



# Hon Greg Smith SC MP

Attorney General  
Minister for Justice

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### INDEPENDENT INSPECTOR TO MONITOR PRISON STANDARDS

An Inspector of Custodial Services will be appointed to monitor standards in correctional facilities across NSW, Attorney General and Minister for Justice Greg Smith SC announced today.

The Inspector will have jurisdiction over all correctional facilities, including public and private sector prisons and juvenile justice centres, court custody centres, police cells managed by Corrective Services NSW, transitional centres, prisoner transport and support services.

The independent watchdog will be able to review correctional and juvenile justice facilities at any time and make recommendations about issues of concern.

“The Inspector will be a champion for prisons and prison officers,” Mr Smith said.

“The new position will build public confidence in the justice system and ensure that correctional facilities are safe, secure and operate to a high standard.

“Prison officers will also be able to air their concerns without fear of being harassed or having their careers prejudiced as a result of assisting an Inspector.”

The Inspector will be required to:

- report on each juvenile justice facility at least once every three years;
- report on each adult correctional facility at least once every five years;
- conduct additional inspections at the request of a government minister; and
- provide an annual report to Parliament and the Minister for Justice.

“It will be an offence to give a false statement to an Inspector or to hinder their investigations and the law will protect whistle-blowers,” Mr Smith said.

The administration of the Official Visitors program will be transferred from Juvenile Justice NSW and Corrective Services NSW to the Inspector. This will enhance the independence of the Official Visitors program.

The Inspector will not deal with individual complaints made by prisoners, but may refer them to the Ombudsman.

An Inspector will be appointed for a five-year term that can be extended for an additional five years. A joint parliamentary committee will monitor the functions of the Inspector and examine reports of the Office of the Inspector.

“By appointing an Inspector of Custodial Services, the NSW Government is delivering on another of its election commitments,” Mr Smith said.

Mr Smith noted the success of Inspectors in other jurisdictions.

“There is an Inspector in Western Australia, where the office is held in high regard by the community and both sides of politics in that state. This has also been the case in foreign jurisdictions including England, Scotland and Wales.”

The Government will advertise the position shortly and it is expected that the Inspector will commence before the end of the year.