

JUSTICE — PRISONER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

320. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to the minister's response to my question without notice 1496, asked on 16 November 2023, in which he was made aware of the research report entitled *Let them work: How criminal justice reform can help address Australia's worker shortage*, published by the Institute of Public Affairs in March 2023.

- (1) Is the minister aware that following previous parliamentary questions, the previous Minister for Corrective Services requested a briefing from the Department of Justice on the report?
- (2) Is he aware that the department failed to brief the then minister?
- (3) Now that the minister has been aware of this report for more than five months, has he requested a briefing from the department on this report and will he table the information provided to him in that briefing?
- (4) If no to (3), has the minister given up on addressing current worker shortages, on reducing incarceration rates and the state's prison expenditure, and on enhancing the rehabilitation of nonviolent offenders?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The Department of Justice advises the following.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Department of Justice was not able to brief Minister Johnston on this report in his capacity as Minister for Corrective Services prior to his change in ministerial responsibilities.
- (3) No.
- (4) The department provides a number of employment opportunities to prisoners in addition to industries. Some of these include the prisoner employment program, the Carey Bindjareb program and the Breaking Through program. Further information on these programs and their beneficial outcomes can be provided on request.