DRUGS IN PRISONS - ZERO TOLERANCE

WINNING THE WAR ON DRUGS

2036

WINNING THE WAR ON DRUGS
By the time our State turns 200 years old, I want South Australia to be a place of prosperity. Planning and delivering on my vision for a better future starts now.

This policy is an important part of our plan to deliver a clear and responsible pathway to recovery and success. See where it fits in below

1.0 GROWING OUR ECONOMY
2.0 THE BEST EDUCATION SYSTEM
3.0 BEING A HEALTHY STATE
4.0 STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES
5.0 BUILDING OUR STATE

6.0 ENSURING SAFETY AND JUSTICE

6.1 Collaborating with police, emergency services and government agencies to deliver the best possible community safety outcomes

6.2 Reducing criminal behaviour through efficient, effective policing and a corrections system that reduces reoffending

6.4 Dealing with emerging trends in crime, as well as entrenched issues such as domestic and family violence and substance abuse

7.0 PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT
8.0 EMBRACING OUR UNIQUE CULTURE
9.0 RUNNING AN EFFICIENT AND STABLE GOVERNMENT
“We will improve the safety of prison officers and the rehabilitation of prisoners by taking a zero tolerance approach to drugs in prisons.”
THE PROBLEM

Drugs are regularly found in our prisons.
Over the past five years, there have been almost 3,200 drug incidents in South Australian prisons and, during the same period, almost 100 alcohol-related incidents.

Prisons are a unique environment with a concentration of people found guilty of drug offences or a history of drug use.

In 2012, a total of 37 per cent of correctional facility entrants in Australia reported using methamphetamine, while 50 per cent of inmates reported using cannabis.

Reported illicit drug use rates by inmates are significantly higher than rates of reported illicit drug use by the general population and drugs and drug/alcohol substitutes are highly valuable currency in our correctional system.

Given these unique considerations, people working in the prison system must be supported by high standards of occupational health and safety.

If prison officers or staff are under the influence of drugs or alcohol at work, they expose their colleagues by significantly increasing an already wide range of workplace risks.

The stressful prison environment can also put officers and staff susceptible to addiction at further risk.

Further, prisons can become a breeding ground for members of organised crime groups such as outlaw motorcycle gangs, providing these groups with a potential source of new recruits for drugs and other crime.

Exposure to illicit drugs is a significant risk to the health and safety of prisoners and prison staff.

First-time prisoners who are not hardened criminals and have no previous gang affiliations can be particularly vulnerable.

They are offered protection while in prison and opportunities to participate in gang activities after release.

Outlaw motorcycle gangs are significant players in the importation, domestic manufacture and trafficking of illicit drugs in Australia and, although federal and state governments have taken steps to inhibit association between members of outlaw motorcycle gangs, further measures are needed to prevent associations between prisoners and members of these criminal organisations.

Prison is an environment where prisoners need to be supported to detoxify from drug addiction and prison officers need to know they are working in a setting that is as safe as possible.
If elected in March 2018, a Marshall Liberal Government will stamp out drugs in South Australia’s prisons.

We will:

- introduce workplace testing of prison officers, staff and contractors for alcohol and illegal drugs
- legislate to ban members of outlaw motorcycle gangs from visiting prisons.

Random testing in the workplace is an occupational health and safety tool widely used in the private sector while testing of police officers for alcohol and illegal drug use can be applied when they are involved in critical incidents, high risk incidents or suspected by a superior of being under the influence.

We believe it needs to be introduced in our prisons to maintain public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of prison staff and discourage people from coming to work affected by alcohol or illegal drugs.

Prison staff will be tested:

- when an employee of the Department of Correctional Services is suspected of being under the influence;
- when an employee is involved in a ‘serious incident’ in a prison
- on a random basis.

To further ensure we stamp out drugs in our prisons, a Marshall Liberal Government will prevent prisoners being groomed by members of outlaw motorcycle gangs by prohibiting these individuals from participating in prison visits.

Given that outlaw motorcycle gangs are so heavily involved in drug trafficking, this is an important step in reducing the flow of drugs/contraband into our prison system.

Currently, all written communication with prisoners can be read by corrections staff. All phone calls with prisoners can be recorded and listened by corrections staff.

However, face to face visits with prisoners can only be visually monitored and are not listened to and that is why visits from outlaw motorcycle gang members to prisoners are such an important part of their operations.

This policy will interfere with that opportunity and contribute to stamping out drugs in prisons and more broadly in South Australia.

We are committed to protecting both staff and prisoners from falling victim to addiction while in our prisons.
“The Liberals are committed to doing what it takes to win the war on drugs.”

Steven Marshall, State Liberal Leader
If you would like to provide feedback on our policy or learn more about our plan, please get in touch via:

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