



## Inaugural Healthy Prison Review of the Alexander Maconochie Centre released

The ACT's first 'Healthy Prison Review' has found that overall the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) has the ingredients to be a Healthy Prison, but more needs to be done to address key issues across all four 'pillars' of the healthy prison framework. These pillars are safety; respect and dignity; purposeful activity; and rehabilitation and preparation for release.

The ACT Inspector of Correctional Services, Neil McAllister presented the review for tabling in the ACT Legislative Assembly today. The review makes 73 recommendations for improvement that will be followed up by the Inspector.

High detainee numbers, the large number of cohorts that do not mix, and the need to escort detainees is creating difficulties across the AMC, impacting areas such as detainees' ability to access health appointments, programs, education and outdoor exercise, and reducing time out of cells.

"This is a broader justice sector issue as AMC cannot control the numbers coming in," Mr McAllister said.

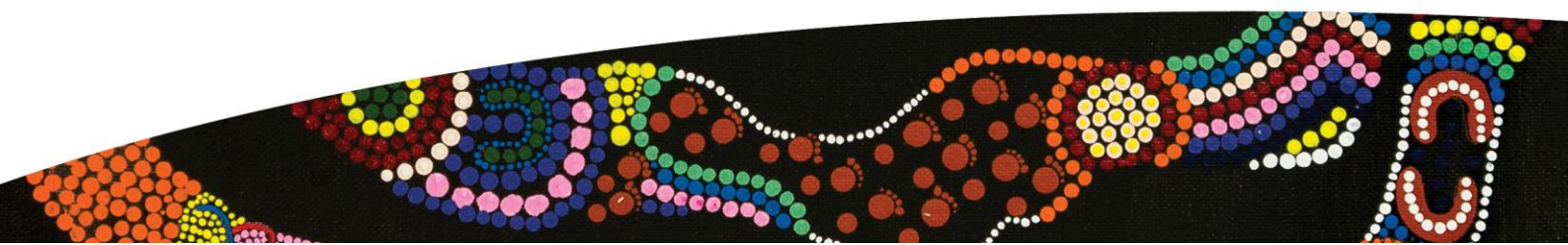
"The ACT government's *Building Communities not Prisons* initiative is a big step in the right direction."

"While we have seen improvements at the AMC over the last 18 months, some key areas of concern have yet to be addressed."

"Accommodating women in a high security men's unit – an issue identified in my February 2019 Remand Review – remains a pressing concern."

"Female detainees also lack equality of opportunity to facilities, programs and services compared to the men," he said.

Mr McAllister also said that the supply of illicit drugs and mobile phones are a major concern, and ongoing priority must be given to barrier control, searching and effective behaviour management systems to reduce demand.





**ICS**  
ACT Inspector  
of Correctional  
Services

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He noted that fresh consideration is needed for harm reduction strategies such as a needle and syringe program to reduce transmission of blood borne viruses, and improving access to overdose prevention interventions.

Mr McAllister paid tribute to the “great staff of ACT Corrective Services who work with detainees on a daily basis in an environment that most members of the community would find difficult at best”.

“They are quite special people who deserve our respect and thanks.”

The Inspector noted the full cooperation of ACT Corrective Services with the review.

He also thanked detainees, staff and the many community organisations that had provided valuable input to the review.

The Inspector will conduct the next Healthy Prison Review of the AMC in 2021.

### For more information

Please contact Neil McAllister, the ACT Inspector of Correctional Services on 1800 932 010 or [ics@act.gov.au](mailto:ics@act.gov.au)

The full report is available at [www.ics.act.gov.au](http://www.ics.act.gov.au).

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