

# Torture prevention watchdogs report on ongoing issues in detention, reiterate call for full OPCAT implementation

The Australian National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), a collective group of torture prevention monitors, has published its second Annual Report, for the period 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024.

The 2023-2024 Annual Report again focuses on serious and ongoing issues in detention across Australia.

Statement attributable to Iain Anderson, Commonwealth Ombudsman and Coordinator of the Australian NPM:

*“The overly punitive state of youth justice, the over-incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, population pressures in prisons and youth detention, and the over-use of isolation practices, remain serious and enduring problems across the country. Mistreating people in detention does not make the community safer.”*

Despite the serious issues seen in detention environments across Australia, Australian governments have not fully implemented the *Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (OPCAT): NSW, Victoria and Queensland are not members of the Australian NPM, which is also not properly resourced or legislated to meet its full mandate.

Nicole Hogg, the Secretary General of the Association for the Prevention of Torture, one of the world’s leading torture prevention NGOs, highlights the opportunity for Australia to be a regional leader on OPCAT:

*“As one of the few established NPMs in the region and one of the few multiple body NPMs in federal states around the world, Australia has the potential to inspire and support others in their journeys to establish and strengthen NPMs.”*

The Australian NPM is a collective of torture prevention monitors established under a key international human rights treaty, OPCAT. Its mandate is to regularly visit places of detention and make recommendations towards preventing torture and other ill treatment.

The Annual Report is available via the Commonwealth Ombudsman website [here](#). For further enquiries please contact us at [media@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:media@ombudsman.gov.au).