

**Question on Notice
No. 1335
Asked on 7 October 2004**

MR LINGARD asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services (MS SPENCE)-

QUESTION:

With reference to rehabilitation courses for sex offenders for each of the last two financial years and for the year to date (reported separately) -

- (1) At which correctional facilities is this course available?
- (2) For each of the above years (a) how many offenders have participated in this course, and (b) what is the number that have not participated in this course (reported separately)?
- (3) Of those listed in (2), how many successfully completed all components of the course for each of the above years?
- (4) For each of the above years, how many offenders are currently waitlisted for this course, and of this number, how many have been waiting (a) less than six months, (b) between six months and twelve months, and (c) greater than twelve months?
- (5) What was the budgeted and actual expenditure recorded for the course for each of the above years, and the budgeted figure for 2004-2005?

ANSWER:

Question (1):

For the 2002/03 financial year sex offender programs were conducted at Townsville, Capricornia, Wolston and Woodford Correctional Centres as well as the West Brisbane Community Custody Centre. For the 2003/04 financial year sex offender programs were available at Townsville, Capricornia, Wolston, Sir David Longland and Lotus Glen Correctional Centres as well as the West Brisbane Community Custody Centre. For the year to date sex offender programs are conducted at the Townsville, Lotus Glenn and Wolston Correctional Centres as well as the West Brisbane Community Custody Centre. The Wolston Correctional Centre conducts two sex offender programs.

If a sex offender is not accommodated at a centre which conducts the necessary course for their rehabilitation, they will be transferred to the centre at the suitable time for the offender to participate.

Question (2):

(a)

There has been an increase in program participation over the last four years. For the 2002/03 financial year the number of sex offenders who participated in a sex offender program was addressed in Question on Notice 1500 of 2003. The number of sex offenders who have participated in a sex offender program for the 2003/04 financial year and year to date are 113 and 38 respectively.

This is a significant increase in the number of offenders who participated in a sex offender program in the 1996/97 and 1997/98 financial years which were 47 and 62 respectively. The 2003/04 figure is an 82 percent increase on the 1997/98 figure.

b)

Due to complexities and variables the Department does not and has never recorded these figures. For example, a broad calculation of non participation would include offenders who have already completed a course or assessed as not requiring or not suitable to participate in a program.

Question (3):

The number of offenders who completed a sex offender program for the financial year 2002/03 was addressed in Question on Notice 1500 of 2003. The number of offenders who have completed a sex offender program for the 2003-04 financial year and year to date are 68 and 19 respectively. The 2003/04 figure shows an increase on the 1996/97 and 1997/98 figures of 41 and 48 respectively.

The reasons for not completing a program include lack of motivation and disruptive behaviour, both of which inhibit an individual's ability to successfully undertake program activities and address their offending behaviour.

Question (4):

Waiting lists are used by the Department to prioritise participation to ensure high risk offenders access programs prior to release. Offenders are placed on a waiting list if they are assessed as suitable for a sex offender program or who have indicated their willingness to participate.

Although waiting lists have increased over the past two years, it must be recognised that some offenders who have been on a waiting list for a sex offender program for greater than 12 months have either declined to participate in the program, have mental health issues which leave them temporarily unable to benefit from the program, have been assessed as being in denial of their offence making program participation counterproductive, or have a post-prison community based release date that is too far in the future for current participation.

Voluntary participation in sexual offender treatment programs is based on the research evidence that indicates offenders who are forced into treatment are likely to disrupt the group, negatively influence other participants and increase their own risk of re-offending.

The number of offenders on the waiting list for a program for 2003 was addressed in the Question on Notice 1500 of 2003. As at June 2004 the number of offenders on a waiting list for less than six months was 98, for six to twelve months 79 and greater than 12 months 152. Currently, there are 74 who have been on a waiting list for less than six months, 62 for six to twelve months and 102 for greater than 12 months.

Question (5):

The Department of Corrective Services does not maintain financial records for each specific sex offender program.

The budgeted and actual expenditure for all sex offender programs for the 2002/03 financial year was \$1,355,000 and \$1,261,000 respectively. The budgeted and actual figures for the 2003/04 financial year were \$1,286,000 and \$1,267,000 respectively. The budgeted figure for 2004/05 is \$1,308,000.