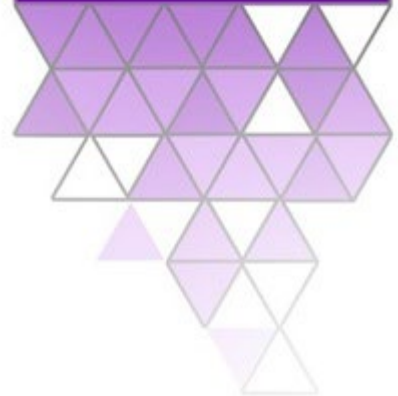
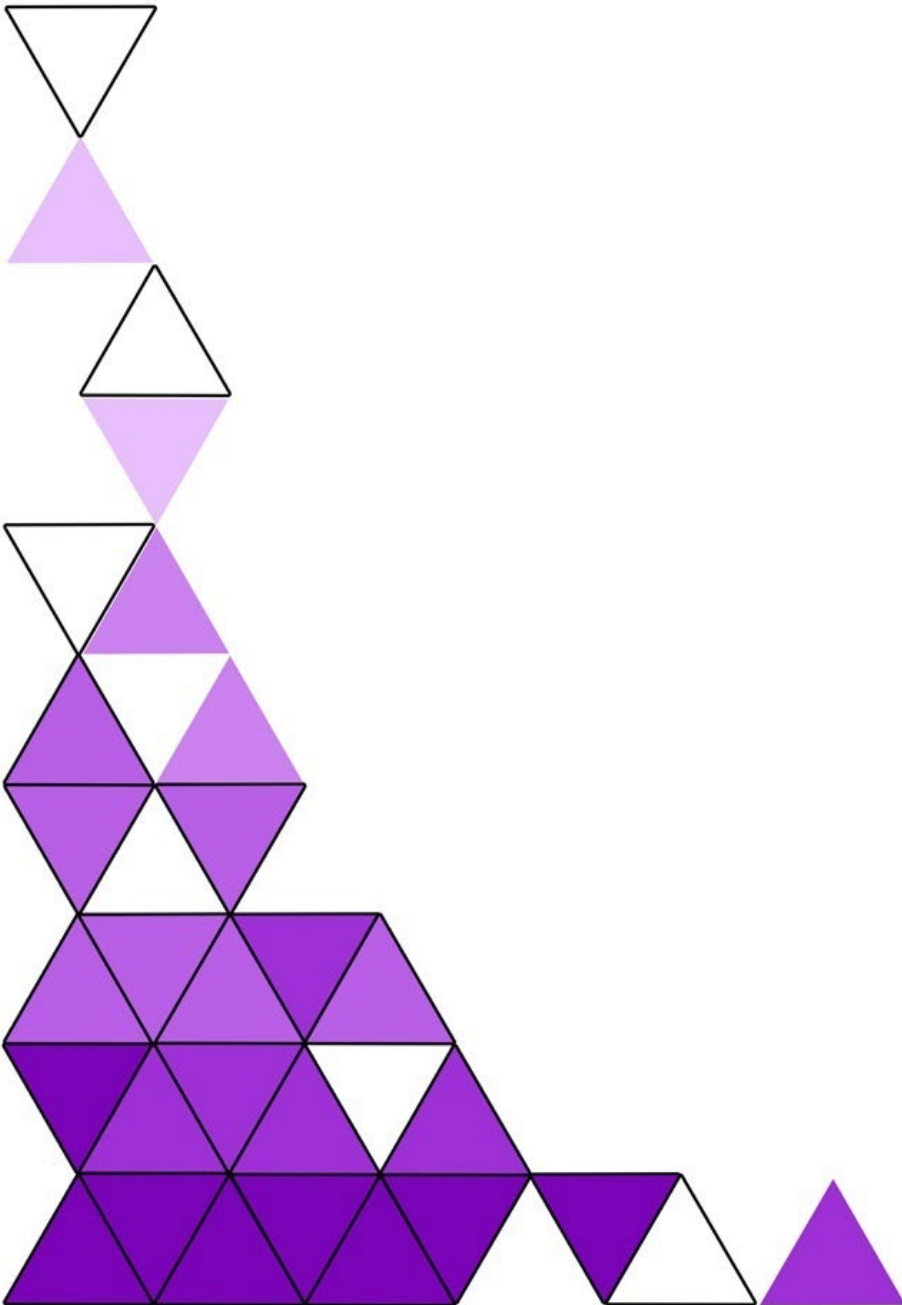
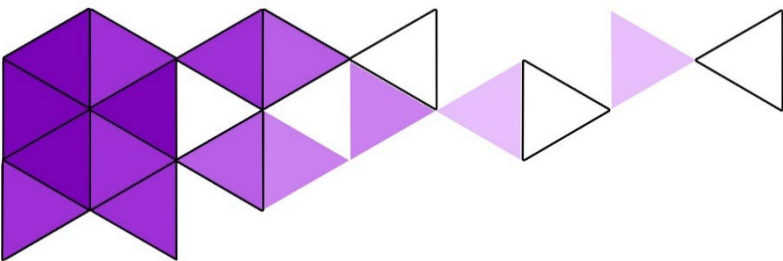




SUPERVISED
RELEASE
REVIEW
BOARD

ANNUAL
REPORT
2022/23





FOREWORD

THE HON. PAUL PAPALIA MLA CSC THE MINISTER FOR CORRECTIVE SERVICES

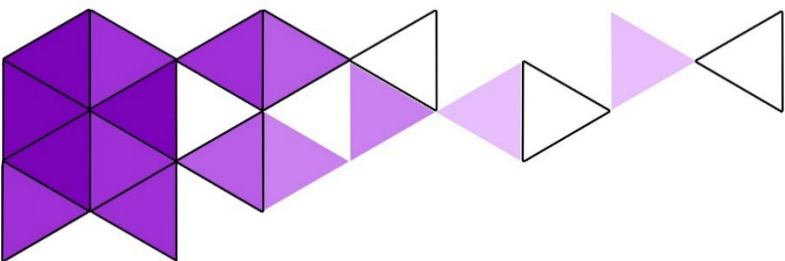
To the Minister for Corrective Services,
The Hon. Paul Papalia MLA CSC

I present to you, the Annual Report of the Supervised Release Review Board (the Board) for the year ending on 30 June 2023, pursuant to section 165 of the *Young Offenders Act 1994* (WA) (the Act). I note that the Report is not only to record the operations of the Board but must also deal with the operation of the Act so far as it relates to the work of the Board.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Curthoys', written over a faint, larger signature.

The Honourable Jeremy Curthoys
Chairperson
Supervised Release Review Board

August 2023



CHAIRPERSON'S OVERVIEW



I am pleased to present the annual report of the Supervised Release Review Board (the Board) for the reporting period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023. This report highlights the significant achievements and milestones we have reached in meeting our responsibilities of ensuring a safe pathway for individual young offenders returning to the community, while prioritising community safety.

Since my appointment in January 2023, I have been impressed by the remarkable quantity of matters considered each year.

I was appointed to the position of Chairperson of the Board on 9 January 2023, replacing His Honour Kevin Sleight who had been Chairperson since 29 April 2022. His Honour Kevin Sleight, is now enjoying a well-deserved retirement.

I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the members of the Board, the dedicated support staff provided by the Department of Justice, and the managers and staff of the Youth Justice Services for their invaluable contributions to our work throughout the year. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the various agencies that have provided essential support to the children held

in detention and upon their release, including the dedicated staff at Banksia Hill Detention Centre.

As we reflect on the past year, we remain committed to upholding the principles of juvenile justice outlined in the *Young Offenders Act 1994 (WA)* (the Act). Our decisions regarding the release and supervision of young offenders are guided by a balance between protecting the community from illegal behaviour and providing appropriate rehabilitation opportunities.

During this period, it has come to our attention that a significant number of young people detained at Banksia Hill Detention Centre face severe neurodevelopmental impairments. In fact, research conducted by the esteemed Telethon Kids Institute revealed that an overwhelming majority, approximately 89%, of these children exhibit some form of such impairments. Additionally, a concerning 36% were found to have Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. We must emphasise that these percentages are consistent with the previous findings.

Furthermore, our observations have revealed that a large majority of incarcerated youth examined in a ground-breaking study conducted by the Telethon Kids Institute exhibited some form of undiagnosed neuro-disability. Despite multiple interactions with government and other agencies, these conditions went unnoticed, which underscores the urgent need for early assessment and intervention to address their vulnerabilities effectively.

It is disheartening to note that parental neglect, coupled with exposure to substance abuse and violence from a young age, remains prevalent amongst young people held in custody. This harsh reality underscores the importance of providing appropriate care and support to address the underlying causes contributing to their involvement in illegal activities.

In addition to neurodevelopmental impairments and difficult backgrounds, a significant portion of young people in detention experience cognitive deficits, with remarkably low IQ levels. Acute psychological issues are also prevalent among this group, with a history of attempted suicide, suicidal ideation and self-harm. These factors further underscore the importance of implementing comprehensive rehabilitation programmes that address both their physical and mental wellbeing.

The geographical location of Banksia Hill Detention Centre presents another challenge, particularly for young offenders residing in remote areas. The substantial displacement from their families, culture and country, especially for indigenous children, underscores the need for sensitivity and cultural awareness in the process of their rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

Regrettably, due to staff shortages and operational issues during the reporting period, some young persons detained at Banksia Hill Detention Centre were confined in circumstances equivalent to solitary confinement for extended periods of time. The negative impact of this confinement on the behaviour and wellbeing of children in custody has been thoroughly detailed in a recent decision by Justice Tottle, which I urge everyone to review.

Moreover, the aforementioned staffing and operational challenges have led to the unavailability of essential rehabilitation programs for young people detained at Banksia Hill Detention Centre. Recognising the significance of such programmes in facilitating the successful reintegration of young offenders, we acknowledge the need for improved resources and support to ensure their proper implementation.

As we deliberate on the best course of action for young offenders, the primary goal of the Board remains the safety of the community. We firmly believe that supervised release, under a well-structured Supervised Release Order, is the preferable alternative to unrestricted release after completing a sentence in detention. This approach allows for close supervision and support, enabling young offenders to gradually reintegrate into society while reducing the risks of recidivism.

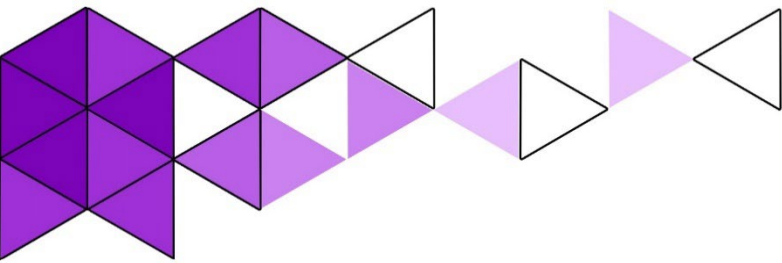
In conclusion, we strongly recommend a comprehensive assessment process for young people upon entering the youth justice system or even earlier, to identify their specific vulnerabilities. By doing so, we can develop and implement tailored interventions and care plans that address their unique needs and support their successful reintegration into society.

Once again, we extend our gratitude to all those involved in the youth justice system and the various supporting agencies. With your continued support, we remain committed to upholding the principles of juvenile justice and making a positive impact on the lives of young offenders in Western Australia.



The Honourable Jeremy Curthoys
Chairperson
Supervised Release Review Board

August 2023



THE COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD

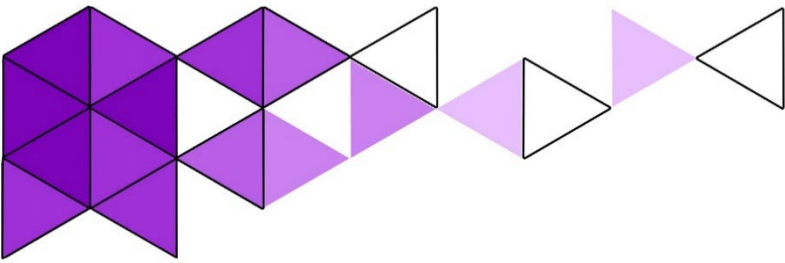
For the 2022-2023 year, the membership of the Board comprised of:

- the Chairperson;
- a Victims' representative;
- a Community representative;
- an Aboriginal community representative;
- the Chief Executive Officer's nominees;
- the Commissioner of Police nominees; and
- Alternates to the Victim's, Community and Aboriginal community representatives.

I offer my thanks for the dedicated work done by:

- the staff of the Banksia Hill Detention Centre;
- the Youth Justice Officers (YJO) and managers in the Youth Justice Services (YJS) agencies;
- the Officers of the Department of Communities (Child Protection and Family Support) (CPFS);
- the Youth Education Workers and the Education and Training Providers;
- the Psychologists (and, on occasion, Psychiatrists), both at Banksia Hill Detention Centre and in the community;
- the Officers of the Victim-offender Mediation Unit;
- those in Non-Governmental Organisations who try to remedy the effects of disadvantage, alcohol, drug use and the misuse of solvents; and
- those, such as the people who work with the Waalitj Foundation, Wungening Aboriginal Corporation and Hope Services who act as trainers, mentors and supporters, particularly for young Aboriginal offenders.

I would also again, like to convey my personal thanks to the wonderful support staff who are provided by the Department of Justice and the Board Members.



THE WORK OF THE BOARD

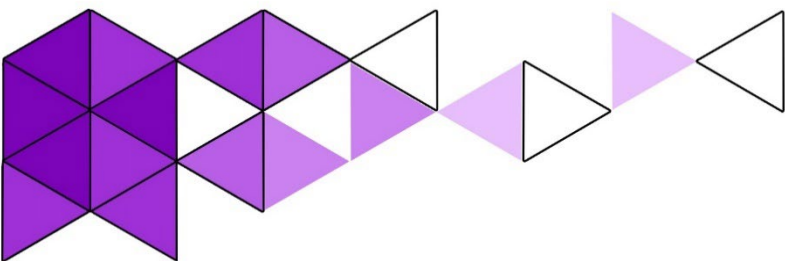
The Board is tasked with managing the return of detained young offenders to the community. These are young offenders who have been sentenced for serious or repetitive offending to terms of detention or in some circumstances, imprisonment. They are released back into the community under the supervision of YJS.

The Board meets, on average, weekly to facilitate access to the young offenders, whether male or female. When granting or denying release, the young offender appears before the Board via video link.

The Act seeks to involve a representative of the adults responsible in law for the young offender, in the process, by requiring the order to be made in the presence, whenever possible, of a parent, guardian, Child Protection Officer, or any other person responsible for the day-to-day care of the young person.

The meetings are attended (via video link or telephone link-up) by the relevant YJO, one or more adults having responsibility for the young person, and any other person involved in the case, wherever possible. When the young offender is present, he or she is carefully addressed in simple language they can understand.

Regrettably this year, as previously, attendance of parent(s), guardian(s), or other responsible adults often does not or cannot occur. In many instances this is an issue in resources. Banksia Hill Detention Centre is located at Canning Vale; meetings commence at 8.30am; some supporters have transport or other familial issues and either decide not to attend or suffer delays and arrive too late. Other familial issues I refer to include parental dysfunction, family breakdown, substance abuse or sometimes alienation.



STATISTICAL INFORMATION

1. In the year to 30 June 2023, the Board held a total of 59 meetings consisting of 48 sittings of the full Board and 11 sittings by the Secretary.
2. The Board dealt with 285 cases involving 107 individuals.
3. There were 107 applications for supervised release.
4. 97 (91%) were approved and 10 (9%) were denied.
5. In the year to 30 June 2023, a total of 30 Supervised Release Orders were cancelled due to re-offending and/or non-compliance. A number of the young offenders involved would, however, ultimately complete the period of supervised release in the community.
6. Of the 107 young offenders dealt with, 98 (92%) were males and 9 (8%) were females.
7. 76 (71%) of the offenders dealt with were Aboriginal persons.
8. Of the Aboriginal persons, 71 (93%) were males and 5 (7%) were females.
9. Of the 107 applications for supervised release, it was not possible to have a responsible adult present in person or by phone link-up in 53 (50%) of cases.

BOARD REMUNERATION

Information relating to the remuneration of Board Members this year is contained with the Annual Report of the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice provides administrative support to the Board and is responsible for remunerating Board Members where such payment is incurred.