

QPC REPORT

The following was dictated by Matthew Cox using the prison ARUNTA telephone system and has been reproduced here to be submitted to the Queensland Productivity Commission on his behalf.

My name is Matthew Cox and I am a life sentenced prisoner currently housed at the Borallon Training and Correctional Centre.

I have read the QPC draft report and have a number of comments I would like to make based on the content in this report.

- 1 In the overview of the draft report (page xxiv) it is stated that the average sentence length for homicide is 7.2 years. This does not paint an accurate picture as this number comes from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' data which excludes life sentences in their calculations. Any person convicted of murder in Queensland receives a mandatory life sentence with a non-parole period of twenty years. This makes the data used misleading as all murders are excluded from the calculation. Due to the mandatory life sentences and non-parole period of twenty years the cost of incarceration for homicide is significantly greater than indicated.
- 2 There is much talk of high and low security prisons and the disproportionate number of prisoners in high security compared to other states. What isn't mentioned is the absence of a medium security classification with Queensland being the only jurisdiction in Australia to not have this classification. As it stands currently inmates can be classified as either high or low and there is a significant difference between the two. Adding a medium classification would enable more progression for inmates and allow life sentenced inmates to show some form of progression prior to release while minimising the harms associated with prolonged exposure to high security environments.
- 3 The report appeared to indicate that when considering the construction of future prisons, thought should be given to cost effective options such as low security facilities. Unlike high security prisons where there is a requirement for certain structural design elements low security facilities do not have this requirement. With this in mind I would like to suggest that consideration be given to re-purposing pre-existing structures as low security prisons. Buildings such as old hotels, motels, sport and recreations centres, demountable buildings etc could be re-purposed as low security prisons to enable a cost-effective and fast expansion of capacity. Inmates at Borallon regularly discuss the potential for old demountable classrooms or shipping containers to be re-purposed as accommodation for inmates at low security facilities. This conversion could be an industry that employed prisoners at high security prisons in order to facilitate a larger low security population.

Dictated by Matthew Cox and typed up by Christine Cox

17 March 2019