NEWS RELEASE

SOUTH AUSTRALIA | Government of South Australia

Hon Peter Malinauskas MLC
Minister for Correctional Services

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Targeting a reduction in reoffending

The State Government has today unveiled an ambitious new strategy to improve community safety through reducing repeat offending. 'Reducing reoffending: 10% by 2020' targets a 10% reduction in the number of people who return to correctional services by 2020.

Currently in South Australia, 46% of those released from prison will return to correctional services within two years.

The State Government has today announced the appointment of a strategic advisory panel, Chaired by Nyunggai Warren Mundine AO. The panel is tasked with providing independent advice on the development of a three-year reform strategy.

The panel comprises state and national leaders in policy and community advocacy:
- Nyunggai Warren Mundine AO (Chair), national leader and Indigenous advocate
- Mal Hyde AO APM OStJ, Former SA Police Commissioner
- Amanda Blair, company director, columnist and broadcaster
- Ms Nikki Govan, Deputy Chair of Business SA
- Emeritus Professor Anne Edwards AO, Former Vice Chancellor of Flinders University
- Michael O'Connell APM, Commissioner for Victim Rights
- The Hon Rev Dr Lynn Arnold AO, former CEO of Anglicare and former Premier of SA

The panel will report their findings to the Correctional Services Minister and Department for Correctional Services be December 2016.

Background

South Australia's prison population has had a decade of sustained growth. Prisoner numbers have grown from a daily average of 1,548 in 2006 to 2,870 in 2016.

It costs nearly $100,000 per year to keep a prisoner incarcerated in a secure facility.

A reduction to the rate of recidivism means a reduction in the number of victims, the cost to the community and the taxpayer.

Quotes attributable to Correctional Services Minister, Peter Malinauskas

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This strategy is first and foremost about building a safer community through reducing reoffending.

If we can reduce the rate of reoffending in South Australia, we will create a safer community with less victims and less crime, while also saving the taxpayer money. It's time to take a smarter path and stop the revolving door of our prisons.

Our panel is comprised of strong policy thinkers, business minds and community leaders who will deliver some fresh and evidence based insights on how we can reduce the rate of reoffending in South Australia.

Quotes attributable to Chair of the expert Panel, Warren Mundine AO

Justice reform is an area that I am incredibly passionate about. I am honoured to have been engaged to lead the panel with a clear target for the reduction of recidivism in South Australia.

I will work alongside some very passionate and experienced people, including the former CEO of Anglicare and Premier of SA Lyn Arnold, Deputy Chair of Business SA Nikki Govan and Commissioner for Victim's Rights Michael O'Connell, to name just a few.

Critical to addressing the problem will be the engagement of government and non-government stakeholders in the solution, along with community education.

Indigenous Australians are over represented within prison systems around the country, and indigenous needs and risk factors will be a key consideration within the strategy.

Quotes attributable to Commissioner for Victims' Rights, Michael O'Connell APM

If we are to make our state safer, we need to look beyond punishment for the sake of punishment. We need, among other things, to address the needs of victims of crime. Victims seek validation as well as vindication for the wrong done to them. They also do not want to become victims again, and do not want other people to become victims, like them.

Simply locking offenders up is among the least useful way of helping victims. Tackling offenders' recidivism is important – it should be an imperative of punishment. It prevent more people becoming victims.

As a state, we should be looking for opportunities and programmes to reduce crime, prevent victimisation and improve community safety.