

# Report to the Children's Commissioner on the program for the closure of Don Dale Youth Detention Centre

16 February 2018

## Context

On 17 November 2017, the Report of the Royal Commission and Board of Inquiry into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory was handed down.

One of the recommendations included in the report was that the Northern Territory Government close the current Don Dale Youth Detention Centre (to be replaced with a new, purpose-built facility) and further that by 17 February 2018, the Northern Territory Government report to the Children's Commissioner on the program for that closure.

## About the new Youth Justice Centres

Territory Families has been working closely with the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DPIL) to identify a suitable process to develop a design brief and to consider possible sites for the location of the replacement facilities in Darwin and Alice Springs.

These new centres will focus on culture and connectedness to family and community, providing the Northern Territory with fit for purpose, innovative, secure facilities that can deliver real change for young people and the community. They will be purpose built to meet the therapeutic and rehabilitation needs of young people with a strong focus on education and training.

The new Youth Justice Centres will address the needs of young people and help them to make informed decisions about the future, that ultimately work toward breaking the cycle of crime for youth offenders.

The Northern Territory Government has set aside \$70 million for the development of Youth Justice Centres, which will provide secure, cottage style accommodation for approximately 30 young people, as well as be scalable to meet future need.

## Site selection for Darwin

In Darwin, the location selected for the new Youth Justice Centre is on the existing facility's Berrimah site. The 82.9 hectares of land has been selected in part due to it being easily accessible for support services and transport, and that consultation with young people has indicated support for the new site.

The opportunity to immediately commence arrangements to demolish the unused, old Don Dale facilities, maintain the existing interim facility, and simultaneously develop a new facility marks a new beginning for youth detention in the Northern Territory, focussed on supporting the therapeutic, educational and cultural needs of young people.

## What about Alice Springs?

A commitment has been made to develop a new Youth Justice Centre in Alice Springs. Preliminary discussions are underway with Desert Knowledge Australia about the potential to partner with them in this work.

Development of this facility on Aboriginal land, with potential partnerships with Aboriginal controlled organisations will strengthen the rehabilitative support provided to young people through the focus on culture and connectedness to family and community.

## What's next?

The design and operation of the new Youth Justice Centre in Darwin will evolve through consultation with stakeholders.



## New Youth Justice Training Centres

The new facilities will be designed in consideration of other initiatives and supporting infrastructure that supports alternatives to detention in the Northern Territory including Bail Support Services and youth diversion programs.

With the selection of site locations complete, consultation is vital to continue to seek input from Aboriginal controlled organisations, the non-government sector, design specialists and the community. Visioning workshops will commence in March, to develop a brief for new facilities.

Consultation is important to design future facilities which:

- ensure community safety needs through infrastructure that is fit for purpose and secure,
- place an emphasis on culture, and connectedness to community and family,
- focus on programs, services and models of care which have been demonstrated to break the cycle of crime and help young people make informed decisions, and
- consider the needs of the young person at the centre of decision making.

### Timeframes

Stage	Description	Schedule
1.	Announcement of sites and plan for replacement	February 2018
2.	Consultation and brief development	March 2018
3.	Detailed Design Tender	June 2018
4.	Detailed Design Tender Complete	October 2018
5.	Construction Tender	December 2018
6.	Construction Tender award	February 2019
7.	Construction Commence	March 2019
8.	Practical Completion	July 2020

### Darwin Youth Justice Centre site

