

# Media Release

**The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP**

Minister for Crime Prevention

Minister for Corrections

Minister for Youth Justice

Minister for Victim Support



Wednesday, 10 February 2021

## PRISON EXPANSION TO BOOST CAPACITY AND CREATE JOBS

The Andrews Labor Government is investing extra beds and upgrades to build a more secure prison system that keeps the community safe, as well as delivering thousands of local jobs.

Work is set to start on a major construction project in Lara, with a \$134 million contract signed to expand the capacity of Barwon Prison by 196 beds.

The project is expected to create 140 jobs during construction, with targeted investment in local employment, social enterprises and jobs for disadvantaged Victorians as part of the government's contract with construction firm Hansen Yuncken.

The new maximum-security beds are expected to be operational in 2022, enabling the prison to accommodate up to 706 prisoners in total.

As well as the cell accommodation blocks, a visitor centre, light industries building and men's shed will be constructed at Barwon. The existing programs and medical building will also be expanded and refurbished, and internal fencing will be built.

The expansion is part of the government's \$1.8 billion investment in the *Victorian Budget 2019/20* to provide flexible prison capacity, deliver programs to break the cycle of reoffending and keep people out of prison.

Barwon Prison is part of a \$798 million program to expand the capacity of five Victorian prisons, generating local jobs and economic activity across four regions:

- Lara (Barwon Prison and Marngoneet Correctional Centre)
- Castlemaine (Middleton Prison)
- Ararat (Hopkins Correctional Centre)
- Ravenhall (Metropolitan Remand Centre).

A further 20 jobs are being created in the Melbourne suburb of Campbellfield, with work starting in recent weeks on plumbing, electrical, furniture and fixtures for 460 prefabricated cells for the five Victorian prison sites.

Construction across the five sites is expected to be completed in 2023.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Corrections Natalie Hutchins

*"We are investing in key infrastructure to keep staff and the community safe, as well as boosting prison programs and investing in education and skill development."*

*"This is one of five sites that are being upgraded, creating local jobs in Lara, Castlemaine, Ararat and Melbourne's west."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Lara John Eren

*"As well as ensuring Barwon Prison continue to be safe and secure, this project is delivering a great boost to our local economy by creating 140 jobs during construction."*

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