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## Shining new light on Indigenous deaths in jail

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EVERY Aboriginal death in custody inside NSW prisons over the past decade will be reviewed as part of a new prisons inquiry.

Indigenous inmates accounted for 13.6 per cent of all deaths in custody between 2008 and 2018, according to the NSW State Coroner. The recent Black Lives Matter movement helped shine a light on the over-representation of indigenous Australians in the justice system and intensified calls for this to change.

In response, Corrective Services NSW in May set up the Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Thematic Review to look at the circumstances of deaths in prison custody since 2010.

“The thematic review will synthesise its findings and develop key recommendations for action that aim to improve the experience of Aboriginal men and women in custody,” a CSNSW

spokesman said. “Themes and lessons will also be generated where relevant from the deaths of non-Aboriginal offenders.”

Deputy Commissioner Luke Grant is leading the review with Professor James Ward, from the University of Queensland Poche Centre for Indigenous Health, as chair.

It comes after a parliamentary inquiry earlier this year called for sweeping change to tackle the high rates of indigenous

Australians in the criminal justice system.

The inquiry’s findings were handed down on the 30th anniversary of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody.

The Royal Commission handed down more than 360 recommendations, some of which still haven’t been implemented decades later.

Since then 455 Indigenous people have died in police and prison custody across Australia.



**Leetona Dungay lost her son David.**



**Caroline Andersen's lost son Wayne.**