

Scanners to reduce searches

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THREE new airport-quality scanners will be introduced at a youth justice facility to reduce the need for invasive searches.

The new scanners will be rolled out and operational at the Kurlana Tapa Youth Justice Centre in Cavan by the end of the week.

Human Services Minister Michelle Lensink said the scanners were introduced to improve the "dignity" of young people at the centre by reducing the need for semi-clothed searches.

Last year, the Human Services Department conducted more than 830 strip searches of youth prisoners in a nine-month period. The scanners are expected to reduce that number and improve on a practice that was labelled by Training Centre Visitor Penny Wright as "humiliating". Ms Wright welcomed the scanners and said they would go a long way to alleviating the need for embarrassing and invasive searches.

The devices, which are similar to those used at Adelaide Airport, will detect concealed items underneath and inside clothing, including metallic and non-metallic weapons, narcotics and liquids.