

## INVESTING IN COMMUNITY SAFETY

The 2014-15 ACT Budget invests more than \$103 million over the next four years to keep Canberra safe and secure, Attorney-General Simon Corbell and Minister for Corrections Shane Rattenbury said today.

### Investing in our justice system

The 2014-15 Budget invests \$2.4 million in our justice system, including:

- A justice reform strategy incorporating:
  - sentencing reform supported by targeted research and evaluation
  - development of justice reinvestment options; and
  - a proposed research project on justice reinvestment.
- Improving access to justice by supporting the Supreme Court to reduce its backlog.
- Providing support for the Aboriginal Legal Service.

The ACT Government is providing funding of \$734,000 over two years to develop and consult on evidence-based reforms to sentencing and restorative arrangements.

A whole of government justice reinvestment strategy is aimed at reducing recidivism and diverting offenders, and those at risk of becoming offenders, from the justice system. The government will commit \$689,000 over four years to this initiative.

\$150,000 over three years from 2015-16 will go towards a Australian Research Council linkage grant between the National Centre for Indigenous Studies, the ANU and the ACT Government. The proposal contains measures designed to reduce serious crime that result in imprisonment.

The government will commit \$225,000 to improve timely access to justice through funding for acting judges and support staff to assist the reduction of the backlog of civil matters in the ACT Supreme Court.

The ACT Government is also providing additional \$416,000 over four years to the Canberra office of the Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT) to undertake a duty lawyer role in the ACT Courts. This will help ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have adequate legal representation if summoned before the court.

Support is also being provided in the form of \$200,000 of additional funding in 2014-15 Budget to the Legal Aid Commission to meet the cost of expensive criminal cases.

### Supporting the transition of offenders back into the community

The ACT Government will invest \$2.1 million over the next two years in support of the *Throughcare* program, bringing the total investment of \$3.3 million over four years in this program since 2012-13.

The *Throughcare* program provides support beyond the end of an offender's custodial sentence to assist their transition to the community and help reduce rates of recidivism. This increased funding builds on the success of the existing program and will provide more detainees to access to this ongoing support.

## **Expansion of the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC)**

The ACT Budget provides recurrent and capital funding of \$98.5 million over four years to increase bed numbers, and to improve the facilities through better use of space. The facilities will increase rehabilitation options for detainees and enhance security for staff and detainees.

This investment includes capital funding of \$54.1 million over two years for the construction of a new 30 cell special care centre and a new 56 flexible accommodation cell block inside the AMC in response to increasing detainee numbers.

In addition to the capital investment, recurrent funding of \$25.4 million over three years will fund the staffing and operational costs of the new facilities.

An investment of \$5.3 million is being provided for the design and upgrade of electronic security systems at the AMC (including ongoing maintenance). The system upgrade will also provide additional capacity to support the electronic security system requirements of the new facilities.