



Front line officers respond professionally to AMC riot, but better management and training in emergency response is required from ACT Corrective Services

The review of the riot at the Alexander Maconochie Centre on 10 to 11 November 2020 conducted by the Office of the ACT Inspector of Correctional Services has found that the incident was not reasonably foreseeable by ACT Corrective Services.

The ACT Inspector of Correctional Services, Neil McAllister, presented the review for tabling in the ACT Legislative Assembly today. The review makes 13 recommendations.

Mr McAllister said, “What seems to have started as a passive protest of detainees refusing to lock into their cells overnight got out of hand when a few detainees started lighting fires and damaging furniture and fittings in the Accommodation Unit – North.”

“This was very serious incident that lasted about 9 hours and the fact that it was resolved without injuries to staff or detainees is a testament to the professional response of Corrections Officers and ACT Fire and Rescue firefighters in very difficult and hazardous circumstances.”

Mr McAllister also acknowledged the prompt and professional support provided to ACT Corrective Services by ACT Policing and the ACT Ambulance Service both of which deployed significant resources to assist in the management of the incident.

The review found issues with the training of staff to deal with serious incidents, including a riot.

“While AMC staff did a great job on the night, many were unprepared for dealing with the situation.”

“Had it not been for the leadership of a few experienced senior Corrections Officers in the frontline, things could have turned out very badly for both staff and detainees.”

For more information

The full report can be found at ics.act.gov.au under our 'reports' page.

Please note that the Inspector will not be making any further public comment on this report.

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