

## B. How we prepared this report

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### Queensland Audit Office reports to parliament

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The Queensland Audit Office (QAO) is Queensland's independent auditor of public sector entities and local governments.

QAO's independent public reporting is an important part of our mandate. It brings transparency and accountability to public sector performance and forms a vital part of the overall integrity of the system of government.

QAO provides valued assurance, insights and advice, and recommendations for improvement via the reports it tables in the Legislative Assembly, as mandated by the *Auditor-General Act 2009*. These reports may be on the results of our financial audits, on the results of our performance audits, or on our insights. Our insights reports may provide key facts or a topic overview, the insights we have gleaned from across our audit work, the outcomes of an investigation we conducted following a request for audit, or an update on the status of Auditor-General's recommendations.

We share our planned reports to parliament in our 3-year forward work plan, which we update annually: [www.qao.qld.gov.au/audit-program](http://www.qao.qld.gov.au/audit-program).

A fact sheet on how we prepare, consult on, and table our reports to parliament is available on our website: [www.qao.qld.gov.au/reports-resources/fact-sheets](http://www.qao.qld.gov.au/reports-resources/fact-sheets).

#### Performance audits

Through our performance audit program, we evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of public service delivery. We select the topics for these audits via a robust process that reflects the strategic risks entities are facing. We develop or identify suitable criteria for each audit and evaluate the audited entities' performance against it. We report to parliament on the outcome.

Our performance audit reports help parliament hold entities to account for the use of public resources. In our reports, we provide recommendations or insights for improvement, and may include actions, advice, or better practice examples for entities to consider.

### About this report

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QAO prepares its reports on performance audits under the *Auditor-General Act 2009*:

- section 37A, which outlines that the Auditor-General may conduct a performance audit of all or any particular activities of a public sector entity.

This report communicates the findings, conclusions, and recommendations from our performance audit on rehabilitating and reintegrating prisoners.

Our audit was a reasonable engagement, conducted under the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards* and guided by the Australian Standard on Assurance Engagements ASAE 3500 *Performance Engagements*. We complied with the independence and other relevant ethical requirements related to assurance engagements. The conclusions in our report provide reasonable assurance about the audited entities' performance against the identified criteria. Our objectives and criteria are set out below.

#### The objective of this audit

The objective of the audit is to assess how effectively Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) plans for and facilitates the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners in custody.



## What we cover

We examine how effectively QCS identifies and assesses the risks and needs of prisoners and the strategies, plans, and programs that it uses to rehabilitate and reintegrate prisoners across its 20 correctional centres. We also examine how effectively QCS monitors and assesses its performance.

We included a focus on First Nations prisoners because they are overrepresented in correctional centres. QCS has obligations as part of the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* to reduce the number of First Nations people held in custody.

In this report we have defined a prisoner as a person sentenced by the court to a term of imprisonment; or ordered by the court to be detained in a correctional centre. This includes people on remand and unsentenced prisoners. This is consistent with the definition in the *Guiding principles for Corrections in Australia*.

## Entities we audited

This audit focuses on QCS and its role in rehabilitating and reintegrating prisoners across Queensland.

## Our approach

### Audit criteria

We addressed our objective through the following sub-objectives and criteria:

#### **Sub-objective 1: QCS uses an evidence-based approach to plan for the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners**

##### Criteria

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 1.1 | QCS has evidence-based strategies for rehabilitation and reintegration of people in custody |
| 1.2 | The strategies are informed by facility information and supported by effective governance   |
| 1.3 | QCS considers and plans for the needs of First Nations people in custody                    |

#### **Sub-objective 2: QCS effectively facilitates access to rehabilitation and reintegration programs and services for people in custody**

##### Criteria

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|-----|---|
| 2.1 | QCS consistently assesses the risks and needs of individuals to inform their rehabilitation and reintegration |
| 2.2 | Rehabilitation and reintegration programs and services are accessible and available to people in custody      |
| 2.3 | QCS provides culturally appropriate rehabilitation and reintegration to First Nations people in custody       |

#### **Sub-objective 3: QCS effectively monitors and evaluates its strategies and programs to rehabilitate and reintegrate people in custody**

##### Criteria

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|-----|--|
| 3.1 | QCS has an appropriate framework for monitoring and evaluating its strategies and programs |
| 3.2 | Findings from monitoring and evaluation inform strategy and program evolution              |

## Scope exclusions

As a part of this audit, we did not assess:

- offending, sentencing, and parole decisions
- the effectiveness of community corrections to rehabilitate prisoners and reduce reoffending
- contract management for programs and services.\*

\*The audit did not examine the administrative processes of contract procurement or day-to-day contract management. It did assess the effectiveness of QCS's performance monitoring of the contracts for services relevant to the audit scope.

## Method

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### Interviews and site visits

We conducted interviews with QCS staff from across Queensland. We interviewed a range of staff involved in planning strategies, analysing data, keeping people safe, managing correctional centres, delivering rehabilitation programs, and more.

The audit team conducted site visits to:

- Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre
- Woodford Correctional Centre
- Townsville Men's Correctional Centre
- Townsville Women's Correctional Centre
- Townsville Men's Correctional Centre – low security
- Townsville Women's Correctional Centre – low security
- Lockyer Valley Correctional Centre.

### Document review

We obtained and reviewed relevant documents from QCS. This included legislation, strategic plans, operational performance directives, performance reviews and reports, guidance and planning documents, correctional centre operational records and plans, meeting minutes, and correspondence. We also considered research from other jurisdictions and academia.

### Data analysis

We analysed a range of data from QCS, including:

- prisoner numbers over time
- program completions
- enrolment in education and employment.

We validated our data methods and analysis progressively with the department.

### Subject matter experts

We engaged a subject matter expert to provide insights about the justice sector in Queensland and across Australia. This expert offered advice and validated facts and concepts related to corrections.

