

Executive Summary

The Inspection of the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre (CYDC) occurred from 25 to 29 September 2017. The inspection focus area was the upcoming transition of 17 year old (y.o.) offenders into the youth justice system. Areas subject to regular monitoring were Complaints, Incident and Harm Reporting, and the Use of Force.

At the time of inspection preparation measures for admissions of 17 y.o. offenders from 12 February 2018 included:

- a. Allocation of VET funding and development of curriculum by EQ;
- b. Roof access prevention works and other building security upgrades, e.g. Installation of steel window protection;
- c. Zoning – age and gender specific fenced areas, 17 y.o. accommodation and structured day area including separate oval; and
- d. Marshalling area – fenced safe area including sally port to allow entry by emergency response vehicles and personnel. Marshalling area also includes the ability to shut off access to buildings containing dangerous equipment (kitchen, laundry, manual arts/trade buildings) from young people.

The zoned areas will provide safe areas for different genders and age groups and reduce young people's ability to roam centre grounds during incidents. The marshalling area will provide staff with a safe area for emergency response and incident control. Inspectors were impressed with the level of activity and creativity being expended on new and additional programs at the centre e.g. cattle management, community bike repair project, and the resumption of small engines (and other VET programs coming on line in future), and at the Acting Executive Director's commitment to agile and innovative programming generally, including unit-based programs.

In regards to the complaints process, one or two young people spoken with claimed not to have confidence in submitting a complaint to unit staff and held a perception that complaints don't get followed up; however, most felt confident handing complaints to Shift Supervisors (Accommodation) or Caseworkers.

Incident review, analysis and feedback loop as advised by the Practice Support Manager (PSM) appeared robust. Statistics show a decrease in use of force incidents (since the November 2016 riot and managerial changes). The PSM advised that reviews of CCTV footage show an increase in staff using de-escalation techniques, for example, staff talking to young people for prolonged periods before using force as a last resort. Report writing still requires improvement as advised by both the Client Relation Manager (CRM) and PSM, with the latter continuing to provide feedback and guidance to staff to write more accurate and detailed incident reports.

In regards to Use of Force, young people generally indicated they are well treated by staff, and didn't share any concerns with Inspectors regarding the use of force. The Inspectors consider the current complaints and incidents review processes to be quite robust.