



PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

General Secretary Stewart Little
President Kylie McKelvie
ABN 83 717 214 309

In reply please quote: File No: 17/0576:TP:mb

15 January 2019

Mr Steven Southgate
Acting Executive Director
NSW Justice
Juvenile Justice
20 Lee Street
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Email: steven.southgate@justice.nsw.gov.au
cc: helen.sourlas@justice.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Southgate,

Re: Managing Safety in Juvenile Justice Centres

I write to you on behalf of the Public Service Association of NSW (PSA) and refer to your agency's discussion paper, "Managing Safety in Juvenile Justice Centres", and to further comments made by Juvenile Justice and NSW Government representatives regarding the management of high risk detainees.

Despite what has been otherwise asserted, the PSA has consistently argued for the need to establish specialist facilities (a unit or units) to cater for the needs of detainees with violent and/or high risk behaviours.

It is evident, in our view, that the NSW Juvenile Justice system is not sufficiently resourced to provide a smallish cohort (around 10%) of the offender population with the intensive rehabilitation support they require. As the system is currently designed, it is, in effect, failing to meet the needs of young people in detention and placing our frontline staff at an unacceptable risk of harm.

We believe, as we have previously stated, that our state's Juvenile Justice Detention Centres should be equipped with facilities to meet the support needs of high risk/high needs detainees. We have previously described these facilities as Therapeutic Units, and have made detailed submissions during proceedings before the NSW Industrial Relations Commission concerning their operation.

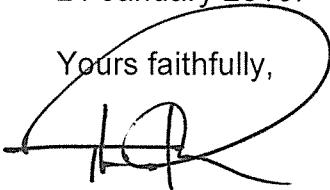
Ideally each Centre would be reviewed to determine the appropriateness of a high risk (or Therapeutic) unit. Where appropriate, our preference is to have those facilities upgraded to ensure detainees are located within a reasonable distance of their families and external support networks (the "dispersal model"). We have also suggested, in the course of discussions with your agency, that high risk units could be brought on-line at Cobham and Frank Baxter Centres relatively quickly with a small additional capital and recurrent investment.

In response to your agency's discussion paper, the PSA believes a mix of strategies is required to improve safety and rehabilitation outcomes for staff and detainees alike. Greater investment in staff training and education is certainly welcome, however the needs of high risk detainees with extreme behavioural issues makes the case for specialist, targeted facilities compelling.

We note these matters have already been discussed in some detail and believe the time for action is now.

I can be contacted on 9220-0906 and would appreciate a response by Monday, 21 January 2019.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'TP', enclosed within a large, hand-drawn oval.

Thane Pearce
for **STEWART LITTLE**
GENERAL SECRETARY