

Media Release

The Hon Enver Erdogan MP
Minister for Corrections
Minister for Youth Justice
Minister for Victim Support



Wednesday, 26 June 2024

CREATING A MODERN AND SECURE CORRECTIONS SYSTEM

The new maximum security Western Plains Correctional Centre will begin housing prisoners next year as part of the Allan Labor Government's investment in a modern prison system that better supports staff and people in custody.

Minister for Corrections Enver Erdogan today announced reforms to the men's prison system that will improve safety and rehabilitate men in custody.

The 1,200 bed Western Plains facility has been designed with state-of-the-art security features, including the use of artificial intelligence and an integrated prisoner movement system to make it easier and safer for staff to monitor and move prisoners throughout the facility.

Opening Western Plains will pave the way to decommission ageing infrastructure and move more of the people in our care into a publicly-run prison – ensuring better oversight and a high standard of care. The facility will also increase access to specialist training and employment facilities for people in custody.

As part of this, Port Phillip Prison (PPP) will close by 31 December 2025, with prisoners to be transferred to other maximum-security prisons including Western Plains. Corrections Victoria will work closely with PPP operator G4S over the next 18 months to support a smooth transition.

Staff will be supported by the private operator G4S including through redundancy provisions, and there will be opportunities for them to take up roles in the public prison system.

The 59-year-old Dhurringile Prison will also close in the coming months. Dhurringile staff will be supported throughout this process and will have the opportunity to transfer into other prison roles, roles within the Department of Justice and Community Safety or Victorian Public Service or take a departure package.

Victoria's other minimum-security facilities for men which have ample capacity will continue to accommodate low-risk prisoners as they prepare to transition back into the community at the end of their sentence.

Future uses for these sites will be considered in consultation with the community.

Better use of technology including the Offender Services Network will provide prisoners the ability to manage their legal, education and administrative affairs – reducing the administrative burden on staff.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Corrections Enver Erdogan

"We are delivering better facilities for people in custody, a safer working environment for our staff and a safer community for Victorians."

"I want to thank our staff at Dhurringile and G4S staff at Port Phillip Prison for the vital work they do every day in keeping people in custody and the community safe. They will be supported during this transition and be provided opportunities to take up new roles."

Quote attributable to Corrections Commissioner Larissa Strong

"This is about delivering a smarter, safer and more modern system – one that focuses on rehabilitation and sets our prison system up for the future."

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