



MEDIA RELEASE

Prisoner Escort Fleet Goes High-Tech

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Live video of inmates will be streamed to a central operations base from onboard Australia's most advanced and secure prison vehicles, in a major upgrade of the NSW Corrections fleet.

NSW Attorney-General Greg Smith SC and Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) Commissioner Peter Severin today unveiled the first of four new high-tech escort vehicles that will make prisoner transport safer, more secure and effective.

All 90 prisoner escort vehicles will have GPS tracking and back-to-base live video streaming progressively installed in a major retro-fitting operation to create the nation's most advanced prisoner transport fleet.

"The custom-designed trucks and GPS and video streaming represent a major safety investment for correctional officers, inmates and the community," Mr Smith said.

"Once we enable GPS and remote viewing and recording capability, the central operations room at Silverwater Correctional Complex can immediately locate every escort vehicle and monitor what's going on inside, in real time."

Around \$1.2 million would be spent on the fleet upgrade including \$300,000 for the retrofitting operation and almost \$900,000 on the design and construction of the four new trucks.

Commissioner Severin said the new escort vehicles would carry 12 inmates in separate compartments delivering a highly secure, flexible and efficient fleet to move around 150 inmates to and from the State's courts and Correctional Centres daily.

"Every day we move the equivalent of a small prison's population on our roads and we have a responsibility to do so with the utmost care for the safety of our dedicated officers, the inmates and the people of NSW," Mr Severin said.

"For the first time our large escort vehicles will have individual compartments allowing us to boost numbers from eight in a vehicle with shared units to 12 inmates in single compartments.

"Individual compartments let us secure and remove inmates one by one instead of in larger groups that pose greater risk. One-out cells will also allow us to transport full loads and maintain separation of inmates by gender, security risk and gang affiliations."

CSNSW expects to take delivery of all four vehicles from expert Sydney emergency transport designers The Byron Group by mid-2014, Mr Severin said.

“We now operate about 20 escort vehicles a day in Sydney alone and expect the new vehicles will enable more efficient use of the vehicles over time. They will initially be used for short-distance trips in Sydney and Newcastle and we’ll consider them for other regions in future.”

From the front cabin, Correctional Officers will monitor each compartment via CCTV, which will be recorded using Digital Video Recording technology.

Emergency audio buttons in each compartment allow inmates to speak with Correctional Officers about issues including medical emergencies, enabling fast response.

“We’re very conscious of our responsibilities to ensure the safety of inmates, Correctional Officers and the community and that’s why we’re making this major investment in our escort fleet so it meets best-practice standards in Australia,” Mr Severin said.

“Since 2009, when inmate Mark Holcroft died of a heart condition in one of our vehicles, Corrective Services NSW has been consulting widely including with Mr Holcroft’s family about improvements to our transport equipment. We’ve already installed quality intercom equipment across our whole fleet.”

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PRISON ESCORT VEHICLE FACTS

New CSNSW prisoner escort vehicles will feature:

- 12 individual compartments to secure inmates safely and remove them one at a time
- CCTV and emergency call buttons that transmit vision to a screen in the front cabin, to be monitored by a CSNSW officer and recorded. This footage will also stream live to an operations control room enabling remote monitoring
- A back-to-base duress alarm that can be activated by Correctional Officers
- Electronically activated emergency entrance and exit doors
- A dual battery system that will keep all electronic security features, air-conditioning and temperature monitoring operating in the event of a vehicle breakdown
- Two compartments bigger than the rest to cater for inmates with special needs
- GPS tracking to inform a central operations room of the exact location of the vehicle
- Construction materials that are longer-lasting and do not require refurbishment as frequently, saving on costs

The CSNSW prisoner escort fleet:

- Travels an average of three million kilometres each year
- Makes 130,000 to 150,000 prisoner movements each year
- Moves about 150 prisoners daily