

Australian NPM Joint Statement **Little funding for torture prevention in federal Budget**

As members of the Australian National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) we are deeply concerned and once again disappointed that the 2024–25 federal Budget did not contain more funding to support a nation-wide mechanism to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in detention. While it is positive to see the potential of some time-limited funding to some jurisdictions, current funding is insufficient to meet Australia’s torture prevention responsibilities.

OPCAT implementation and funding remains the responsibility of all Australian governments. We had hoped ongoing disagreements between Commonwealth, state and territory governments on the appropriate resourcing to fulfil our OPCAT mandate would be resolved. We urge governments to resolve this matter expeditiously and ensure that NPMs are appropriately resourced to fulfil their mandate.

➤ **“Even in times of budgetary pressure, it remains critical for Australia to implement its international human rights commitments” said Iain Anderson, Australia’s Commonwealth Ombudsman and NPM Coordinator. “For OPCAT, this includes effectively resourcing all the bodies whose responsibility it is to conduct regular, independent oversight of places of detention” Mr Anderson said.**

Our governments appointed or nominated us to undertake the important work of advancing efforts to prevent the torture and ill-treatment of detained people, including by visiting places where people are or may be deprived of their liberty.

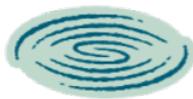
Fifteen years after signing the United Nations *Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (OPCAT), Australia continues to see high rates of incarceration and increased incidences of death and other harm in custody, while ill treatment also continues to be found in other places of detention.

As Australian NPM members we remain committed to our work and will continue to carry out our functions to the best of our ability with limited funding. We play an important role

in identifying risks of ill-treatment and making recommendations for improvement for those deprived of their liberty.

We reiterate our long-standing call on all Australian governments to, where they have not done so, appoint NPMs, legislate their role and powers, and adequately resource them so they can discharge their full mandate under OPCAT.

This joint statement is made on behalf of the following members of the Australian NPM:



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR
OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES

Jo Battersby
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South Australian Official Visitors



NT Community Visitor Program



NORTHERN TERRITORY
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Commonwealth
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