

INFRASTRUCTURE

PRISONS

REDEVELOPMENT

PROGRAM



Tasmania

INFORMATION SHEET 8
November 2004

Building stage commenced on site

The building stage (Stage 2) of the project has now commenced on the site. In April this year early site works commenced for the new Men's and Women's Prisons and the Secure Mental Health Unit (all to be located at the existing prison site at Risdon Vale). This involved excavating a substantial amount of rock and soil and the construction of building platforms. Excavation materials have been used to construct 'mounds' for landscaping and screening. These 'mounds' will be planted with vegetation. Further topsoil excavation is currently being undertaken.

Building completion dates

The first facility to be completed will be the Secure Mental Health Unit in late 2005. Over the coming months the floor slabs will be laid for the Secure Mental Health Unit and the 'in-ground' work will be undertaken. Construction of the Women's Prison will be finished in early 2006, followed by the new maximum/medium security Men's Prison by mid-2006.

There will be a short commissioning period after building completion before facilities will be fully operational.

The new buildings

Many of the prison buildings will be single storey, including the Visitor Reception, Correctional Health Centre, Education and Workshop buildings. A number of the prisoner accommodation blocks, however, will be double storey.

The secure prison facilities will be built from a mix of reinforced concrete, pre-cast concrete panels and reinforced block work. Other parts of the complex

which do not need to be as secure will have a more 'residential' appearance.

The colour of the new concrete prison buildings will be natural grey. The Secure Mental Health Unit will have colour in the brickwork and a coloured Colorbond fence. The roofs of the new facilities will be silver Zinalume. The existing Women's Prison buildings will retain the green roof.

Cottages relocated

Four cottages previously located beside the prison entrance road from East Derwent Highway have now been relocated to the southern side of the existing Men's Prison. The cottages have been substantially renovated and refitted to allow them to be used for Offender Services staff and to create a new training facility for staff. Each cottage has been joined to another, forming two larger buildings from the existing four cottages.

Site offices

The main site office for construction contractors is now in place on the left hand side of the entrance road where cottages were previously located. Additional site offices are also located at the Secure Mental Health Unit building site.

New footpath from the East Derwent Highway

A footpath has been constructed between the bus stop on East Derwent Highway and the existing Men's Prison to enable pedestrians to access the site without having to walk up the road. This is important given the increase in heavy construction-related traffic on the site.

Below: Early (inset) and more recent photographs of construction works.



New prisoner workshop for laundry

The new workshop facility within the maximum/medium security Men's Prison, being built as part of this stage of the Prisons Infrastructure Redevelopment Program, will be fitted out to operate as a commercial laundry. Other existing workshops within the old prison building will remain and be operated by minimum security prisoners in the future.

Building models on display

Models of the new prisons and Secure Mental Health facilities have been constructed to enable those with an interest in the project to see how the new buildings will look when completed. These were unveiled at the Risdon Vale Neighbourhood Centre by the Minister for Justice, the Hon. Judy Jackson MHA, on Friday 23 July. The models remained at the Centre for the day for public viewing. Quite a number of local residents took the opportunity to visit the centre, look at the models and talk to members of the project team.

The models were also displayed at the Agricultural Shows in Launceston, Hobart and Burnie this year. They will be used for staff training and information purposes over the coming months.

Investigation into the feasibility of a new walkway along Grass Tree Hill Rivulet

Preliminary work has been done by the Risdon Vale Neighbourhood Centre to investigate whether it will be feasible to extend the new public access walkway along the edge of the Grass Tree Hill Road. If achieved this project would allow greater pedestrian access from Risdon Vale to the Risdon Brook Dam, the Tavern and the prison entrance. It may eventually link up with the 'Bike Track' across the Bowen Bridge. The Risdon Vale community is liaising with the Prison Service, PIRP and the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources to assess the viability of the walkway project. Prisoners have already been working with the community on tree planting along the upper stretches of the Rivulet, in connection with the walkway.

Landscaping

Stream rehabilitation and the planting of about 10,000 trees and shrubs around the perimeter of the prison site has been in progress for over two years. The plantings will provide future screening of the facilities, improve the overall amenity of the area and soften the impact of early site works excavations. The bushland species are growing well and many positive comments have been received from local residents about the tree-planting project.

Greening Australia has the contract for this work and a number of local residents have participated in the project along with prisoners.

Growing seedlings at the Women's Prison

As one element of the perimeter planting and rehabilitation project, seeds have been collected from the old trees on the prison site. Inmates at the Women's Prison have been using this seed to grow seedlings to supplement the perimeter work and provide replacements for plants that have died. Over 1,000 seedlings have been grown and some of these are now over a metre high.



Social history of imprisonment at Risdon Prison

The social history project, undertaken by Dr Caroline Evans and funded as part of the Bicentenary celebrations, has now been completed. The project is being published as a booklet titled *A "Pink Palace"?: Risdon Prison 1960-2004*. It looks at the history of imprisonment at Risdon in the context of Tasmania's penal history. People with an interest in the history can find out about it by contacting the Prisons Infrastructure Redevelopment Program (see contact details listed below).

Development of names for the new facilities

Over the coming year or so names will be given to the new prison facilities. The Department of Health and Human Services is also considering a suitable name for the Secure Mental Health Unit.

Incorporation of prisoner artwork in the new facility

The artwork for the new facilities is the responsibility of the Department of Tourism, Parks, Heritage and the Arts (through the arts@work program). A number of options are being considered, in consultation with the Prison Service and Correctional Health, including the possibility of using some of the artwork produced by prisoners.

For further information about the Prisons Infrastructure Redevelopment Program contact the PIRP Office on (03) 6233 4758, or email pirp@justice.tas.gov.au



Right: Minister for Justice, the Hon. Judy Jackson MHA unveils the models of the new prisons and Secure Mental Health facilities (above).



Prison Service update

The Organisation Development [OD] Program defines the approach to be taken by the Tasmanian Prison Service over the next two years to ensure specific planning to improve organisational performance and a smooth transition to the new and redeveloped facilities.

A number of specific projects are well underway in relation to the following:

- an industrial relations strategy;
- new custodial operating models;
- a human resource strategy;
- a communication plan; and
- a transition planning process.

Industrial relations project

The Industrial Relations project involves a review of the current industrial relations environment of the Prison Service to determine the type of award structures required for the future, appropriate communication methods with employee representatives and protocols to support a positive workplace environment.

A Joint Consultative Committee representing the Community & Public Sector Union and the Tasmanian Custodial Officers Association has been established to maintain ongoing consultation.

Custodial operating model

This project will develop specific custodial operating models for all inmate facilities including both the Men's and Women's Prison.

The planning process and endorsed models will encompass security, use of new technology, inmate management principles, inmate employment, education and programs, accommodation, staffing requirements and provision of essential services.

A series of workshops with Prison Service staff has identified some of the key elements of the operating models.

The information gathered throughout these workshops is now being collated and developed for wider consultation with stakeholders.

Human resource strategy

A Human Resource Strategic Plan has been developed and submitted to the Prison Service Senior Management Team.

The Plan has identified 10 critical success factors and outlined short and long-term objectives, strategies and initiatives for each. Work has commenced on developing action plans that will implement the objectives, strategies and initiatives identified in the HR Strategy.

Communication plan

This project involves reviewing the current communication processes of the Prison Service to determine the most appropriate information flow to internal and external stakeholders and protocols required to improve communication processes in the future.

A staff survey was undertaken in March 2004, with 48% of all Prison Service employees responding to the questionnaire. The results of the survey have been released and the information from staff has provided valuable input to the OD Program planning process.

This year the Prison Service was the focus of the Department of Justice stand at the Agricultural Shows in Burnie, Launceston and Hobart. Both custodial and non-custodial staff volunteered to take part in this initiative. A free competition was held at all shows and the prizes were products manufactured by inmates in the woodworking industry of the Prison Service.

Transition plan

The Transition Plan will support the move to the new and redeveloped prison facilities by managing decommissioning

Organisation Development Personnel

There have recently been some staff changes with the OD Program. The team is now as follows:

Ginna Webster	Program Manager
Gary Hanch	Principal Consultant
Rob McCafferty	Project Manager, Transitional Planning
Evelyn Robertson	Project Officer
Cathryn White	Executive Assistant
Andrea Davie	Project Manager, Communication Plan
Nigel McCulloch	Project Manager, Industrial Relations Strategy

(Andrea and Nigel are working part-time on the project in addition to their normal duties.)

processes, developing commissioning plans, focussing on functionality and security of the prison during the building phase and implementing the endorsed custodial operating models for all facilities.

This project also includes recruitment, training and deployment of staff, preparing inmates for the move and ensuring legislation and associated protocols have been amended or developed.

The position of Project Manager was recently taken up by Rob McCafferty.

For further information about the Organisation Development Program, contact: Ginna Webster, Phone: (03) 6216 8187, or email ginna.webster@justice.tas.gov.au



Tasmania

DEPARTMENT of
HEALTH and
HUMAN SERVICES

Department of Health and Human Services

The new Secure Mental Health Unit (SMHU) and the new Correctional Health Centre will be managed by the Department of Health and Human Services. Both these facilities will be located at the Risdon Prison site.

The Secure Mental Health Unit

The 35 bed Secure Mental Health Unit (SMHU) is being built at the southern end of the Risdon site (on the hill). It will be located away from the prison facilities and have its own access road. There will be three sections within the SMHU: a 12 bed high dependency unit; an 18 bed extended care unit; and, a 5 bed semi-independent living unit.

Construction work has begun on the SMHU and it will be the first of all the new facilities at the Risdon Prison site to be completed and operational.

The Correctional Health Centre

The Correctional Health Centre will be located in the new Men's Maximum/Medium Prison. It will include six beds for inpatient treatment and provide outpatient and outreach health services for male and female prisoners. Services will include nursing, medical, dental, physiotherapy, podiatry and a range of other primary health services. Outreach services will be provided to the Women's Prison, Hayes Prison Farm and remand centres.

The Correctional Health Services Renewal Project Team

The role of the Correctional Health Renewal Team is to develop, and implement, the protocols and procedures involved in establishing the two new correctional health facilities. John Alderdice has recently taken on the position of Project Manager. The Project Team will also shortly expand from the current five members to eight, with the addition of three new staff members planned. These positions have been advertised.

The Team has moved into a larger office in the Wingfield Building at St Johns Park.

The Operational Model

A major focus for the Renewal Project Team has been the development of an operational model for the Correctional Health Centre and SMHU. This process includes the development of details on staffing structures, staffing mix, rosters, therapeutic programs and day-to-day operations. The development of the operational model is near completion and it is expected that this phase will be endorsed by the Renewal Project Steering Committee towards the end of this year. An extensive consultation phase will then be undertaken before the operational model is finalised and implementation plans developed.

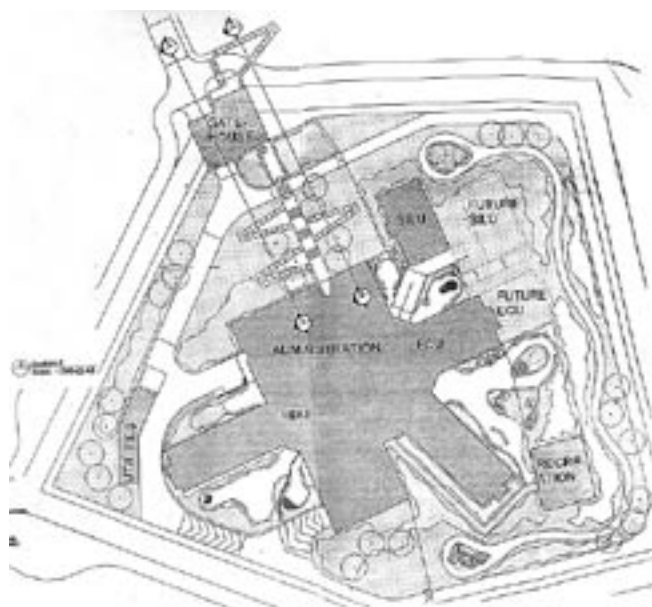
Recruitment of Staff for the SMHU

It is envisaged that more than 50 additional nursing staff will be required for the new SMHU. The number of local experienced mental health nurses will not be enough to meet this need. The Department of Health and Human Services will be engaging an external recruitment agency to undertake a worldwide recruitment drive to ensure that the unit is staffed by qualified professionals. A request for tender (RFT) process has commenced in order to select a suitably qualified and resourced recruitment agency. The recruitment agency will work closely with the Renewal Project Team to attract and recruit nursing staff from interstate and overseas.

Provision of Security Services at SMHU

A tender document outlining the services to be provided by a private security firm in the provision of perimeter security for the SMHU is currently being prepared. It is anticipated that the tender process will commence by the end of the year with selection and engagement of the private provider in early 2005.

The provision of other internal security/emergency items such as movement sensors, door alarms, staff duress alarms, pagers, two-way radios and emergency response co-ordination is currently under consideration. The initial part of this process involves the preparation of draft policies and procedures that outline operational imperatives along with the use of technology to maintain a safe and secure environment.



For further information about the Correctional Health Centre And Secure Mental Health Unit contact:
John Alderdice, Project Manger,
Correctional Health Services Renewal Project Team, (03) 62307800, or email john.alderdice@dhhs.tas.gov.au