

Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures

5.3 Musters, let-go and lock-in

Policy summary

Musters allow for inmates to be accounted for and visually inspected and should be held at both pre-determined and random times. Musters are essential in maintaining a safe, secure and humane environment.

The timing and frequency of musters is to be determined by the Governor or delegated officer.

Let-go and lock-in are conducted in a systematic manner that supports centre-specific routine and allow for the identification of inmates that may be in distress.

Management of Public Correctional Centres Service Specifications

Service specifications	<p>Decency and respect</p> <p>Health services</p> <p>Professionalism and accountability</p> <p>Safety and security</p>
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Scope

This section applies to all correctional centres and other facilities administered by or on behalf of Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW), and all CSNSW employees.

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1 Muster

1.1 Policy

Inmates are formally identified and accounted for a minimum of three times per day, usually at the start of the structured day (after let-go), in the middle of the day, and the end of the structured day (before lock-in).

The frequency and timing of routine musters is determined by the Governor or delegated officer, and must take into account the centre's operations and the opportunities for escape, particularly during periods of intense activity and movement through entry and exit points of the correctional centre.

During the muster, staff must be respectful and reflect pro-social behaviour towards inmates. Staff must respond to any signs that an inmate may be in distress.

In addition to the pre-determined muster times, the Governor or delegated officer, in consultation with Managers of Industries, is to implement two additional musters per day in Corrective Services Industries work locations. One is to occur in the morning and one in the afternoon, but otherwise these additional musters should occur at unscheduled (random) times.

The Duty Officer and the respective Assistant Commissioner, Custody (ACC) are to be immediately notified if an inmate cannot be identified or accounted for at a muster and it is determined that an escape or an attempted escape has occurred.

1.2 Procedures

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Muster inmates in accordance with correctional centre timetables.	Officer in Charge (OIC) Accommodation
2.	Identify inmates using the Muster Book. Use visual observation and verbal cues to identify inmates in distress.	OIC Accommodation
3.	Manage inmates identified to be in distress in accordance with COPP section 3.7 Management of inmates at risk of self-harm or suicide.	OIC Accommodation
4.	Follow procedures in COPP section 13.6 Escapes if an inmate cannot be identified or accounted for during a muster.	OIC Accommodation

2 Let-go

2.1 Policy

Prior to commencing the let-go process, the OIC of the accommodation unit will check any local records (journals, logbooks) for information that might impact upon the management of inmates housed in the accommodation unit, such as incidents that have occurred during the night.

The OIC of the accommodation unit will ensure inmates are identified using available records and confirm the inmate is in good health through verbal interaction and visual observation. Any inmate showing signs of distress or harm must be assessed for risk of self-harm or suicide (**refer to COPP section 3.7 Management of inmates at risk of self-harm or suicide**). Staff must also be mindful that harm to an inmate may not be self-inflicted, so they must also consider managing the situation as a potential crime scene (**refer COPP section 13.8 Crime scene preservation**).

In correctional centres with dormitory/unit style accommodation (where inmates are responsible for releasing or securing themselves in their cells, rooms or units) the responsible officer does not have to check every cell/room in the dormitory/unit. However, they must satisfy themselves that each of the inmates housed in the accommodation area is present, alive and well.

When checking the Cell Card against the Muster Book, if an inmate is identified as requiring two-out cell placement, the officer must ensure the two-out placement is not lapsed (**refer to COPP section 5.2 Inmate accommodation**). In all circumstances where an inmate is subject to a notification for two-out cell placement, they must never be left alone in a cell.

2.2 Procedures for let-go (non-dormitory style units)

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Check log books and/or notification systems for any information that could be of relevance to staff working in the area.	OIC Accommodation
2.	Check that the information on the cell card matches that in the Muster Book regarding which inmates are held in the cell, prior to opening a cell at a let-go.	OIC Accommodation
3.	Open the cell door and call the inmate(s) by name once the name(s) of the inmate(s) have been established	OIC Accommodation
4.	Attempt to wake the inmate and see if they are in good health if the inmate does not respond.	OIC Accommodation

	Procedure	Responsibility
5.	Assume that some harm has come to the inmate and immediately implement the discovering officer procedures if the inmate does not respond (refer to COPP section 3.7 <i>Management of inmates at risk of self-harm or suicide</i>). Be mindful that any injury or harm to an inmate may not be self-inflicted, so consider managing the cell as a potential crime scene (refer to COPP section 13.8 <i>Crime scene preservation</i>).	OIC Accommodation
6.	Record in the <i>Accommodation Journal</i> the identity of every staff member releasing or assisting in the release of inmates from cells.	OIC Accommodation
7.	Examine all cells and communal areas to ensure no inmate is hiding, if the accommodation area is to be cleared as part of the let-go process.	OIC Accommodation
8.	Ensure that a written record is made in the relevant <i>Accommodation Journal</i> of the correctional officers who opened or assisted in the opening of every cell.	Functional Manager (FM)

2.3 Procedures for let-go (dormitory-style units)

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Check log books and/or notification systems for any information that could be of relevance to staff working in the area.	OIC Accommodation
2.	Muster inmates and be observant for any signs that they may be in distress.	OIC Accommodation
3.	Search the accommodation area to confirm that the inmate has not escaped or is in need of medical attention, if an inmate is not present for muster.	OIC Accommodation
4.	Record in the <i>Accommodation Journal</i> the identity of every staff member releasing or assisting in the release and muster of inmates.	OIC Accommodation
5.	If the accommodation area is to be cleared as part of the let-go process, examine all communal areas to ensure no inmate is hiding.	OIC Accommodation
6.	Ensure that a written record is made in the relevant <i>Accommodation Journal</i> of the correctional officers who assisted in the let-go.	FM

3 Clearing of accommodation areas

3.1 Policy

The OIC of the accommodation area will be responsible to authorise staff for the clearing of the accommodation area at a determined time as per the purposeful day routine. The responsible officer/s must ensure that each inmate housed in the accommodation area is identified and accounted for whilst clearing from the area. The responsible officer/s must physically examine all cells and communal areas to ensure that no inmate is hiding when the area is cleared as part of clearing of the accommodation area process. The OIC must ensure that a written record is made in the relevant area log with the names of the correctional officer/s conducting the process.

4 Lock-in

4.1 Policy

Unless a cell or dormitory unit is designed with a self-locking mechanism no inmate is to lock or otherwise secure themselves or any other inmate into a cell or dormitory unit.

Staff must satisfy themselves that the inmate is alive and well prior to being locked in cell or dormitory unit. An inmate who appears to be affected by a drug or alcohol or is otherwise unwell or injured or not able to care for themselves must not be locked in a cell or dormitory unit. The inmate must be provided with medical care and managed according to appropriate policies and procedures (**refer to COPP section 13.2 *Medical emergencies***).

Where inmates are accommodated in open style units and are not secured in individual cells, the inmates must be mustered into the residential unit.

The availability of daylight may impact on security. As a general guide, the recommended hours for inmates to be locked in their cell, dormitory unit or accommodation area are as follows:

- from 1 November to 31 March, with the exception of Rapid Build Prisons, the latest time that inmates are to be mustered and locked in their accommodation area is 7.00pm.
- from 1 April to 31 October, with the exception of Rapid Build Prisons, the latest time that inmates are to be mustered and locked in their accommodation area is 5.00pm.
- in Rapid Build Prisons, the latest time that inmates are to be mustered and locked in their accommodation area is 9.00pm.

Operational activities may require the lock-in of inmates outside the recommended times. In this case, a timetable must be created and endorsed by the Governor or authorised officer identifying let-go and lock-in times. Deviation from times identified in

the timetable will need to be reported via the *Incident Reporting Module* available in Offender Integrated Management System (OIMS).

When checking the Cell Card against the Muster Book, if an inmate is identified as requiring two-out cell placement, the officer must ensure the two-out placement is not lapsed (**refer to COPP section 5.2 Inmate accommodation**). In all circumstances where an inmate is subject to a notification for two-out cell placement, they must never be left alone in a cell.

4.2 Procedures for lock-in (non-dormitory style units)

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Muster inmates prior to lock-in according to timetables.	OIC Accommodation
2.	Be observant for any signs that they may be in distress.	OIC Accommodation
3.	Check any Health Problem Notification Form (HPNF) against the Muster Book and cell card, ensuring inmates requiring two-out or group cell placement are not locked in cell alone.	OIC Accommodation
4.	Make alternative cell placement arrangements when the cell-mate of an inmate requiring two-out or group cell placement is absent from the location.	OIC Accommodation
5.	Match the Cell Card(s) against the muster book to ensure the identity and number of inmate(s) recorded is the same, after the inmates are secured in the cell.	OIC Accommodation
6.	Double-check the locking mechanisms that secure the cells and accommodation areas. This must be done by an officer independent of the lock-in process.	OIC Accommodation
7.	Record in the <i>Accommodation Journal</i> the identity of every staff member assisting in the Lock-in of inmates.	OIC Accommodation
8.	Ensure that a written record is made in the <i>Accommodation Journal</i> of the staff member who closed or assisted in the closing of every cell.	FM

4.3 Procedures for lock-in (dormitory-style units)

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Muster inmates prior to lock-in.	OIC Accommodation
2.	Be observant for any signs that they may be in distress.	OIC Accommodation
3.	Lock-in will be achieved when all inmates are secured in their accommodation area.	OIC Accommodation

	Procedure	Responsibility
4.	Double-check the locking mechanisms that secure the accommodation area. This must be done by an officer independent of the lock-in process.	OIC Accommodation
5.	Record in the <i>Accommodation Journal</i> the identity of every staff member assisting in the Lock-in of inmates.	OIC Accommodation
6.	Ensure that a written record is made in the <i>Accommodation Journal</i> of the staff member who closed or assisted in the closing of the dormitory.	FM

5 911 tool

5.1 Policy

The 911 tool is a cutting implement that can safely cut through any material that may be causing harm to an inmate (such as in the case of a hanging). All custodial staff whose duties involve contact with inmates must be issued with and carry this tool at all times for the duration of their shift.

Additional 911 tools must be stored in places accessible to correctional officers in inmate accommodation areas and police/court cell complexes.

CESU transport staff are responsible for inspecting the handcuff kits for 911 tools prior to escort. The escorting officers are responsible for the 911 tools during the course of their shift. The OIC is to ensure all 911 tools are returned and accounted for prior to the cessation of all shifts.

5.2 Procedures

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Implement a Local Operating Procedure (LOPs) to assign responsibilities and create procedures for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the issuing of 911 tools to relevant officers at the start of each shift the return of 911 tools at the end of each shift. 	Governor or General Manager
2.	Ensure that every custodial officer on duty during the shift is issued with and wears the 911 tool for the duration of their shift.	FM, Night senior or OIC police/court cell complex
3.	Ensure that 911 tools (additional to those worn by custodial officers) are supplied:	Governor or General Manager OIC CESU Transport Unit

	Procedure	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for use by JH&FMHN staff • for storage in a place accessible to officers in each accommodation area or police/court cell complex • to every vehicle used for the purpose of escorting inmates • in CESU handcuff kits issued to escorting officers. 	

6 Quick links

- [Related COPP](#)
- [Forms and annexures](#)
- [Related documents](#)

7 Definitions

ACC	Assistant Commissioner, Custody
Authorised officer	The officer authorised by the Governor to perform the functions set out in this part of the Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures Manual.
Cell	A room, cubicle, or other place that is assigned to an inmate as accommodation
Cell mate	Any other inmate sharing the same cell or accommodation area
CESU	Court Escort Security Unit
COPP	Custodial Operations Policy & Procedures
CSNSW	Corrective Services NSW
Dormitory unit	Dormitory units house multiple inmates in an open space environment with direct access to communal areas. Each inmate housed in a dormitory unit has access to a cubicle for sleeping and property storage
FM	Functional Manager
HPNF	Health Problem Notification Form
JH&FMHN	Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network
Let-go	The release of inmates from their identified housing location, usually at the start of their structured day
Lock-in	The procedures adopted to secure all inmates in their identified housing locations, usually at the end of their structured day
MIN	Master Index Number
Muster	A time when all inmates in a correctional centre, wing, workshop or other location are called to a specific place for the purpose of identification and head-count
Muster Book	A book contains individual images, names and MIN of all inmates located in a designated area. The image will be used to confirm the identity of an inmate
OIC	Officer in Charge
OIMS	Offender Integrated Management System
911 Tool	A cutting implement that can safely cut through any material that may be causing harm to an inmate (such as in the case of a hanging)

8 Document information

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1.0		Initial publication (<i>Replaces section 12.1.9 of the superseded Operations Procedures Manual</i>)
1.1	12/03/20	General formatting update and improvements
1.2	09/12/22	Addition of sub-section 3 Clearing of accommodation area Refer to Deputy Commissioner Memo 2022/04
1.3	18/08/23	Update in line with CSNSW restructure: renaming of Assistant Commissioner Custodial Corrections (ACCC) to Assistant Commissioner, Custody (ACC).
