

### 4.3.6 MINISTER FOR CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES

#### OVERVIEW

Agency	Forecast 1995-96	Estimate 1996-97	Variation
	\$m	\$m	%
<b>Department of Corrective Services</b>			
Current Payments .....	320.6	316.8	(-) 1.2
Capital Payments .....	49.9	40.9	(-) 18.0
<b>New South Wales Fire Brigades</b>			
Current Payments .....	216.3	230.4	6.5
Capital Payments .....	17.5	24.1	37.7
<b>Department of Bush Fire Services</b>			
Current Payments .....	26.9	27.1	0.7
Capital Payments .....	38.3	41.1	7.3
<b>State Emergency Service</b>			
Current Payments .....	9.4	9.6	2.2
Capital Payments .....	1.5	2.0	33.3
<b>Total, Minister for Corrective Services and Minister for Emergency Services .....</b>	<b>680.4</b>	<b>692.0</b>	<b>1.7</b>

The significant variations in estimated payments for 1996-97 in this portfolio compared with forecast payments in 1995-96 are in the agencies responsible for fire prevention services. This reflects the Government's commitment to ensuring that the Department of Bush Fire Services and the New South Wales Fire Brigades are adequately equipped. The capital payments for the State Emergency Service also show a significant increase in percentage terms.

The decrease in capital payments by the Department of Corrective Services largely reflects lower expenditure in 1996-97 on the Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre project which is due for completion in July 1997.

#### DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES

The Department of Corrective Services is responsible for carrying out both custodial and non-custodial orders of the criminal courts and adult inmates. The Department is responsible for the management of offenders who have been sentenced to imprisonment, are on remand or are on appeal, or have been required to adhere to an order involving supervision by the Probation and Parole Service.

## **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

The daily average inmate population, excluding periodic detainees, over the period between June 1990 and June 1995 increased from 5,002 to 6,279. During 1995-96 the full time inmate population has increased marginally from the June 1995 level. During 1995-96 metropolitan fine defaulters were transferred from full time custody to Malabar periodic detention centre, thus lowering the security level of their incarceration. Cabinet has approved in principle reforms to the legislation governing fine defaulters and various alternatives to imprisonment.

During 1995-96 the Law Reform Commission is undertaking a review of judicial sentencing options and alternatives, with its final report due for release in July 1996. Depending on the outcome of this report the number of short sentenced inmates in custody is expected to reduce in future years. It is not currently anticipated that the number of inmates in full time custody will vary significantly in 1996-97 from that experienced in recent years, given lead times involved in the legislative and judicial processes.

In 1995-96 a number of significant strategies have been implemented to improve the cost efficiencies including destaffing armed security towers and replacement of personnel with electronic security equipment. Custodial staff released have been redeployed to other activities.

## **Strategic Directions**

In April 1996 Cabinet gave approval to a substantial reform package to improve correctional services in New South Wales to -

- improve the overall management of inmates by reducing transfers of inmates, locating inmates near their families wherever possible, and establishing a major therapeutic complex at Long Bay Correctional Complex;
- achieve a better match between the location of correctional centres and the place of residence of inmate families;
- take full advantage of the opening of the Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre currently being built; and

- focus upon the rehabilitative value of specialised care programs to counter-balance the negative aspects of imprisonment and to reduce recidivism.

The Department's capital strategy is consistent with Cabinet's recent approval and the Department's Capital Works Strategic Plan, 1993-2003. This plan provides for a number of institutions to be closed and others redeveloped to make them more suitable from an operational point of view and more cost effective.

## **1996-97 Budget**

### **Current Payments**

In line with the Government's Corrections Policy and the reform package approved in April, a number of initiatives are scheduled for implementation over the next five years.

These initiatives are -

- **Therapeutic Centres**

As a consequence of the Waller Committee Report on suicide and self harm in custody, therapeutic centres are being constructed at Mulawa, Cessnock and Bathurst. These facilities will become operational during 1996-97 and 1997-98 (at an annual cost of \$0.68 million) and will provide a therapeutic regime for inmates who exhibit behaviour of a potentially suicidal or self harming nature.

- **Additional Periodic Detention Centres**

Capital funding has been provided to both upgrade existing and build new periodic detention centres in the metropolitan area and country locations. During 1996-97 an upgraded Tomago PDC will be opened to accommodate both male and female detainees. A new periodic detention centre catering for both male and female detainees at Broken Hill is also scheduled for opening in 1996-97. In the following year facilities at Bathurst will be opened along with an upgraded centre at Emu Plains.

Periodic detention provides an alternative sentencing option to full time custody with particular significance for female and Aboriginal offenders. To date, periodic detention for women (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) has only been a sentencing option in the Sydney metropolitan area.

Funding has also been provided to open a metropolitan mid week periodic detention program during 1996-97 to accommodate the anticipated increase in detainees.

- **Home Detention Scheme**

A home detention scheme is to be progressively implemented during 1996-97 to 1998-99 to provide a sentencing alternative to divert suitable minimum security offenders from full time custody while providing control and restriction of liberty similar to imprisonment. The scheme, already on trial since 1992 in New South Wales, should provide a more cost effective alternative than full time custody. It is intended that home detention will be used as an alternative to a sentence of up to 18 months full time imprisonment, but only where the nature of the offence and the background of the offender are such that the risk to the safety of the community is minimal.

- **Sex Offenders Program**

Extensive planning has been undertaken to implement a sex offender program to manage this category of inmates from their reception into correctional centres through their sentence to temporary leave, release and post release.

The program also includes specialist and detailed assessment in conjunction with the Probation and Parole Service prior to an offender's sentence by the judiciary.

### **Capital Payments**

The 1996-97 capital program totals \$40.9 million. The main projects are as follows -

- **Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre**

The Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre, to accommodate 900 unsentenced and new reception inmates, will provide the opportunity to significantly reduce costs by establishing a more efficient inmate to staff ratio without compromising appropriate levels of security and inmate programs.

The estimated total cost of the Centre is \$81 million. In 1995-96 significant progress has been made with construction advancing ahead of program. The allocation for 1996-97 of \$20 million will advance the project closer to completion which is scheduled for July 1997.

- **Computer Replacement**

An amount of \$1.2 million has been allocated in 1996-97 for replacement of the Department's computer system to streamline the handling of inmate reception and private property, management of visits to inmates and to effect improvements in rostering of custodial staff.

- **Tomago Periodic Detention Centre**

An existing facility at Tomago is currently being redeveloped as a combined male/female Periodic Detention Centre (estimated total cost \$1.5 million). The project is due for completion at the end of 1996.

- **Emu Plains Women's Periodic Detention Centre**

This project involves the construction of a purpose built 70 bed periodic detention centre for women at Emu Plains. The project is due for completion in February 1998 at an estimated total cost of \$1.76 million.

- **Goulburn - New Kitchen and Reception Facility**

This project covers the replacement and upgrade of essential infrastructure at the Goulburn Correctional Centre, including a new external kitchen to service the complex which is currently under construction. The current inadequate reception facility is to be relocated.

The two developments will improve the operation of the centre and also complement the proposed staged major redevelopment planned for 1997-98. The new kitchen and reception facility, at a total estimated cost of \$3.1 million, is scheduled for completion in October 1996.

- **Mulawa Therapeutic Centre**

This facility will provide health care for female inmates with special needs in relation to security, management and care. It will be jointly staffed by Corrective Services and Corrections Health Service personnel and will ensure medical care for inmates who are considered psychiatrically and emotionally unstable.

The total estimated cost of the project is \$1.85 million with the costs being shared between the Department of Corrective Services (\$1 million) and the Health Department (\$850,000) and is due for completion in September 1996.

- **Bathurst and Cessnock Therapeutic Centres**

These two facilities were commenced as a result of the Waller Committee Report recommendations and will provide health care for inmates considered psychiatrically and emotionally unstable with a higher standard of care, supervision, counselling and assessment than that provided in the mainstream correctional centres.

The total estimated cost for each Therapeutic Centre is \$1.6 million, with the Cessnock Centre due for completion in April 1997 and the Bathurst Centre in July 1997.

- **Broken Hill Periodic Detention Centre**

This project will provide a new 30 bed facility for male and female detainees in Broken Hill and enable the Periodic Detention Program to be offered more widely, particularly to the Aboriginal community, allowing diversion of people from full time imprisonment.

The project also involves the provision of accommodation for up to 5 full-time female inmates who are currently required to be housed in the male correctional centre.

The total estimated cost is \$1.1 million, and the Centre is scheduled for completion in January 1997.

- **Bathurst Periodic Detention Centre**

This project will provide a new 40 bed facility offering periodic detention to a large number of persons in the region. It will complement the current correctional centre which is unable to offer a program such as periodic detention.

The Centre is scheduled for completion in August 1997 at an estimated total cost of \$1.6 million.

- **Emu Plains Re-development Stage 2**

This development will provide four new accommodation pods for up to 70 minimum security female inmates within the existing security fence at Emu Plains Correctional Centre. The facilities will cater for mothers and babies, persons of non-English speaking background, Aboriginal and special needs inmates.

The existing infrastructure will be replaced or developed to provide administration, clinic, programs, recreation and industries areas, with the existing visits building re-used, and existing industries, such as the dairy to continue operation. The total estimated cost is \$5.7 million (\$1.5 million in 1996-97) with completion scheduled for July 1998.

- **Probation Information Management System (PIMS)**

The NSW Probation and Parole Service business objectives will be enhanced by new generation application systems, built on the Department's approved Computerised Offender Management System (COMS) and will be supported by professional support systems within the Department.

Networks and upgraded computing equipment will be supplied and installed at all probation office sites. The total estimated cost of this project is \$3.05 million with \$1.5 million to be spent in 1996-97.

## **NEW SOUTH WALES FIRE BRIGADES**

The NSW Fire Brigades works with the community to prevent fire and to respond to fires, hazardous material incidents, rescue and other emergency incidents, in order to protect and preserve life, property and the environment. It is responsible for providing fire protection to developed centres throughout the State, covering over 90 per cent of the population. In times of difficulty, such as bush fire crisis, it also supports the Department of Bush Fire Services in non-urban areas.

## **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

Under the Fire Brigades Act 1989, the recurrent expenditures of the agency are financed by contributions from local government (12.3 per cent) and insurance companies (73.7 per cent), with a net cost to the State of 14 per cent. These contributions are net of other funding, such as user charges, which is available to the agency.

The level of expenditure over the past six years has increased mainly due to the significant increases in awards, superannuation and worker's compensation, as well as depreciation following the revaluation of assets during 1994-95. The agency has also progressively upgraded the level of protection to firefighters in accordance with occupational health and safety issues. These have required the introduction of new and improved protective clothing, boots and helmets, and the provision of specialised breathing apparatus and protective suits when combating incidents involving hazardous materials and other hazardous substances.

There was also an 18.2 per cent growth in incident levels attended by the Brigades between 1991-92 and 1994-95. This has placed heavy demands on existing resources and generated higher operational costs for attending incidents. Increased costs have been experienced through higher levels of overtime, greater demand for skills training, more (and improved) equipment, increased requirements for consumable firefighting materials and an increase in repairs and maintenance to fire stations and fire appliances which are required to be operational 24 hours a day.

Other cost increases have arisen following the State Consent Award in August 1994 which provided fire officers with a salary increase of 8 per cent retrospective to 1 August 1993, a 2.5 per cent increase from 1 April 1994 and a further 2.5 per cent increase from 1 April 1995.

The Capital Program has also steadily increased in real terms over the past seven years and will continue to increase as incident levels increase and growth areas are serviced.

Since the Fire Brigades became a Budget Sector agency on 1 January 1990, its capital program has been primarily funded from internal sources. In 1993-94 a special allocation of \$12.7 million was made from the Consolidated Fund to enable planned equipment and facilities to be acquired more quickly, and in 1995-96 \$2.3 million was provided from Consolidated Fund to assist with urgently needed replacement equipment, vehicles and property.

### **Strategic Directions**

The overall objective of the NSW Fire Brigades is to improve emergency response capability and response time so that loss of life and property is minimised. This is to be achieved through improvements in the Communications Network including the FireCad automated dispatch system, radio links and "000" responses, construction of new fire stations in growth areas and upgrading existing ones, and purchase of replacement and additional firefighting vehicles to replace the ageing fleet.

For 1996-97 there is particular concern with urban and developing areas where population changes have resulted in a change in service needs. A strategic program is being developed to ensure an adequate and equitable level of fire service is provided in existing and major growth areas of the State. The level of grants to be provided to Volunteer Rescue Associations is to be increased to \$500,000.

## **1996-97 Budget**

### **Current Payments**

Total current payments in 1996-97 are estimated at \$230.4 million.

In 1996-97 the agency plans to expand its repairs and maintenance programs for both the firefighting fleet and also for fire stations. It will also continue with the subsequent stages of the replacement programs for breathing apparatus, Hazmat equipment and communications equipment. Allowance has been made for increased operating costs associated with the opening of new fire stations to meet the expanding demands of growth areas and also funding for 10 additional training positions to meet the demands for skills training and skills maintenance.

### **Capital Payments**

The NSW Fire Brigades' 1996-97 capital program of \$24.1 million (a 37.7 per cent increase on forecast expenditure for 1995-96) makes provision for the following projects -

- communications network development (\$6.0 million);
- redeployment of fire fighting resources and facilities to achieve more equitable distribution in the Greater Sydney Area (\$1.8 million in 1996-97 to complete two projects at St Andrews and Marayong);
- commencement of a new fire station at Tweed Heads (\$550,000);
- commencement of a new fire station at Kariiong (\$250,000);
- commencement of a new fire station for the Rouse Hill area (\$750,000);
- continuation of the program of acquiring additional and replacement pumpers (\$4.4 million);

- continuation of a program to replace special appliances such as breathing apparatus, Hazmat (Hazardous Materials Responses) and salvage vehicles (\$3.1 million);
- purchase of aerial fire fighting appliances (\$2.9 million);
- expansion and upgrading of existing training facilities and acquisition of new sites (\$600,000);
- major computer upgrade and extension of the network including replacement of existing hardware and software (\$711,000);
- miscellaneous property works (\$2.7 million); and
- minor firefighting and other equipment (\$300,000).

In 1996-97 the contribution from Consolidated Fund will be \$8.2 million. These increases in capital funding will be of particular benefit to both city and rural areas of New South Wales as well as addressing the need for additional facilities required in growth areas.

## **DEPARTMENT OF BUSH FIRE SERVICES**

The Department is responsible for the promotion of effective rural fire fighting services within the State, including the co-ordination of bush fire fighting and prevention activities.

Under the Bush Fire Act, total expenditures of the Department are financed by contributions from Consolidated Fund (14 per cent), local government (12.3 per cent) and insurance companies (73.7 per cent).

## **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

The Department has received significant funding increases over the past five financial years. The total payments for 1996-97 are estimated at \$68.2 million compared to \$25.2 million in 1992-93.

### **1996-97 Budget**

The level of funding provided for 1996-97 allows the Department to continue to implement the Government's commitment to provide additional tankers to the bush fire movement.

Included in the allocation is an amount of \$7.1 million for the supply of additional tankers to local government councils. It is anticipated that 110 new tankers will be placed into various local government areas during the year. The allocation of these tankers will be in accordance with Standards of Fire Cover.

The level of other equipment to be supplied to local government will remain consistent with that of the previous year.

An amount of \$8.5 million will be allocated for the provision of second hand vehicles.

During the financial year the Department will enter phase two of a three year program to develop a radio communications network which links in to the Government Radio Network. An amount of \$3.6 million has been included in the Budget, in addition to the normal expenditure on radios.

Reimbursement to councils for maintenance and operating costs associated with bush fire fighting is estimated to be \$14.7 million for the year. In addition, an amount of \$20.5 million will be expended on providing general bush fire fighting equipment to local government.

Administrative savings mean that the level of expenditure on the administration of the Department will not increase over the 1995-96 level. The Department has over the years maintained a policy whereby resources are, where possible, directed to the provision of equipment for fighting bush fires as distinct from other expenditure areas.

The Government is considering its response to the findings of the Coroner's report into the January 1994 bushfire emergency.

## **STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE**

The State Emergency Service is a volunteer based organisation dedicated to providing immediate assistance to the community in times of natural or man-made incidents or emergencies. Its main responsibility is as the lead agency for floods and storms.

## **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

During 1995-96, volunteer members of the Service attended numerous floods, windstorms, road rescues and searches, as well as providing major assistance in bushfires.

The majority of the Service's 1995-96 recurrent allocation (\$9.4 million) was used to provide support directly to volunteers through the provision of equipment, insurance and training as well as repair and maintenance of equipment.

### **1996-97 Budget**

#### **Current Payments**

The funding provided in 1996-97 (\$9.6 million) to the State Emergency Service will ensure a continued high level of support to the volunteers with the further provision of equipment, insurance, training and equipment repairs.

#### **Capital Payments**

The State Emergency Service's capital program makes provision for land and building costs and the purchase of rescue equipment.

The Service's 1996-97 capital program of \$2.0 million includes \$1.4 million for communications and rescue equipment throughout the State, the construction of a new headquarters for the Lachlan Division at Parkes (\$0.4 million) and the purchase of the North West Division Headquarters at Moree (\$0.2 million).

The high level of capital funding provided to the Service in 1995-96 and 1996-97 will enable volunteers to provide a superior response to emergencies and disasters throughout the State.