

Bond just visiting, no promises made

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Dharm Makwana

B.C. Solicitor General Shirley Bond is committed to visiting the province's correctional centres – but her promises stop there.

That sole guarantee came on the heels of a B.C. Government Employees' Union demand made earlier this week that guards working in inmate living quarters be armed with pepper spray.

"The safety of our corrections team is incredibly important to us," she said.

Bond, however, added balance must be considered when deciding how to safely operate facilities and address capacity issues raised by the BCGEU.

She pointed to the addition of 104 maximum security cells at Alouette Correctional Centre for Women, which can house up to 208 inmates, as just one example of the province's plan to increase capacity and in turn decrease tension between inmates and guards.

"We've got the most aggressive capital plan in terms of infrastructure related to corrections in the history of the province."