

Division 33: Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services, \$3 818 000 —

Mr S.J. Price, Chair.

Mr W.J. Johnston, Minister for Corrective Services.

Mr E. Ryan, Inspector of Custodial Services.

Ms N. Gibson, Deputy Inspector.

Mr D. Summers, Manager, Corporate Governance.

Mr R. Sao, Chief of Staff, Minister for Corrective Services.

Mr R. Verne, Principal Policy Adviser.

Ms E. Meagher, Policy Adviser.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIR: The estimates committees will be reported by Hansard and the daily proof will be available online as soon as possible within two business days. The chair will allow as many questions as possible. Questions and answers should be short and to the point. Consideration is restricted to items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must relate to a page number, item or amount related to the current division, and members should preface their questions with those details. Some divisions are the responsibility of more than one minister. Ministers shall be examined only in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

A minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee. I will ask the minister to clearly indicate what information they agree to provide and will then allocate a reference number. Supplementary information should be provided to the principal clerk by noon on Friday, 2 June 2023. If a minister suggests that a matter be put on notice, members should use the online questions on notice system to submit their questions.

The member for Moore.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I refer to the significant issues impacting the agency on page 487. It says —

The ongoing challenges being experienced in juvenile detention have significantly increased the Office's monitoring and inspection commitments to cover both Unit 18 at Casuarina Prison and the Banksia Hill Detention Centre.

In relation to a reported inspection by the Inspector of Custodial Services in February, can the minister confirm that the inspection actually took place, and what did the inspection find?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The inspection report will be tabled. This is the budget estimates. It is about the expenditure of the agency. The inspector is an independent office holder. He cannot, through me, answer that question. You understand that you are examining me. He is independent. The idea that I would speak on his behalf is not permitted by the regime. He will table his report.

Mr R.S. LOVE: But the minister could defer to him.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Yes, but that is not the way the system works. The member cannot ask me about his opinion. The member has to ask him about his opinion, but the member cannot do that in the estimates process.

Mr R.S. LOVE: He is employed by the state to provide reports.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No. He is an independent office holder.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Okay.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: He will table his report. It has nothing to do with the government.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I refer to the significant issues impacting the agency on page 487. The government has set a target of a 50 per cent rate of return to youth detention —

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Sorry, which page?

Mr R.S. LOVE: It is page 487.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Which line item is the member pointing out? Which line item? I am sorry; I did not hear what the member said, that is all.

Mr R.S. LOVE: It is the second significant issue impacting the agency. The government has set a target of a 50 per cent rate of return to detention. Why is the target set at 50 per cent? How did that come about?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: That is a question for the Department of Justice. This is the Inspector of Custodial Services. It is not related. I cannot answer the question because it is not in front of us.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Okay. Can I ask again: what inspection regime has been put in place at Banksia Hill Detention Centre, given that the minister has identified a problem there that requires increased monitoring and inspection commitments? What has been put in place to increase the monitoring and inspection regime?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: That is a question for the inspector. This is the budget estimates. I am the one being examined, not the inspector. I get to edit the inspector's comments because I am the one giving the answers.

Mr R.S. LOVE: You are being deliberately obtuse.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No, I am not. The member does not seem to understand the standing orders.

Mr R.S. LOVE: The money is there to carry out inspections. I am asking the minister what regime has been put in place in response to the crisis at Banksia Hill and you are refusing to respond.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No, what I am pointing out to the member is that he does not understand the standing orders.

Mr R.S. LOVE: This is ridiculous.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No. The member needs to read the standing orders. The member is examining me, not the inspector.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: It was perfectly reasonable.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No.

Mr R.S. LOVE: What resources has the minister given to increase the inspection services at Banksia Hill?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No, because the Inspector of Custodial Services —

Mr R.S. LOVE: What resources have you given to increase the inspection services at Banksia Hill?

The CHAIR: Thank you, members. We have run out of time.

The appropriation was recommended.