

Mr Greg Watkinson  
Chief Executive Officer  
Economic Regulation Authority  
via [publicsubmissions@erawa.com.au](mailto:publicsubmissions@erawa.com.au)

24<sup>th</sup> April 2015

Dear Mr Watkinson,

**Response to the ERA Prisons Inquiry (2014) Discussion Paper**

The Western Australian Council of Social Service (the Council) thanks the Economic Regulation Authority for the opportunity to attend the recent roundtable discussion relating to the ERA's Prisons Inquiry (2014) *Discussion Paper*.

For the Council, the *strongest* message coming out of the roundtable discussion was the need for the WA Government to take a whole-of-system approach to improving the efficiency and performance of the justice system in Western Australia. To this end, we strongly endorse much greater consideration of issues including the rates of Aboriginal incarceration, parole, foetal alcohol spectrum disorder, and the use of prison for remand purposes in preparing your draft report.

Further Tuesday's discussion, we also wish to flag one additional item for consideration by the ERA. As articulated in our original submission to this inquiry, we hold significant concerns about the current quality and quantity of mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment, support and through care services made available to people within the prison system.

We encourage the ERA to examine whether the mental health and AOD needs of prisoners may be better met if identification of service need — and the subsequent procurement and evaluation of these services — were to become the responsibility of the WA Mental Health Commission.

Yours sincerely,

Irina Cattalini  
Chief Executive Officer



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