



---

**MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES; CORRECTIVE SERVICES;  
RACING AND GAMING; DEFENCE INDUSTRIES; VETERANS**

Our Reference: 70-50707

Ms Dawn Wright  
Manager Listings  
Officer of the State Coroner

Email: [coroner@justice.wa.gov.au](mailto:coroner@justice.wa.gov.au)

Dear Ms Wright

**CORONER'S FINDINGS INTO THE DEATH IN CUSTODY OF MR OWEN DUKER  
NUGGET WEAZEL**

Thank you for your correspondence dated 16 September 2025 requesting advice on proposed actions in response to Coroner Linton's findings into the death in custody of Mr Owen Duker Nugget Weazel.

The Department of Justice (the Department) takes deaths in custody very seriously and places great importance on recommendations made by the Coroner. It carefully considers the basis for each of the recommendations to assist in identifying target solutions to address the intent of the recommendations.

The Department has initiated a number of suicide prevention strategies to better manage at-risk and vulnerable prisoners. These have taken effect through the establishment of a dedicated suicide prevention project that aims to improve the safety and wellbeing of these prisoners; reduce incidents of suicide and self-harm; and improve the Department's focus on prevention and safer custody in line with the State's Suicide Prevention Strategy.

With respect to the recommendations made, funding decisions are ultimately matters for government rather than the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF). While DTF provides advice to government on funding proposals, it does not independently make funding decisions. I have therefore written to the Treasurer advising her of the recommendations and indicating that they will inform future budget submissions made by the Department of Justice. Specific responses to each recommendation are provided at Attachment 1 of this letter.

I also accept your proposal to publish this letter, and the attachment provided on the Coroner's Court Website and your Annual Report.

Yours sincerely

**HÓN PAUL PAPALIA CSC MLA  
MINISTER FOR CORRECTIVE SERVICES**

## **ATTACHMENT ONE:**

### **Response to Recommendation 1:**

As this recommendation acknowledges, significant additional funding is required to create appropriately private and therapeutic dedicated interview spaces for counselling at Albany Regional Prison.

While the Department supports this recommendation in principle, the provision of funding is ultimately a matter for government. The Department will advocate for additional funding to undertake infrastructure changes within the prison environment in Western Australia.

### **Response to Recommendation 2:**

Albany Regional Prison currently has two recurrently funded Psychological Health Services counsellor positions, both of which are substantively filled.

While the Department supports this recommendation in principle, the provision of funding is ultimately a matter for government. The Department will advocate for funding for additional Health and Wellbeing staff at Albany Regional Prison.