



Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2026–2027 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2026–2027

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Rebecca Vassarotti MLA

Addressed to: Attorney-General

Reference: Attorney General -Justice

Hearing: 22/07/2026

In relation to: Reducing recidivism by 25% by 2025

Question received: 27/07/2026

Answer Due: 06/08/2026

(1) Regarding the Government's commitment to reducing recidivism by 25% by 2025: what percentage recidivism reduction was achieved by the 2025 milestone date: ie the actual result in meeting this commitment (by 2025)?

(2) Given the passing of the milestone date of 2025, what is the Government's future recidivism reduction target beyond 2026-27 (noting the budget statement declares a target of reducing recidivism from 32.5% to 31.7% for 2026-27)?

(3) What is the reduction / increase of recidivism rates for Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander detainees specifically (using the same baseline as the general recidivism target or, alternatively, whatever data is available for the previous 5 years)?

Ms Tara Cheyne MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) The original RR25by25 Plan outlines that the primary indicator to measure success will be reducing the rate at which adult sentenced detainees return to custody with a new correctional sanction within two years by 25% - that is from the 2018-19 baseline of 42.4% to 31.7%. Accordingly, the RR Plan highlighted that the recidivism rate for offenders in 2025 will not be measurable until 2026–27.

Return to custody data is published routinely in the JACS Annual Report and the annual Report on Government Services – Justice. An estimated outcome for 2025-26 has been included in the 2026-27 Budget Papers.

ACT 2025-26 actual return to custody data will be published in the JACS 2025-26 Annual Report, and subsequently in February 2027 the Report on Government Services will publish 2025-26 return to custody data for all jurisdictions, providing the opportunity to compare the ACT to other jurisdictions and the national rate.

In 2025 the ACT Government conducted a comprehensive review into how recidivism rates are calculated. This coincided with the transition to a new offender management system and the development of an automated data model. The automated data model enables us to better track those who return to ACTCS and aligns with our strategic vision to improve the quality, consistency, and timeliness of recidivism data.

The 2024–25 reporting period was the first in which the recidivism indicators were calculated entirely from the new offender management system. This revised method more closely aligns with national Report on Government Services standards and resulted in 2024-25 data published in the JACS Annual Report and Report on Government Services not being directly comparable with prior years.

As outlined in the RR25by25 Plan (Phase 1)¹, the return to custody rate is a crude indicator for measuring success as it does not take into consideration, for example, reductions in the seriousness or frequency of offending. I intend to table a report in the Legislative Assembly by the end of the year that includes additional data related to reducing recidivism and the outcomes achieved against Phase 2 of RR25by25².

(2) 32.5% is the 2025-26 estimated outcome against the return to custody target included in Table 3 of the JACS Budget Statement³ and as outlined in the explanation of Strategic Indicators on page 8, this indicates the target of 31.7% (25% reduction from the 2018-19 baseline) will not be achieved. The 2026-27 target of 31.7% maintains the commitment to works towards reducing recidivism by 25% from the RR25by25Plan 2018-19 baseline. The annual target for the return to custody rate will continue to be published in the JACS Budget Statements and results reported on in the JACS Annual Report.

(3) Table CA.4 of the 2026 Report on Government Services - Justice⁴ includes data on the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults released from prison who returned to prison with a new sentence within two years. ACT data for the last 5 years is provided in the table below, however as outlined above, ACT data from 2024-25 is not directly comparable to previous financial years due to changes in methodology:

¹ www.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/2543646/RR25by25-Plan-Reducing-Recidivism-in-the-ACT-by-25-by-2025-2020-to-2023.pdf

² www.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/2563831/RR25by25-and-Beyond-A-Justice-Reinvestment-Strategy-for-the-ACT.pdf

³ https://www.treasury.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/3080767/ACT-Budget-2026-27-Statement-D.pdf

⁴ <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/justice/>

2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
44.0%	47.2%	47.10%	44.3%	45.6%

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2026–2027

Signature: 

Date: 7/8/26

By the Attorney-General, Ms Tara Cheyne MLA