or through industrial washing machines located at individual facilities. Operating Manuals for each facility contain set procedures for laundry services. Any policies and/or manuals that require updating to reflect current laundering practices are being actioned through the DSO Renewal Project, as outlined above. It is also important to note that a review of laundry processes is currently being undertaken to coincide with the opening of the Southern Remand Centre later this year.

Consistent with standards in the broader community, the Department supports that the cleaning of larger bedding items, such as doonas, should occur every few months. Current processes for laundering such items differs between facilities, occurring either through a scheduled laundering process or by request from prisoners. There are also a number of current prisoners (with specified health conditions) who have special arrangements in place for the more frequent washing of their doonas.

Notwithstanding the above, and in light of the comments made by the Custodial Inspector, I will request that processes are reviewed at each facility to ensure that the laundering of long-term prisoners' larger bedding items aligns with industry standards.



In contrast to comments made by prisoners to the Inspectorate Team during the inspections, I can confirm that clean doonas, bedding and clothing are always issued to prisoners on their reception into custody.

Mattresses

The TPS has an imbedded mattress replacement strategy which ensures that all mattresses are replaced every three years, with one third of mattresses replaced in each facility yearly. Mattresses are also replaced outside of the schedule, through identification by staff during cell check processes, or upon request by prisoners.

As part of regular daily cell checks, staff are required to examine mattresses for defects or for signs of mould. Any issues with the condition of mattresses are to be noted by the staff member and action is to be taken to replace the mattress.

The Department acknowledges the Custodial Inspector's ongoing concern that these checks are not being adequately undertaken in some locations on a daily basis. I have therefore requested that further review and monitoring of this process is undertaken by prison management through the TPS Performance and Compliance Framework.

Thermal Conditions

The Department is aware of the physical discomfort that can be caused by varying thermal conditions of cells, whilst also recognising the difficulty in determining levels of discomfort as personal reactions to conditions vary. Levels of comfort can be dependent upon a number of factors, including personal preference, an individual's health condition or age.

Similar to standard housing in the community, varying thermal conditions primarily occur within prison facilities with aged infrastructure, such as the Ron Barwick Prison, and areas of the reception prisons. As in the community, local strategies are put in place within each facility to maintain or improve thermal comfort, especially during the hottest and coldest months of the year. Practical examples include varying heating or cooling set temperature systems, the provision of extra clothing or blankets, and the distribution of fans or extra heaters. Extra heating systems have also been installed into Division 7 of the Ron Barwick Prison, which primarily houses an aged and/or infirm cohort of prisoners.

Again, similar to contemporary housing infrastructure within the community, new prison infrastructure is designed to more appropriately manage thermal conditions. Thermal conditions were a central design consideration for the Southern Remand Centre, and will be for the development of the Northern Correctional Facility.

Training, Education and Programs for Prisoners

As noted by the Custodial Inspector, all prisoners who work in TPS kitchens and handle food, receive Food Safety Awareness Training through TasTAFE. Further, the TPS is currently exploring the option to embed food handling safety for all prisoners upon their initial 5-day induction to the prison.

The TPS has a regular scheduled meeting with TasTAFE as part of our partnership arrangements and will continue to discuss and explore what further opportunities can be provided in this area.

Funding has been provided to Australian Red Cross for the delivery of the Volunteering for Change



Program, based on the proven Community Based Health and First Aid in-prison program. The program provides training for prisoners to become Special Status Red Cross Volunteers within their prison, and empowers them to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of the prison community through identified initiatives.

The program will commence initially in the Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison, before being rolled out further to other facilities.

The program has had great success at improving the health and safety of prisons world-wide and we are excited to work with Australian Red Cross to deliver this important initiative.

Specific Follow up

In respect to some specific issues raised in the report, I provide the following response:

Issue	Response
Capacity Reporting	• While they are taken from TPS documentation, the capacity figures as reported in the 'About Tasmania Prison Service' section of the report are used out of their proper context and give a misleading impression of prison capacities. The TPS Performance and Compliance Unit will provide the correct figures to the Custodial Inspector. • As per the Department's response to the Utilisation Review, temporary beds are not included in the capacity count in accordance with the counting rules for the Report on Government Services. The temporary beds are used to manage surging prisoner populations and are not intended for permanent ongoing use (to be addressed with the opening of the Southern Remand Centre).
Drinking Water Quality	• Water quality testing is undertaken twice yearly from 56 locations around all prisons, staff and prisoner accommodation areas. The results from these tests have always come back at an appropriate level fit for human consumption. • The Department acknowledges the current water restrictions in Tasmania, and appreciates the effort of the wider community in abiding by these restrictions. The Department will therefore review the current communication strategy (advising prisoners to run taps for 30 seconds before use) to ensure that this is a warranted requirement and is not resulting in unnecessary water wastage.
MHWP Kitchen – Cleaning	• Processes are in place for correctional staff to review the cleanliness of the MHWP kitchen on a daily basis. This occurs at the conclusion of each shift when they are conducting general auditing duties. The cleaners will be returned to the kitchen if staff determine that appropriate cleaning has not occurred.
Provision of Processed Meats to Pregnant Prisoners	• Once a pregnancy is confirmed by Correctional Primary Health Services a medical chit is provided to Catering Services. Catering Services then prepare the provision of catering for the prisoner in accordance with the chit – as per process outlined in DSO 4.07 Catering Services.



Responses to Recommendations

Recommendation	Response/Acceptance Level
I. As it was in my 2017 Care and Wellbeing report, it is again recommended that the TPS implements processes to ensure that staff regularly inspect mattresses, doonas and pillows for defects, moisture and mould and replace where necessary.	Supported - Existing Initiative Current process is in place for this to occur as part of the daily cell checks undertaken by correctional staff. Further review and monitoring of this process will be undertaken by prison management through the TPS Performance and Compliance Framework.
That the TPS implements processes to clean a doona if a prisoner formally requests it for verifiable health and wellbeing reasons, prior to the scheduled washing cycle.	Supported - Existing Initiative This already occurs as noted in the response above and is consistent with community standards. Additionally, there are a number of current prisoners (with specified health conditions) that have special arrangements in place for the more frequent washing of their doonas.
3 That the TPS implements processes to ensure that food thermometers are calibrated at least every 12 months.	Supported - Existing Initiative Infrared and thermometer battery checks will be included in the auditable documentation as part of the HACCP process. Monthly temperature audits are conducted by the Assistant Catering Services Manager which will highlight any fault with temperature probes. Satellite areas will also be included in the auditable documentation. Conformity in these areas is difficult to maintain due to them not being operated by catering staff.
4. That the TPS implements processes to ensure that service equipment is regularly maintained and that service stickers or service records are also maintained.	Supported - Existing Initiative TPS Maintenance maintains a service schedule that provides service requests to an external contractor that provides calibration and certification of all works carried out on all equipment, with the exception of the RPC commercial laundry. Equipment in the commercial laundry is not required by its nature to undergo scheduled service intervals. The equipment is maintained and repaired on an as-required basis with many of these pieces of equipment not designed with serviceable parts.



	The TPS is not aware of any requirements for service stickers to be displayed on machines.
5. That the TPS implements processes to ensure that the cleaning of all service equipment is checked and recorded.	Supported - Existing Initiative Daily, weekly and monthly cleaning schedules and checks are in place for equipment items. The TPS will review the requirement for these checks to recorded.
6. That the TPS produce policy document(s) to reflect the drinking water testing and water filter changing currently listed as action items on the TPS Maintenance Schedule. The policy should reflect both the drinking water testing procedure and the process for addressing results that indicate contamination.	Supported in Principle Options to address this recommendation will be considered in line with the review of the current water quality testing practice (as noted above).
7. That the regular water testing undertaken by the TPS include testing for the metals detected in the original testing.	Supported in Principle Water quality testing is undertaken twice yearly from 56 locations around all prisons, staff and prisoner accommodation areas. The Department will review the current water quality testing practice, taking into consideration the comments made.
8. That the TPS produce policy document(s) to reflect the need to inform all prisoners and staff of the need to run taps for 30 seconds prior to using the water for drinking, washing and preparing food, and brushing teeth.	Not Supported As noted above, the Department will be reviewing the requirement for taps to be run for 30 seconds. This is to ensure that the practice is warranted and does not result in unnecessary water wastage. Regardless of the outcome of the review, the TPS already has a communication strategy in place which involves the placement of relevant signage in areas. The production of further policy documents is not considered necessary.
9. That the TPS introduce policies to ensure everyone who works in the kitchens, including food handlers and cleaners, undertake food safety courses.	Supported - Existing Initiative As noted above. TasTAFE, through the established partnership with the TPS, undertakes Food Safety Awareness Training for prisoners working in the kitchen/food handling roles. This requirement is outlined in DSO 4.07 (Catering Services). The TPS will consult with TasTAFE to



determine whether this can training can be delivered to cleaners.

10. That the TPS introduce policies that ensure all prisoners are given basic food safety training.

Supported - Existing Initiative

As noted above, the TPS is currently exploring the option to embed food handling safety for all prisoners upon their initial 5-day induction to the prison.

11. That the older kitchenettes in RBP be upgraded to the same standard as those already refurbished.

Completed

As outlined further above, these works have now been completed.

12. That the TPS implements a policy to provide existing prisoners in RPC with a sun hat if they haven't already been provided with one.

Supported - Existing Initiative

All prisoners in the medium precinct are provided with a hat as part of their standard clothing provision. Prisoners can also request hats.

Prisoners in maximum units are supplied with hats if they are required to work in the outside workgroups, or attend the oval for sport and recreation.

13. That the TPS document procedures to inspect all cells in RBP and HRP regularly and leave unoccupied those identified as having visible condensation or mould or identified as excessively hot.

Supported in Principle

Options (consistent with community standards) to address this recommendation will be considered.

14. That the TPS address the hygiene issues caused by in-cell toilets with no lids.

Supported in Principle

Options on safe and secure in-cell toilet seats are being investigated. The requirement to ensure that there no potential hanging points adds complexity to this issue.

The TPS is also considering options for the provision of a removable covering that prisoners could place over the toilet bowl.

15. That the TPS produce policy document(s) to reflect the cleaning and disinfection required for hair and nail clippers that are used by multiple prisoners, and that this policy is made available to all relevant custodial officers.

Supported - Existing Initiative

Procedural annexures for the management of grooming appliances in all facilities will be included in the Health Services Standing Order that is currently being progressed through the DSO Renewal Project.



16. That the TPS provide infection control education for prisoners who clean their own hair and nail clippers.

Supported - Existing Initiative

General information regarding infection control is already outlined in the Health Induction Booklet which is provided by Correctional Primary Health Services to all new prisoners on reception into custody.

This recommendation will be added to the standing agenda for the Senior Management monthly meeting that occurs with Correctional Primary Health Services, for further discussion.

17. That the TPS investigate issues with the showers, including inadequate drainage and smelly/blocked drains.

Supported - Existing Initiative

The drains within showers will become blocked from time to time due to the requirement for correctional drains to be installed to stop foreign items being inserted.

An established process sees correctional staff notifying TPS maintenance who unblock and clean the drain.

18. That the TPS investigate the provision of appropriate cleaning products available for cleaning cells and common areas in units.

Supported

The TPS will undertake a review of cleaning processes (wardsmen's positions and the provision of cleaning products) within the Risdon Prison Complex.

19. That the TPS investigate the introduction of recycling into some, if not all, sections of the TPS.

Supported - Existing Initiative

Some recycling practices already exist, including the recycling of cardboard boxes and vegetable matter from the vegetable processing industry.

The TPS continues to consult with the Clarence City Council regarding further recycling options at the Risdon site.

20. That the TPS examines the possibility of introducing a rest break at Campbell Town Police Station for prisoners and staff during transportation between Launceston and Hobart.

Supported - Existing Initiative

This recommendation remains part of ongoing negotiations in the development of the 'Letter of Intent' for partnership between the Department and Tasmania Police.

In the meantime, the TPS will undertake enquiries with other correctional jurisdictions in order to determine what other options can be provided to prisoners who need to urinate during escort.



21. That the TPS examine the use of a juice-box like container for the drink given to prisoners during transportation between Launceston and Hobart.
22. That the TPS document, and put into place, a cleaning schedule for the Hobart-Launceston escort vehicle.

Supported in Principle

Prisoners are currently provided with bottled water.

The TPS will undertake enquiries with other correctional jurisdictions in respect to this recommendation.

Not Supported

The revised DSO (External Escorts, Medical Appointments and Hospital Admissions) was issued on 17 February 2022. A minimum requirement outlined in this policy is for escort vehicles to be cleaned daily or 'as used'.

The TPS currently meets this minimum requirement. All escort vehicles are cleaned at the end of the day by contracted cleaners. The TPS will also engage the services of a forensic cleaning service if required. Additional cleaning will occur at either end of an escort on an as needs basis.

The above process is standard practice and occurs as part of the daily maintenance schedule. As such, the TPS does not support that this needs to be further documented or a cleaning schedule be developed.

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