



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

Our Reference: 70-52599

Ms Dawn Wright
Manager Listings
Office of the State Coroner's

Email: coroner@justice.wa.gov.au

Dear Ms Wright

Thank you for your letter dated 13 February 2026, requesting advice on proposed actions in response to Coroner Linton's findings into the death in custody of Mr Sean Theo Winmar.

Although this death did not occur in custody, the Department of Justice (the Department) takes all deaths 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 targeted solutions to address the intent of the recommendations.

I confirm that the Department is actively taking steps to address supported recommendations arising from the Inquest into the death of Mr Winmar. For your reference I have attached a progress update detailing the Department's efforts to implement the recommendations to date.

I accept your proposal to publish this letter on the Coroner's Court website and your Annual Report.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

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

14 APR 2026

Attachment One:

Recommendation 1:

The Department of Justice review the staffing requirements and resourcing of the FPIT, to consider whether there are ways to improve the staffing levels in order to reduce the length of the waitlist. Alternatively, the Department of Justice should explore alternative ways to provide psychological support to supervised offenders subject to both interim supervision order and final supervision orders.

Department's Response:

The Department of Justice (the Department) supports this recommendation as it is current practice. The Department is experiencing skills shortages in various clinical fields across Offender Services. In response to this issue, in January 2024 the Department established the Clinical Workforce Shortages Working Group (CWSWG) which is a multidisciplinary team, consisting of key personnel from across the Department who are involved in operational service delivery, Human Resources and Industrial Relations. Key initiatives introduced from the CWSWG have included offering relocation costs to prospective staff recruited from all other States and New Zealand, as well as offering professional development incentives. The Rehabilitation and Reintegration area of the Department are now leading this via the Corrective Services Strategic Plan 2025-2030 Workplan which is focused on attraction, recruitment and retention of specialist staff. Regular recruitment has also been undertaken. It should be noted that the Forensic Psychological Intervention Team (FPIT) is not a general support or crisis management service. Rather, FPIT psychologists provide individual intervention to target offenders' criminogenic treatment needs.

The Department acknowledges the Coroner's concern that delays in accessing psychological intervention can have significant consequences, particularly during periods of heightened stress such as court proceedings. While FPIT's primary mandate is criminogenic risk reduction, the Department recognises the importance of ensuring that supervised offenders are supported through clear pathways to appropriate mental health and substance use services when emerging needs are identified. The Department continues to access generalist psychological services available within the community for supervised offenders. This includes supporting offenders to access mental-health providers via their General Practitioner and utilising community support organisations. With any community service, the length of the waitlist generally impacts timeliness and accessibility.

Recommendation 2:

WA Police and the Department of Justice staff involved in supervising persons on HRSO Act orders should receive regular training in culturally safe and trauma informed interactions, above and beyond the standard cultural awareness training provided to staff as part of their standard agency induction and training.

Department's Response

The Department of Justice supports this recommendation in principle. The Department is unable to comment with respect to WA Police.

Specific to the Department and staff at the Community Offender Monitoring Unit, a number of actions have been implemented since the death of Mr Winmar in 2022 to strengthen culturally safe and trauma-informed practice.

On 20 March 2025, the Department introduced a mandatory learning program titled "Aboriginal Cultural Capacity Training – Foundation Program". This online learning program builds on an Officers existing knowledge and commitment to reconciliation and improving our work and the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people impacted by the justice system. The training forms part of the Department's broader efforts to embed cultural capability as a core professional competency.

In addition, structured monthly professional supervision between Team Leaders and officers provides a forum to reflect on individual cases, including cultural responsiveness and trauma-informed considerations. This supervision supports officers to consider how supervision practices can be tailored to the circumstances, cultural context and vulnerabilities of individuals subject to HRSO Act orders. The Department acknowledges the Coroner's findings and the importance of ensuring that staff involved in the supervision of individuals subject to HRSO Act orders are equipped to engage in ways that are culturally safe, trauma informed, and consistent with rehabilitative objectives. The Department also recognises the concerns raised that existing approaches have been perceived as predominantly risk focused and not sufficiently responsive to the cultural or trauma related needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who comprise a significant proportion of those managed under these orders.

Delivering the highly specialised training envisaged by the Coroner presents practical challenges, including identifying providers with appropriate expertise, capacity and operational understanding of the HRSO supervision environment. Integrating advanced trauma-informed practice with the complex statutory and risk management framework of HRSO orders requires careful design to ensure training is both contemporary and operationally relevant. The Corrective Services Academy is also operating at capacity, which constrains the ability to rapidly commission bespoke programs.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the Department supports the intent of the recommendation and is committed to progressively strengthening capability beyond foundational cultural awareness. This includes continuing to embed culturally safe and trauma-informed practice through supervision, targeted learning opportunities, and the incorporation of Aboriginal cultural perspectives into guidance and decision-making processes. The Department will continue to explore feasible and sustainable options to enhance staff capability within existing resources and will prioritise opportunities that align with best practice and operational need.

Recommendation 3:

Department of Justice amend the policies for HRSO Act orders to ensure that CCOs are required to ensure a person subject to the order (interim or final) is offered appropriate psychological and substance use support related to their identified risk factors from the outset of the order. If the FPIT does not have the capacity to provide that support, then appropriate alternatives should be sourced to provide that support within the framework of the Department of Justice's overall supervision requirements.

Department's Response

The Department acknowledges the Coroner's finding that there were missed opportunities to provide earlier and more coordinated psychological and substance use support where emerging needs became evident.

The Department does not support a requirement that all persons subject to HRSO Act orders be automatically offered individual criminogenic intervention from the outset of an order, as such intervention must be clinically appropriate, ethically applied, and targeted to identified treatment needs.

However, the Department accepts the underlying intent of the recommendation- that supervision practices should ensure timely consideration of psychological and substance use support aligned to an individual's risk profile. Community Corrections Officers are expected to identify and respond to emerging risks, including substance use and mental health deterioration, and to facilitate access to appropriate services within the community where specialist departmental services are not immediately available.

The Department will consider whether existing policies and guidance can be strengthened to better support early identification of emerging needs, clearer escalation pathways, and improved coordination with external health and support services.

Recommendation 4:

Department of Justice ensures that there is an independent Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representing at HRSO review Committee Meetings.

Department's Response

The Department of Justice supports this recommendation in principle. The Department recognises the value of independent Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander perspectives in strengthening cultural insight, trust, and decision-making within governance processes. Consultation will be undertaken to determine an appropriate, culturally respectful model that supports informed advice while managing confidentiality and role clarity. Progression to implementation will be subject to the availability of funding and resourcing, noting there may be financial and workforce implications associated with establishing and maintaining the role.