

# World first: computers in prison cells with phones

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We are proud to announce a [world first](#). Computer tablets are now available to NSW maximum security prisoners in their cells, with access to rehabilitation services and education providers, as well as telephone contact with their families.

ABC Radio National interviewed Corrective Services Commissioner Peter Severin and a family member. Online story: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-11-21/tablet-computers-to-prisoners-during-covid-19/12895870> Radio story on PM: <https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/pm/prison-ipad/12906248>

“COVID-19 has dramatically disconnected us from each other. But for those held in prison cells it has enabled vital connections. For the last eight months visits to NSW prisons have been banned and been **replaced by video visits using 430 computer tablets**. This experience has led to good general **acceptance by staff in correctional centres**. This **breakthrough** now allows rehabilitation services to be delivered into cells, including access to white-listed secure internet sites. This is consistent with the Government’s aim to reduce recidivism” said the Hon John Dowd AO QC, President of the Community Justice Coalition.

“The overwhelming success was to enable **70,204 family visits** up to August. Twenty percent of video ‘visitors’ were from interstate or overseas, people who would normally not be able to visit inmates. All prisoners in Dillwynia Women’s, John Morony and Clarence Correctional Centres have computer tablets in their cells. A mother told us she had been unable to speak with her daughter as school began and ended whilst the mother was in her cell. Now they support each other daily. Lessening the isolation through this technology is for the benefit of the whole community. In this time of COVID everybody knows how important this kind of contact is” said the Hon Elizabeth Evatt AC, former Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia.

“As well as having telephony capacity, the **tablets will have access to digital mental health services**. This flags the beginning of services that will support prisoners experiencing disorders exacerbating drug use and violence. Computers in cells have proven to have positive outcomes in other jurisdictions in reducing the reoffending rate. It is also a real opportunity to implement new education strategies and introduce **behavioural change** material. This is a new era for NSW prisons by taking an inclusive approach to rehabilitation and lessening the number of **victims** in our society” said Ken Marslew, CEO Founder, *Enough is Enough Anti Violence Movement Inc.*

Interview with former Chief Justice Elizabeth Evatt December 2, 2020

<https://www.sydneycriminallawyers.com.au/blog/computers-in-nsw-prison-cells-an-interview-with-former-family-court-chief-justice-elizabeth-evatt/>

GTL and Telstra are the technology providers.

<https://www.gtl.net/correctional-facility-services/communication-solutions/video-visitation/>