

Question On Notice
No. 209
Asked on 10 March 2021

MR S KNUTH ASKED THE MINISTER FOR POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (HON M RYAN)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Lotus Glen prison in my electorate which is over 100 percent capacity and that there may be plans for prisons in Queensland to have an allowance for an increase to 200 percent capacity— Will the Minister consider (a) the health, safety and increasing level of violence risk to prison guards because of overcrowding and (b) an increase in (i) prison security personal and (ii) prisoner work release programs to reduce the mental anguish caused from overcrowding?

ANSWER:

The safety of every custodial corrections officer is paramount.

I am advised by Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) that QCS is actively recruiting hundreds of additional custodial corrections officers for prison facilities across Queensland.

In fact, on 1 February 2021, 12 custodial corrections officers commenced the custodial officer entry program at the Lotus Glen Correctional Centre.

In addition, a further 15 recruits will commence training on 27 April and 2 July in a further boost to staffing at the Lotus Glen Correctional Centre.

In addition, this government is building a new 1,000-plus cell prison facility at Gatton. It is the second biggest government infrastructure project in Queensland and it will create more than 500 jobs at a time when jobs and job security are more important than ever.

This is over and above the expansion of the Capricornia Correctional Centre with an extra 348 cells and the delivery of 2,000 extra bunk beds at prisons across Queensland. By the end of 2023, this government will have added over 4,000 beds to correctional centre capacity.

The Lotus Glen Correctional Centre already supports low security work release programs through the Innisfail Work Camp.