

## NLAF Prisoners Forum Report to NLAF – November 2018

The NLAF Prisoners Forum met on 15 November 2018. Key issues discussed at the meeting included:

### **JUST Connect**

Peter Sharp and Helen Reynolds from Corrective Services NSW presented on JUST Connect, a project updating AVL services provided by Corrective Services NSW. Among other updates, they advised:

- A custody reconciliation list is being tested and will be run through JUST Connect. This means that when a prisoners are moved, the booking will be cancelled and the practitioner can then make a booking the next day.
- Compassionate visits are being trialled for prisoners via AVL, for funerals, interstate and overseas family, for occasions when the prisoner cannot attend in person. An iPad trial is being run for families at Goulburn Correctional Centre. Importantly, using an iPad for 'visits' will involve no cost (as opposed to phone calls which do cost families overseas for example).
- E-briefs are being expanded, with 200 laptops as well as tablets that have more storage.
- UTS have undertaken an audit of AVL and visit suites, looking at what is needed to improve privacy and noise issues as well as other suitability issues. This includes both future builds and retrofits. At MRRC, the glass partitions do not impact upon noise issues. At LBH2, the issues raised at the last meeting have now been addressed.

### **Closure of Ngara Nura Program at Long Bay Correctional Centre**

As reported by Dianne Anagnos from Kingsford Legal Centre (**KLC**) at the last meeting, the Ngara Nura drug and alcohol program at Long Bay Correctional Centre is being shut down. Corrective Services NSW provided an updated response noting that the program is being shut down due to a lack of participation. It was clarified that while there was participation, the numbers were not as high as other programs that Corrective Services NSW run. Corrective Services NSW advised that they plan to consult with various stakeholders regarding rolling out a similar program in the future.

### **NLAF Joint Subcommittee on Prisoners and Identification**

The joint subcommittee on prisoners and driver licences has now been renamed the subcommittee on Prisoners and Identification to reflect a broader scope (see attached terms of reference), and has met on two occasions. Members of the subcommittee include Corrective Services NSW (CSI Education, Custodial, Aboriginal Strategy & Policy), Juvenile Justice, Legal Aid (Prisoners, CLSD, Driver Disqualification Reform Team, WDO), the Aboriginal Legal Service, Births Deaths Marriages, Roads & Maritime Services, Revenue NSW, the Community Restorative Centre, Red Cross and Service NSW. The aim of the subcommittee is now to identify and resolve issues that prevent prisoners leaving custody without a suitable identification document. One issue raised in the Prisoners' Forum meeting was that often prisoners are advised to speak to SAPOs about issues relating to drivers licences and/or identification and SAPOs are too busy to be able to assist with these issues.

The next meeting of the Prisoners Forum is 21 February 2019.

**Camilla Pandolfini**

NLAF Prisoners Forum Chair, November 2018