

Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028



OUR VISION:

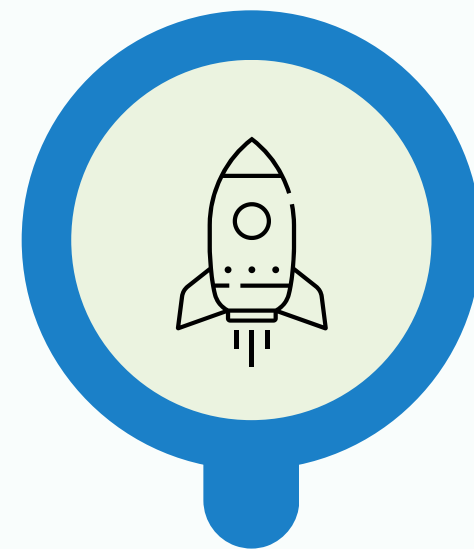
Detention of adults and young people in the ACT is in a way that everyone feels and is safe, all people are treated with respect and dignity, detained people have sufficient purposeful activity and are prepared for release.

OUR MISSION: WHAT WE DO



Transparency & Accountability

Promote and bring about transparency of and accountability for conditions and treatment in places of detention.



Value Lived Experience

Centre the lived experiences of detained people in our work, and value the perspectives of staff and other stakeholders.



Constructive Dialogue

Engage in constructive dialogue with detaining authorities to promote and support continuous improvement.



Reliable & Evidence Based

Produce reliable reports drawing on evidence, research and expertise.



Prevention Focused

Exercise our preventive mandate to identify root causes and systemic risks of ill-treatment across the criminal legal system and promote strategies to reduce risk.



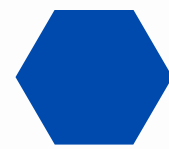
Focus on Over-Representation

Contribute to ending the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal legal system by listening & being guided by their expertise and making relevant recommendations.

OUR VALUES: CORE VALUES THAT INFORM OUR WORK

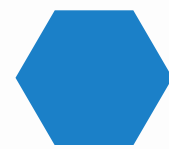
Integrity

We are ethical and honest in our work. We are responsible and accountable for our actions and decisions.



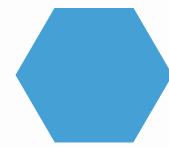
Independence

Independence is fundamental to the role of the Inspector and the Office to ensuring our work is impartial and unbiased.



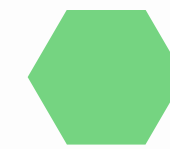
Curious

We are always learning and growing. We strive for innovative ways to have impact and foster a culture of continual improvement.



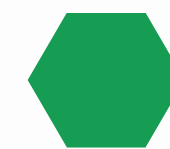
Respect

We recognise the fundamental human rights of every human being and treat people with dignity and respect.



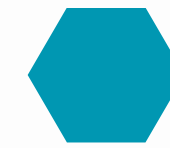
Inclusion

We value the diverse experiences of our staff and stakeholders and centre the voices of people with lived experience.



Perseverance

We are focused and motivated, even when the journey toward achieving our goals seems complex and challenging.



OUR GOALS: OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS WILL FOCUS PARTICULARLY ON

1 Improving conditions of detention and reducing the risk of ill-treatment

What we are seeking to accomplish:

- Recommendations that are accepted and implemented as intended and lead to positive outcomes.
- Detaining authorities paying particular attention to the needs of detained people in situations of vulnerability including but not limited to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women and girls, children and young people, people with disability, and people identifying as LGBTIQ+.
- A reduction in the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal legal system, listening, highlighting experiences and making relevant recommendations.
- Detaining authorities engage constructively with OICS in a spirit of seeking continual improvement to ensure practice, policy and law appropriately balances the rights of all.

Actions we will take to achieve this goal:

- Inform ourselves with the most relevant expert analysis, including utilising expert contractors from different professional backgrounds and experiences.
- Engage with people with lived experience of detention to inform our work.
- Make SMART recommendations (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) that are root cause responsive.
- Report back to stakeholders on outcomes of reviews.
- Monitor implementation of accepted recommendations and continue to advocate for and address barriers to relevant recommendations that have not been accepted.
- Continue to improve our monitoring methodology through review, evaluation and peer engagement with other Inspectorates and National Preventive Mechanisms.

How will we know if we are successful:

- OICS recommendations are accepted and fully implemented, leading to positive outcomes, verified through our own validation. Where recommendations are not accepted, we identify and reflect on barriers to recommendations being accepted and this informs our further work.
- Evidence of positive changes resulting from our work is apparent in places of detention, relevant data, and feedback from detained people, staff and other stakeholders.
- Detained people in a situation of vulnerability are considered by detaining authorities in practice, policy and law.
- Healthy Prison Reviews and Healthy Centre Reviews indicate improvements in conditions and treatment over time.



OUR GOALS CONTINUED:

2 Demonstrating the positive impact of prevention of ill-treatment in detention through our work

What we are seeking to accomplish:

- Constructive engagement with key stakeholders based on a shared understanding of prevention and its value in places of detention and to society more broadly.
- Detained people and staff understand OICS' role and see value in sharing their experiences and insights with us.
- Access to the full suite of powers, privileges and guarantees required by the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT).
- Making a constructive contribution to public and policy discourse on the value of transparency around places of deprivation of liberty and prevention.

Actions we will take to achieve this goal:

- Provide accessible materials for detained people, staff and other stakeholders to be aware of OICS work and the broader concept of prevention of ill-treatment and OPCAT.
- Ensure reports are evidence based, informed by a range of sources, and reflect good practices in human rights and detention.
- Maintain strong governance and statutory compliance in our work.
- Ensure the financial sustainability of OICS.

How will we know if we are successful:

- Appropriate legislative framework is in place that sets out full suite of powers, privileges and guarantees required by OPCAT.
- OICS ongoing budget ensures we are able to fulfil statutory and OPCAT functions, including engaging specific expertise as required.
- Feedback from stakeholders, particularly detained people and detaining authorities including operational staff, indicate meaningful impact and improvements in detaining environment.
- There is a greater public awareness of closed environments informing broader discussions about the role of the criminal legal system, including rehabilitation and alternatives to detention.



OUR GOALS CONTINUED:

3 To be a leading Australian NPM body and continually improve our own practices consistent with the OPCAT

What we are seeking to accomplish:

- Guaranteed adequate ongoing funding to fully discharge the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) preventive mandate.
- Appropriate fit for purpose legislation to discharge NPM mandate.
- A strategy for our NPM work that enables us to judiciously utilise limited resources with maximum impact.
- The NPM and OICS influence development of public policy.
- Monitoring best practice methodology that aligns with OPCAT.

Actions we will take to achieve this goal:

- Develop and publish our NPM monitoring methodology that aligns with and integrates with other functions.
- Learn from good practices from our peers nationally and internationally, including Inspectorates and NPMs.
- Demonstrate impact of prevention through our work including raising awareness of accepted and implemented recommendations.
- Contribute to the development of relevant law and policy in the criminal legal system and other relevant systems.
- Work effectively and collaboratively with ACT and national NPMs.

How will we know if we are successful:

- OICS monitoring methodology informed by OPCAT and NPM best practice publicly available on our website.
- OICS reports and supporting documentation such as Standards publicly available on our website.
- Successful engagement with other NPMs, oversight entities and expert bodies in Australia and globally through meetings, seminars, exchanges and learning opportunities such as detention centre visits.
- Key reports including OICS Annual Report demonstrating the impact of our work.
- References to OICS work in media, conference discussions and literature.



OUR GOALS CONTINUED:

4 To develop our people and create a workplace that fosters passion and professionalism

What we are seeking to accomplish:

- High staff retention and satisfaction.
- Be an employer of choice in conditions of employment.
- An environment where staff feel safe, valued, and are supported to grow and develop.
- A diversity of voices and opinions informing the work we do.

Actions we will take to achieve this goal:

- Ensure strategic goals are tailored (short, medium and long term) and workloads are sustainable.
- Engage with, learn from, and co-design with specialists including expert contractors, and people with lived experience.
- Foster a culture that supports staff pursuing particular professional interests or focus areas.
- Prioritise staff training and capacity building.
- Provide a family friendly and flexible workplace, where interests outside of work are celebrated.

How will we know if we are successful:

- Data on staff turnover, absenteeism.
- Feedback from staff.

