




Speech By  
**Jessica Pugh**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 August 2022

**INSPECTOR OF DETENTION SERVICES BILL**

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (5.56 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Inspector of Detention Services Bill. I do declare at the outset that many corrective services staff reside in my wonderful community and I also sit next to one in this chamber. In Wacol there is the remand centre, the men's prison, the women's prison and the youth detention centre. The corrections precinct in Wacol is a substantial employer in my electorate and there are also a few more that sit just outside that precinct. As I said, this precinct sits just outside my electorate. However, since I was elected I have had the absolute privilege of visiting all of these facilities, often more than once, for formal and informal events as well as for graduation and induction events for new staff.

It is in this context that I have had the opportunity to speak with the staff in our facilities and I can speak really happily and with great pride about the dedication they have to the respectful treatment they endeavour to give people in these detention facilities. During some of the special events that I have attended the staff there often reflect on the fact, with a degree of sadness I would say, that many people in our community have no idea what happens inside our corrections precinct. Most of the staff that I have met would actually love to see this changed. It was only once I went into the precinct for the first time that I realised that in our women's prison some of our corrections staff help facilitate a really lovely program where they partner with the RSPCA across the road which allows some of the female inmates to look after kittens and foster kittens. It is part of the rehabilitation process. I think it is a really beautiful program, and that is just one of the great things that is happening behind closed doors in our Wacol women's prison. That was really beautiful to see.

This bill is going to go some way at least to shining a light on the great work that is happening behind closed doors in our corrections facilities. I want to make a couple more comments about what I have learnt from the staff as it pertains to this bill specifically. The first is that, as I have said, the work of our corrective services officers happens behind closed doors, and that is for good reason—that is, for the safety of our community—but it means that members in our community, unless they know or sit next to somebody who works in the corrective services industry, unfortunately have very little opportunity to see or find out what the role of our corrective and protection officers actually entails. Unlike the police, who also play a vital role in community safety, corrective officers do not have that community engagement or interaction with the public on a day-to-day basis. Conversely, members of the police are constantly interacting with the community, so they also have that additional layer of oversight to their role because everything they do is in public view. Due to that lack of visibility, our corrective services teams really are the unsung heroes of community safety because, as I said, we do not often see them.

As a community we get a really clear breakdown of how police allocate their time in the community. Members of this House and many members of the community would be very familiar with the statistic that around 40 per cent of police time is allocated to DV incidents.