

Tasmania Department
of Justice

Review of the
Community Service
Order scheme

Final Report

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Executive summary

Tasmania Community Corrections provides advice to courts and the Parole Board to inform sentencing decisions and manages and supports offenders on community based probation, parole and community service orders. The mission of Community Corrections encompasses the dual purpose of offender rehabilitation and upholding community safety and is articulated in a commitment to work “*with offenders on community based orders in ways which aim to reduce re-offending and contribute to a safer society.*”

In 2008, the Community Corrections Directorate Commissioned a review of the Community Service Order (CSO) scheme, as part of a wider review being undertaken by the Directorate into the structure and operations of Community Corrections more broadly.

The CSO scheme review has been a priority of the Department of Justice, following a number of complexities, issues and risks that have arisen in relation to the program’s operations and have been subject of focus of a Performance Audit conducted by the Auditor General¹. The issues that have been highlighted include, but are not limited to, issues relating to recruitment and suitability of project sites and the nature of supervision of offenders on CSOs.

The objective of the CSO scheme review was to consider options on an appropriate model of delivery that takes into account regional issues and variations in the demand and uptake of CSOs. In particular, the review examined and made recommendations regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the scheme, with a focus on consistency, appropriateness of project sites and on overall quality and risk management.

The review used an approach that includes a desktop review and consultations with a wide range of Community Corrections and external stakeholders to identify challenges and areas for improvement with the current CSO scheme. This report is supplemented by and should be read in conjunction with the *Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report* and the *Implementation plan for Community Corrections and the CSO scheme*.

Case for change

Key findings emerged from the analysis of consultation findings and form the basis of recommended improvements to the CSO scheme:

- assessment of an offender for a CSO is limited, does not consider risk of reoffending and may lead to missed information about risk and suitability for a CSO;
- current organisational arrangements for delivering CSOs in the North and North West contribute to professional isolation and a view that managing CSOs is “easy”, deskilling and results in poor motivation;

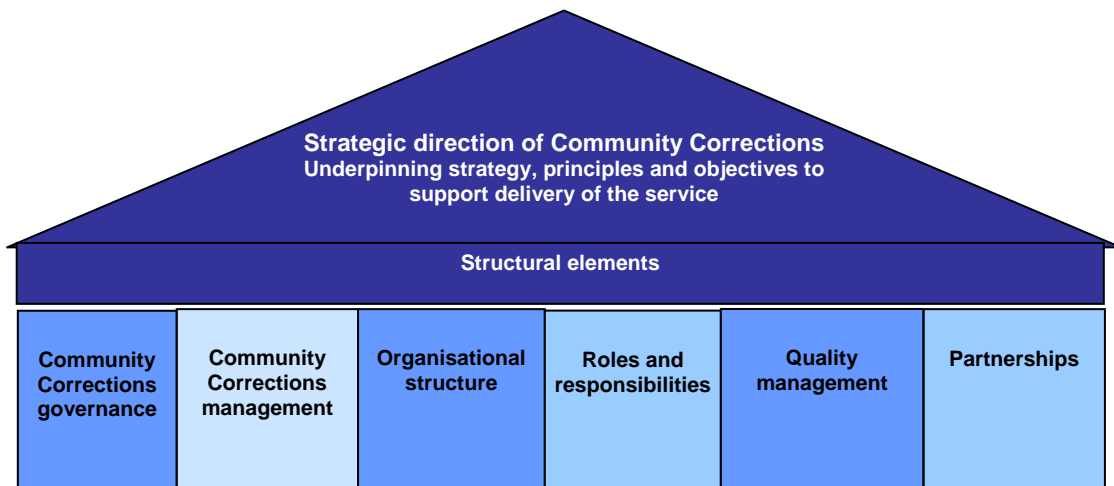
¹ The Auditor General’s report was originally conducted in 2002 and was followed up in 2007.

- CSOs are seen as “risky” and there are concerns over the current supervision of CSO offenders while on project sites and a lack of consistency in deducting hours for work done;
- there is a perception that individual/ pensioner sites are inappropriate, that a number of them are unsuitable and that there is difficulty in securing appropriate bulk sites;
- support for CSO supervisors is limited and there is a perception that CSO supervisors are poorly equipped to deal with the client group, are at times unable to set appropriate boundaries with offenders and are not consistent in reporting inappropriate behaviour;
- breaching of CSOs is inconsistent and untimely, with some offenders having more “strikes” before being breached; and
- there is limited focus on considering educational and other programs as part of a CSO.

Proposed improvements to the CSO scheme

The review recommends a number of opportunities for improvements to the current CSO scheme. These recommendations are in line with those for the Tasmania Community Corrections model as a whole but provide further focus and specific consideration of the CSO scheme as a unique program area. Recommendations for the CSO scheme are discussed in the context of the wider Community Corrections improvements, as outlined in *Figure A*, below.

Figure A: Elements of recommended Community Corrections model



Areas of recommended improvement to the CSO scheme are summarised against the elements for an improved Community Corrections model in the following table, *Table A*.

Table A: Improvements for the CSO scheme under the recommended model for Tasmania Community Corrections

Elements of the model	Description	Additional information
1 Strategic Direction	As with the wider Community Corrections model, it is important that there is clarity regarding the strategic directions of the CSO scheme.	<p>The strategic directions are underpinned by the statement of purpose for the CSO scheme, legislative requirements and the principles for offender management in general and for managing offenders on CSOs specifically.</p> <p>The refreshed statement of purpose for the scheme expands on existing objectives and includes a stronger focus on managing ongoing safety of CSO offenders and the community, facilitating rehabilitation and providing support to encourage compliance with an order. Principles of managing offenders on CSOs should be based on those for managing all community based offenders and should include a whole person approach, a focus on completing an order and partnership working.</p> <p>Overall, recommendations for improvements to the strategic direction of the CSO scheme provide a stronger emphasis on the importance of managing and supervising offenders on a CSO in a way that is appropriate to their level of risk and facilitates them to complete an order appropriately.</p>
2 Community Corrections governance	Strong governance is essential to deliver all aspects of a safe, effective and efficient community corrections service, including the CSO scheme.	The Directorate of Community Corrections and the Department of Justice will be responsible for leadership and strategic direction, policy and program development, workforce strategy, managing funding and submitting future applications, and quality management. Regional operational teams have responsibility for staff management, assurance of operational quality, data collection and reporting, implementation of continuous improvement initiatives and networking and forming partnerships. This recommended approach to Community Corrections governance incorporates governance for the CSO scheme.
3 Community Corrections	To deliver effective responses to offenders on a CSO it is	Under the CSO model, principles of offender management, including management, supervision and administration, should apply equally to CSO offenders. This will address

Elements of the model	Description	Additional information
management	important to have clarity regarding management, supervision and administration functions, including recruitment and management of CSO project sites	<p>current concerns about the suitability of offenders to undertake CSOs and will enable offender managers to provide better support to the offender to manage risk and ensure compliance with an order.</p> <p>In practice, as the focus of the CSO is more on ‘compliance’, rather than rehabilitation, the intensity of management and supervision for CSOs will be less than for other orders. However, CSO offenders should be assessed against suitability criteria and the assessment include a brief screening that also indicates the level of risk of reoffending. Supervision of CSO offenders should include proactive and tailored support for an offender who is non-compliant, if appropriate.</p> <p>Management and administration of CSO project sites is identified as a discrete task that requires a different set of skills and competence. It involves conducting focused and targeted recruitment of sites to increase the availability and type of CSO project sites in the state, against requirements and guidelines to ensure the sites are suitable. A central project site database is important to manage information about available sites and places and to better match offenders to sites based on skills, location and availability.</p>
4 Organisational structure	Workforce arrangements will be modified for the CSO scheme to enable demand across the state to be responded to and to address some key challenges that have arisen with the scheme, related to the current operational arrangements.	<p>A Statewide CSO Unit will be introduced to manage and monitor CSO project sites. This will require a differentiation between tasks involved in managing CSO scheme sites and CSO offenders. The Unit will be based in the Rosny office in the South and will be responsible for recruiting and monitoring CSO project sites and for recruiting and screening paid CSO supervisors to ensure consistency across the state, against agreed standards.</p> <p>Offenders on CSOs will be managed by designated offender managers in the South, where there are larger numbers of offenders on CSOs. To recognise the distinct roles and responsibilities of CSO staff in the South, it is proposed that these positions are entitled Offender Manager – CSO (OM-CSO). All Offender Managers in the North and North</p>

Elements of the model	Description	Additional information
		<p>West should conduct tasks relating to management of offenders on CSOs. This is in contrast to current practice, in which only designated staff have responsibility for the scheme.</p> <p>Paid CSO supervisors are considered part of the professional response to supervising CSOs and are expected to provide appropriate supervision to offenders on project sites. They should be provided with support and professional development opportunities commensurate with this expectation.</p>
5 Roles and responsibilities	For the CSO scheme to be run safely and efficiently it is important that roles and responsibilities of staff and supervisors are articulated and understood by all staff.	<p>Under improvements to the scheme, it is proposed that <i>management of offenders</i> on a CSO (incorporating management, supervision and administration) will be undertaken by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Leaders; • Offender Managers (OMs) in the North and North West; • Offender Manager- CSOs (OM-CSOs) in the South; • Administration Officers; and • volunteer and paid CSO supervisors. <p>Offender Managers will undertake tasks that require knowledge and skills in offender management, such as assessment, investigating and addressing non compliance and providing support where necessary. Administration Officers will undertake other tasks. Paid and volunteer supervisors play an important role in providing day to day supervision of an offenders and are required to form appropriate relationships, set boundaries and monitor compliance in line with the CSO scheme guidelines.</p> <p>As for other community based orders, Team Leaders will conduct overall reviews and will vet decisions relating to CSO offenders. Team Leaders will also provide professional</p>

Elements of the model	Description	Additional information
		supervision for paid CSO supervisors. It is proposed that <i>management of CSO project sites</i> will be undertaken by staff located in the Statewide CSO Unit.
6 Quality management	Improvements to the CSO scheme must be underpinned by strong accountability and sound guidelines and procedures to minimise any risk related to the scheme. As with the wider Community Corrections model, quality management for the CSO scheme is closely linked to risk management.	<p>Quality assurance and accountability for the CSO scheme will fall under the general quality assurance framework for the whole of Community Corrections. Within the framework, specific consideration should be given to monitoring, measuring and the continual improvement of the CSO scheme against a number of refreshed program and practice guidelines and key performance indicators.</p> <p>To lead to greater consistency and professional practice, practice guidelines must include standards, procedures and criteria for project sites and paid CSO supervisors and for addressing non-compliance with an order. To address existing challenges with the CSO scheme monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the scheme is particularly important to support improvements to be realised.</p> <p>Workforce development considerations for Community Corrections staff involved in the CSO scheme are the same as those for the wider organisation. However, specific consideration should be given to learning and development and professional supervision and support for paid CSO supervisors, in recognition of their important role in the supervision of offenders.</p>
7 Partnerships	Partnerships with external stakeholders are important to facilitate recruitment of appropriate CSO project sites and effective management of CSO offenders.	A key element of improvements to the CSO scheme is the expansion of the range, type and availability of CSO project sites, undertaken by the Statewide CSO Unit. This will require the Statewide CSO Unit to engage with and build partnerships with community based organisations, including government and non-government. Stronger relationships with these partners will facilitate recruitment and maintenance of CSO project sites and will provide a greater understanding of the requirements, parameters and challenges faced by the community organisations who assist with the provision of CSO project sites. Stronger partnerships are also important in effective risk management of offenders on a CSO so that

Elements of the model	Description	Additional information
		concerns and issues can be raised and responded to promptly.

1 Introduction

Community Corrections Tasmania manages offenders in the community on probation, parole and community service orders. Community Corrections forms part of the Department of Justice's Corrective Services Output Group, along with the Tasmania Prison Service (TPS).

In 2008, the Community Corrections Directorate commissioned a review of the Community Service Order (CSO) scheme, as part of a wider review being undertaken by the Directorate into the structure and operations of Community Corrections more broadly.

The CSO scheme review has been a priority of the Department of Justice for some time. This is due to a number of complexities, issues and risks that have arisen in relation to the program's operations and have been subject of focus of a Performance Audit conducted by the Auditor General². These issues that have been highlighted include, but are not limited to, issues relating to recruitment and suitability of project sites and the nature of supervision of offenders on CSOs.

Following the commencement of the CSO scheme review, it was subsequently decided that the external consultant would undertake components of a wider review of Community Corrections being undertaken concurrently by the Community Corrections Directorate. Both reviews were supported by previous work undertaken by the Department of Justice, including an 'as-is' report of the existing service system and a comparison of other community corrective services in other Australian jurisdictions.

1.1 Purpose of the review

The primary objectives of the Community Corrections and the CSO scheme reviews are complementary but have different, specific focuses.

The objective of the Community Corrections review was to 'ensure that the structure of Community Corrections allows it to respond to current demands and provides the flexibility to adapt to future demands, in terms of recruitment, retention of staff, changing models of practice and changes in the population of offenders on community based orders'. Building on work already completed by the Directorate, the review involves:

- making recommendations to develop and implement of a new model for Community Corrections;
- recommending the workforce and organisational structure across the State; and
- identifying any areas that may benefit from additional resources or focus in the future.

The objective of the CSO scheme review was to develop options and provide recommendations on an appropriate model of delivery that takes into account regional issues and variations. In particular, the review examined and made recommendations regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the scheme, with a focus on the following areas:

² The Auditor General's report was originally conducted in 2002 and was followed up in 2007.

- the consistency with which the scheme is delivered across Tasmania;
- whether the scheme is delivered in line with standards for quality and risk, and whether it meets Tasmanian Government and legislative requirements;
- what the aim of the scheme is and/or should be (e.g. rehabilitation, reparation);
- the availability and appropriateness of projects;
- the length of orders and time taken to complete them; and
- resourcing of the scheme, including human resource allocation.

Recommendations for change to the CSO scheme should be considered within the context of the recommendations for Community Corrections.

The review also includes the development of an implementation plan which will highlight next steps, activities, timeframes and change and risk management strategies required to implement changes and improvements resulting from the review. The implementation plan will be available as a separate report.

1.2 Review methodology

The approach to the review of the CSO scheme involved the following stages:

- desktop review of:
 - information provided by the Directorate on the current activities, workload allocations and operational structure of the CSO scheme;
 - documentation provided by the Directorate which describes current issues and challenges with the scheme;
 - the Sentencing Act and other key documentation to inform improvements to the scheme;
 - practice relating to community service orders or similar sentencing options in other jurisdictions;
- consultations with stakeholders;
- development and refinement of recommended improvements for the CSO scheme with the Project Steering Committee;
- modelling of the CSO scheme workforce requirements around the state;
- final reporting; and

- development of an implementation plan.

1.3 Documenting the review

For simplicity and to support the development of implementation and communication plans required to take recommendations forward, the process and output of the review is documented in five reports:

- the Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report;
- the Review of the Community Service Order scheme Report; and
- the Community Corrections and CSO scheme Implementation Plan.

1.4 Purpose of this report

This report presents the findings of each stage of the CSO scheme review and the recommendations for improvements. The findings and recommendations for a proposed model for the Community Corrections as a whole are included in the report, the *Review of Community Corrections Final Report*.

This report identifies specific areas for improvement relating to the CSO scheme and makes recommendations for improvement, aligned to wider changes in the Community Corrections model.

As a whole, this report presents a forward direction for the CSO scheme in Tasmania. The implementation plan, to be developed as part of this project, will provide further details on “how” the changes will be implemented (the activities required) and the timeframe for implementation.

1.5 Terminology

This report uses a number of terms that require further explanation, based on the context in which they are used.

The term ‘*offender management*’ refers to a whole range of activities undertaken to manage offenders in the community. This includes activities taken at a whole of service level, e.g. ‘Community Corrections is the organisation that provides offender management’, as well as at an individual level, e.g. ‘a member of Community Corrections staff is responsible for offender management of an individual’.

The report refers to a number of Community Corrections staff by title, including an Offender Manager and an Offender Manager- CSOs. These staff grades are responsible for the management of individual offenders on CSOs. However, Offender Manager- CSOs will only work with CSO offenders, while Offender Managers will work with offenders on all type of

community based orders. However, the phrase ‘*offender manager*³’ is a generic term used to refer to any member of Community Corrections staff who conduct offender management activities with an individual.

The word ‘*site*’ is used to refer to a CSO project site, where offenders on CSOs undertake unpaid work to complete their order. Depending on the context, the word refers to the physical location of the place of unpaid work (e.g. a bowling green), or the organisation which provides or manages the site (e.g. the ‘Eastside’ Bowling Green).

1.6 Structure of the report

The report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2:** This section provides an overview of the CSO scheme and the context for change.
- **Section 3:** This section provides an overview of consultation findings and presents a case for change for proposed improvements to the CSO scheme.
- **Section 4:** This section outlines the strategic directions for the CSO scheme.
- **Section 5:** This section describes the program management functions for the CSO scheme in terms of management and supervision of an offender and administration of an order.
- **Section 6:** This section describes the underpinning organisational structure for the proposed model and considers workforce structure and operational considerations.
- **Section 7:** This section describes the roles and responsibilities for CSO staff in managing CSO orders.
- **Section 8:** This section provides an outline for a quality management approach that incorporates a framework for quality assurance, ensuring continuous improvements and workforce management strategies.
- **Section 9:** This section identifies key stakeholders for the CSO scheme and considers how partnership arrangements may be established.
- **Section 10:** This section identifies next steps to be considered to take forward recommendations included in this report.

³ Uncapitalised.

2 Background of the CSO scheme and the context for change

The *Report on Existing Structure and Operations*⁴ (referred to as the ‘as-is’ report) prepared by the Department of Justice provides the context for Community Corrections in Tasmania and describes the way in which services are delivered, including the CSO scheme.

This section provides a very broad summary of the current context and operations of the CSO scheme in terms of the following headings.

- legislation;
- suitability assessments; and
- staff delivering CSOs (and difference between the regions) and their roles.

This section also summarises findings from the review consultations, which identified a number of strengths and areas for improvement relating to the CSO scheme.

2.1 Overview of the CSO scheme

CSOs require an offender to perform unpaid work or other activity in the community under the direction of a probation officer or supervisor. Part 4 of the *Sentencing Act 1997*⁵, describes a CSO as:

" an order of a court that the offender in respect of whom it is made must perform some work or other activity in the community under the direction of a probation officer or supervisor"

The Act also makes provision for a CSO to be conducted through attending *"an educational or other program in accordance with the directions of a probation officer"*⁶.

In accordance with statutory requirements, all probation officers may be required to manage offenders on all order types. However, in practice CSOs have evolved to be managed by nominated probation officers who rarely have other order types on their caseload.

Arrangements for managing CSOs have evolved slightly differently in each region. In the South, a CSOs Unit was established that is dedicated to the management of CSOs across the South. This Unit comprises probation officers and administration officers. In the North and North West, two probation officers are dedicated solely to management of CSOs in the larger regional hubs. These probation officers also undertake work relating to supervision, training and induction of offenders and CSO supervisors across their region. Probation officers in the North and North West who visit offenders in ‘country areas’ also undertake management of offenders on CSOs in those areas.

⁴ Received from Department of Justice, dated 18 October 2008.

⁵ Sourced from

http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p:cond=:doc_id=59%2B%2B1997%2BAT%40EN%2B2008092500000:hison=:prompt=:rec=-1:term= on 1st December 2008.

⁶ Sentencing Act 1997, Part 4, s.32

Unpaid work is generally unskilled, and can be conducted at individual sites, such as in the gardens of pensioners, or at group sites usually under the auspices of a non-government or community service organisation. A number of group sites provide supervision of the offender while on the project sites, either through paid staff or through other volunteers. At sites where no supervisor is provided, paid casual CSO supervisors, recruited by Community Corrections, supervise offenders. All supervisors, volunteer or paid, provide day to day supervision of work undertaken by offenders on CSO project sites. They are responsible for ensuring the offender complies with the terms of the order while at the site and completes allocated work appropriately, and for reporting back to offender managers on compliance.

2.2 Consultation findings

Consultations with stakeholders identified strengths and areas for improvement related to the current CSO scheme, as summarised below.

2.3 Strengths of the current model

A number of strengths were identified with the CSO scheme including:

- the creation of the CSO unit in the South to respond to a high demand. This has had positive outcomes with more appropriate supervision of offenders on CSOs and has also led to stronger relationships with CSO project sites; and
- stronger recognition of the scheme in the community, particularly among pensioners. This means that there are frequent requests from individuals seeking to offer unpaid work opportunities to the scheme.

2.4 Areas for improvement

Consultations with stakeholders identified a number of potential areas for improvement. These are summarised below:

CSO philosophy: Many jurisdictions consider CSOs to be an opportunity for both reparation, through unpaid work, and rehabilitation, through attendance at educational or other programs. The Tasmanian Legislation allows for this interpretation of the purpose of CSOs. However, the review found that CSO scheme focuses mainly on ensuring compliance with unpaid work. This is reflected in the fact that placements are mainly for unskilled work that do not necessarily provide capacity to build the skills, confidence and motivation of offenders. There are few examples where a CSO includes literacy and education programs.

CSO work structure: Under the current structure, a number of designated probation officers have responsibility for managing most of the CSO scheme. The scheme is generally not viewed as an attractive area of staff responsibility and was seen by staff to be an “easy job” and to create a degree of professional isolation. Restricting a probation officer to delivering only CSOs can lead to deskilling and low motivation of staff, as tasks relating to CSOs are narrower than

the broad spectrum of responding to offenders. In smaller offices, having discrete CSO roles creates challenges in managing the scheme when designated staff are not available.

CSO suitability: The processes and tools for assessing suitability for CSOs is not robust, which may lead to missed information about risk and appropriateness for a CSO and a recommendation that is not based on comprehensive information. Recommendations on suitability for a CSO can be driven by available project sites and this may discriminate against offenders in country areas, those that are only available at specific times, those that require specific tasks or light duties, those that are often not suitable for 'standard' unpaid work. There is also currently no review of decisions to recommend CSOs to the court.

Recruitment and types of work sites: A number of challenges were identified with the current recruitment and availability of sites. The current assessment process for individual project sites is not robust enough to ensure that sites are suitable. There was also a view that individual sites were inappropriate and challenging to supervise. However, recruiting bulk sites, which are easier to manage and generally provide a larger number of placements per site, is challenging, particularly in remote areas.

Concerns were raised by both magistrates and by probation officers over the limited range and availability of project sites. The majority of projects involve manual activities (e.g. gardening) and are offered on a set number of days only. Across the state there are a limited number of sites available on the weekends, which make it challenging for offenders who are employed to find time to complete their order.

Matching offenders to work sites: Due to the homogeneity of community work sites, the process of matching offenders to work sites is focused primarily on safety and practical considerations and there is little opportunity to match offenders to sites that would benefit from their skills. Also some offenders do not have the appropriate equipment, including attire, for some jobs, which may prevent them from being accepted to undertake work on a site.

Supervising offenders: There is considerable variation in the level and quality of supervision of CSO offenders while undertaking unpaid work. Few CSO supervisors have a comprehensive understanding of justice philosophy and their roles and responsibilities in supervising offenders. This results in inappropriate limit setting, too much discretion in accepting offender absences and/or failing to advise probation officers of absences in a timely manner. This makes it challenging to manage an order or to address non-compliance.

Paid CSO supervisors: Paid supervisors may not be receiving the level of support they require to be able to effectively supervise offenders. In some cases, for example, during weekends, the supervisors may not be able to contact a probation officer for immediate advice and support. There are few formal meetings with paid supervisors to discuss any general challenges they face and to provide them with any organisational information they may require.

Breaching CSOs: Across the state, conducting breaches for CSOs can be influenced by how busy probation officers are at the time the breach occurred. For example, during particularly busy times a breach may not be actioned, or may be actioned some time after the incident to which it related. This creates inconsistencies across the state and may also send out a message of leniency. Examples were also given where decisions to breach a CSO were based on a

presumption about the court's response to the breach, rather than as a response to the behaviour that led to the breach. This creates difficulties in delivering the scheme with integrity and ensuring consistency in responses to offenders who breach.

2.5 Summary of key findings

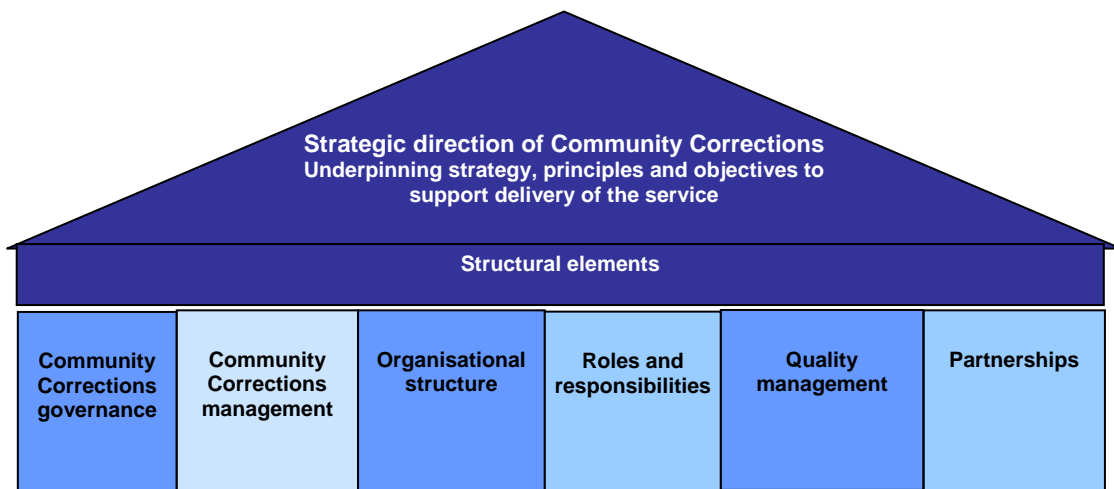
The following key findings emerged from the analysis of consultation findings and require consideration in the proposed changes to improve the CSO scheme:

- assessment for a CSO is limited, does not consider risk of reoffending and may lead to missed information about risk and suitability for a CSO;
- current organisational arrangements for delivering CSOs in the North and North West contribute to professional isolation and a view that managing CSOs is “easy”, deskilling and results in poor motivation;
- CSOs are seen as “risky” and there are concerns over the current level of supervision of CSO offenders while on project sites and a lack of consistency in deducting hours for work done;
- there is a perception that individual/ pensioner sites are inappropriate, that a number of them are unsuitable and that there is difficulty in securing appropriate bulk sites;
- support for CSO supervisors is limited and there is a perception that CSO supervisors are poorly equipped to deal with the client group, are at times unable to set appropriate boundaries with offenders and are not consistent in reporting inappropriate behaviour;
- breaching of CSOs is inconsistent and untimely, with some offenders having more “strikes” before being breached; and
- there is limited focus on considering educational and other programs as part of a CSO.

3 Proposed improvements to the CSO scheme

An improved Community Corrections model has been proposed that addresses a number of challenges identified with the wider service and to enable the service to be more responsive to current and future demands. The proposed model for Community Corrections as a whole includes the elements outlined in Figure 3.1, below and is discussed in the *Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report*.

Figure 3.1: Proposed framework for improvements to the Community Corrections model



A number of the improvements proposed as part of the new Community Corrections model will also improve aspects of the CSO scheme, such as clarity regarding the program functions required to manage and supervise offenders and greater focus on professional development.

However, a number of additional considerations and improvements are required to address specific issues that have been highlighted with the CSO scheme. Therefore, aligned to the proposed Community Corrections model, the following sections consider opportunities for change that relate specifically to the Community Service Orders (CSOs) scheme, as shown in table 3.1, below.

Table 3.1: Proposed areas for improvements to the current CSO scheme

Elements of proposed Community Corrections model	Proposed improvements specific to CSO scheme
Strategic direction	Refreshed statement of purpose and focused principles for managing CSO offenders
Community Corrections governance	Governance of the CSO scheme – governance arrangements sit more broadly with Community Corrections and have been described in the report “ <i>Review of the Community Corrections Services</i> ”

Elements of proposed Community Corrections model	Proposed improvements specific to CSO scheme
Community Corrections management	Clarity of management, supervision and administration functions for offenders on CSOs, including recruitment and management of CSO project sites
Organisational structure	Introduction of a Statewide CSO unit and differentiation between CSO scheme tasks in different regions
Roles and responsibilities	Clarity on roles and responsibilities of offender managers and paid and volunteer CSO supervisors
Quality management	Improvements to CSO risk management and accountability
Partnerships and collaboration	Stronger relationships with community service and other organisations to provide CSO project sites

The following chapters present the rationale for why these improvements are required and make recommendations for changes to the CSO scheme.

3.1 The case for change – what will be different?

The proposed changes will enable the CSO scheme to deliver contemporary and effective responses that are tailored specifically to offenders undertaking community service work. The CSO scheme currently operates as an ‘add-on’ to the management of other community based orders, and there has been limited focus on quality and standards of response to CSO offenders and type of CSO projects. This is despite the fact that, as a sentencing option, CSOs are considered a serious sentence, second only to imprisonment.

The refreshed model for the CSO scheme draws on:

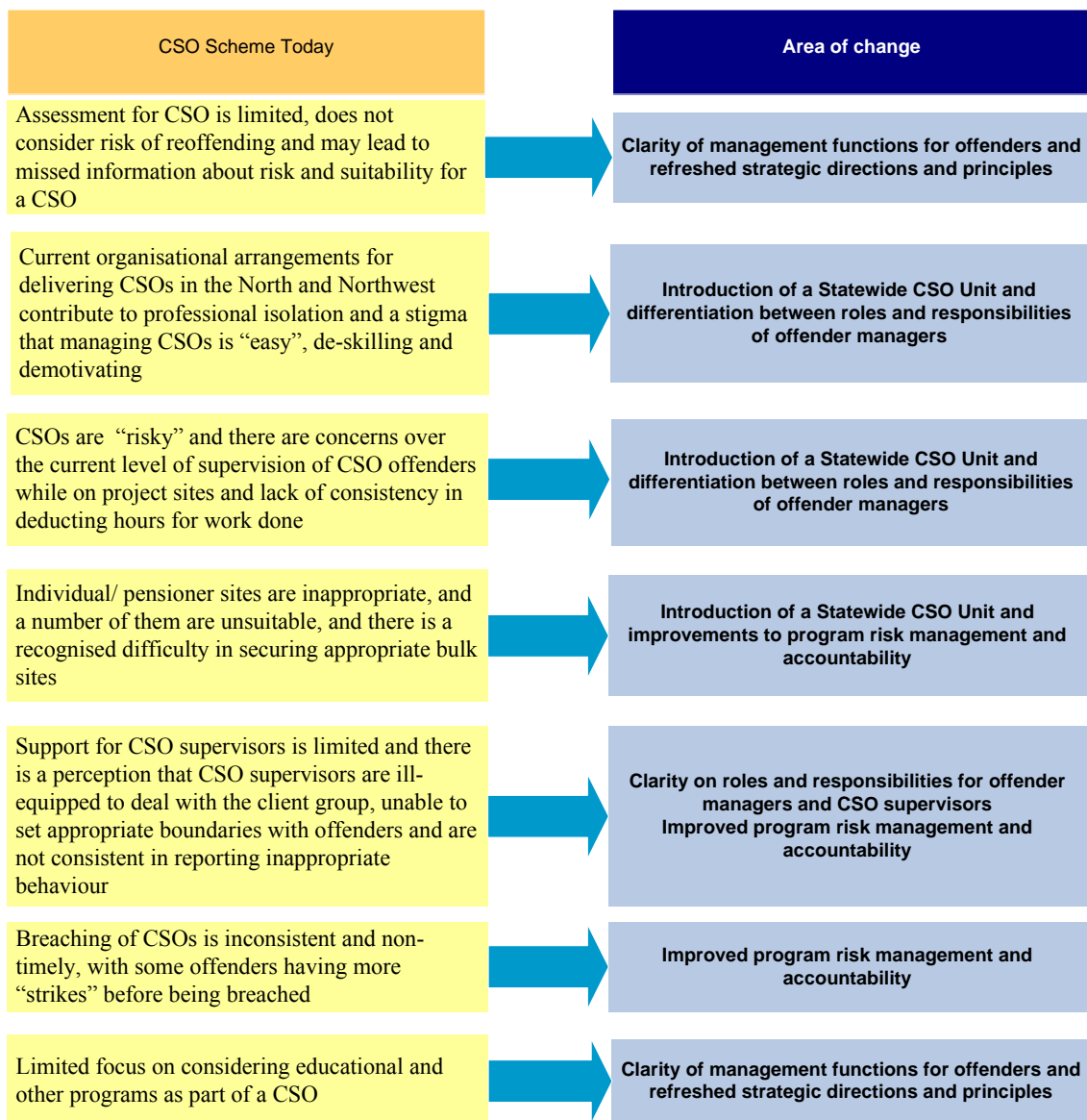
- contemporary practice identified in the literature and through jurisdictional analyses;
- issues and challenges identified through the consultations relating to CSOs;
- the recommended elements for change, reflecting the actions required to achieve an improved CSO scheme; and
- ‘the points of difference’ - how the proposed elements of the model will enable a tangible shift from the status quo to a significantly improved CSO scheme in Tasmania.

Most significantly, under the proposed CSO model, there will be greater emphasis on embedding the principles for managing all offenders (discussed in Section 4.1.3) along with the strategic and operational changes, in recognition of the seriousness of CSOs as a community based sentence. There will also be a distinction between the functions of managing offenders on

a CSO and managing CSO project sites, functions which are currently merged at the expense of recruitment and effective management of project sites.

The current issues and challenges identified through the consultations (discussed in section 2) and how these will be addressed through the elements of the model are summarised in 3.2 below.

Figure 3.2: Outcomes of proposed improvements



Key proposed improvements to the current scheme include:

- the introduction of a Statewide CSO Unit to recruit, manage and monitor appropriate sites, with functions devolved to regions for local on the ground management;

- revised guidelines on the types of sites that are considered to meet minimum requirements;
- improved initial assessment of offenders for CSO suitability and advice to courts, to include a brief assessment on the risk of reoffending;
- that responses and interventions to offenders on CSOs align to principles of offender management;
- mechanisms to appropriately identify, manage and monitor possible changes in risk and to address this and reasons for non-compliance;
- increased professionalism of CSO supervisors and improved management and supervision of them;
- improved program risk management and accountability mechanisms, including clearer program guidelines, improved occupational health and safety management and monitoring;
- clarity for all individuals involved in delivering CSOs on their roles and responsibilities; and
- practice standards and quality assurance mechanisms to support effective practice.

4 Strategic directions for CSOs

Clarity regarding the strategic directions of the CSO scheme is important to inform improvements to the scheme and to establish guidelines and standards within which the scheme operates.

The strategic directions for the CSO scheme are underpinned by:

- the aims and objectives of the CSO scheme;
- legislative requirements; and
- the principles for offender management in general⁷ and for managing offenders on CSOs specifically.

4.1 Refreshed statement of purpose

The existing *Community Service Order Manual, January 2006* specifies the CSO objectives as follows:

“In accordance with the stated aims of Community Corrections, the objective of the Community Service Order scheme is to minimise the risk of offending and its effect on the community through programs which:

- are administered and enforced in a manner that reflects the penalty imposed by the Courts;
- encourage offenders to achieve pro-social behaviour;
- include useful tasks that provide reparation to the community, and in certain cases the victim;
- improve skills through counselling, programs, and vocational training;
- improve interaction between offenders and the members of the public.”

Under the new model, it is suggested that the CSO scheme objectives are slightly refreshed to reflect contemporary practice. Suggested refreshed aims and objectives are that the CSO scheme will:

- provide an alternative to imprisonment, taking into account seriousness of the offence and the sentencing options available to the court;
- advise and support the courts to make decisions about giving CSOs based on appropriate assessment and consideration of risk to the community;

⁷ Outlined in Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report.

- manage the ongoing safety of CSO offenders and community members while offenders are on project sites;
- provide a penalty and enable an offender to make reparation for an offence through spending mandated hours contributing time and skills, in a suitable project, to the benefit of the community;
- encourage offenders to achieve pro-social behaviour and interact appropriately with members of the public;
- facilitate rehabilitation through making referrals and signposting offenders to other services or facilitating an offender to spend mandated hours developing a new skill(s) or learn behaviour to address a particular factor that contributed to offending; and
- as far as possible support an offender to comply with and complete an order.

With a refreshed statement of purpose, aligned to strong principles of managing all offenders, the new model recognises that CSOs should manage non-compliance and support completion of an order. While higher risk offenders should still be the priority of the service, offenders on CSOs should also receive appropriate, supportive attention when this is warranted. This should be reinforced through supervision and professional development mechanisms.

It is expected that offenders on CSOs will demonstrate a lower level of complexity and will focus primarily on compliance with the order. Compliance involves more hands-off offender management and more administration, organisation of sites, monitoring and providing information on and signposting an offender to other services if required.

The few offenders that pose a higher level of risk but are still placed on a CSO by the court, may also receive more support to motivate and encourage them to minimise the risk of re-offending and to address risk factors that might lead to non-compliance with their CSO.

4.2 Legislative requirements

As described in the *Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report*, Part 4 of the *Sentencing Act 1997* sets out the legislative requirements for offenders given a CSO to “*perform some work or other activity in the community under the direction of a probation officer or supervisor*”. The Act also provides for occasions where an offender on a CSO may “*attend an educational or other program in accordance with the directions of a probation officer*” as part of the performance of the order.

These requirements provide clear guidance for the direction of the CSO in terms of:

- specifying that CSOs must be performed under the direction of a probation officer (offender manager) or supervisor; and
- providing the opportunity for an offender to undertake educational or other programs as part of an order.

The recommended improvements to the CSO scheme are based on these directions. Any future reviews and changes to relevant parts of the Sentencing Act should be reflected in subsequent changes to this model.

4.3 Principles of managing offenders on CSOs

Under the new model, it is proposed that work with offenders on CSOs is underpinned by the same principles that apply to working with other offenders, as described in the *Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report*. This is because an ‘offender’ is defined and should be responded to on the basis that s/he committed an offence which is punishable by a community based sentence. For this reason, the high level principles of offender management should remain the same for **all** offenders.

However, because the primarily restorative purpose of the CSO as a community sentence is different to the purpose of other orders, the ways in which these principles are interpreted and applied in practice will be slightly different. Table 4.1, below, illustrates adapted principles for CSOs specifically and how these relate to the overall Community Corrections principles for offender management.

Table 4.1: General Community Corrections principles for managing offenders and adapted CSO scheme principles

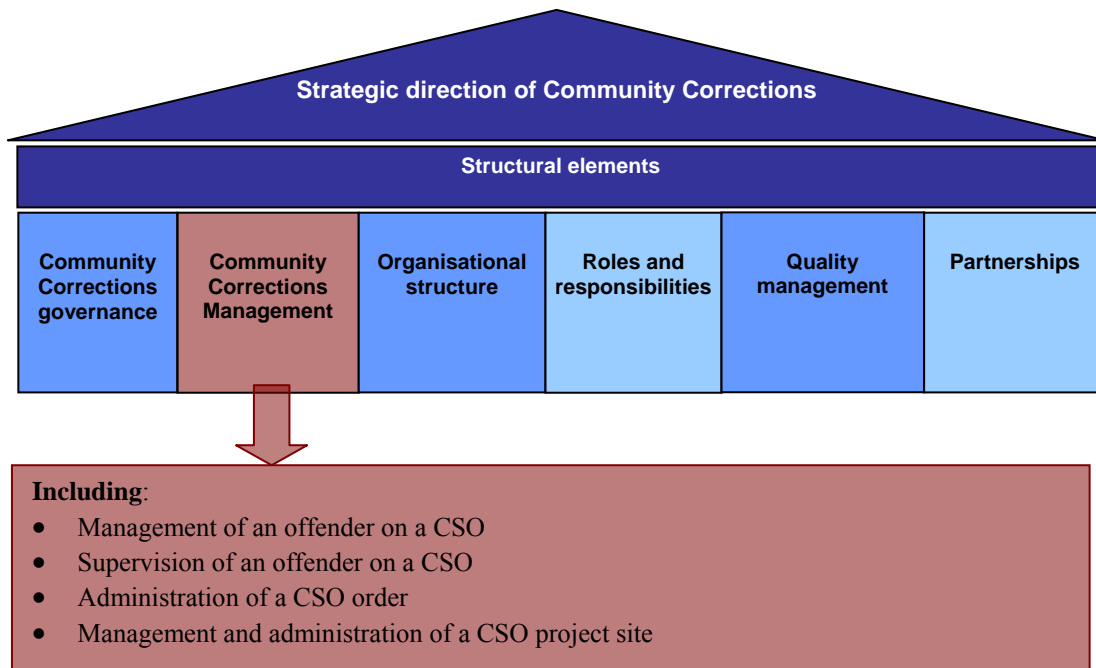
General Community Corrections offender management principles	CSO specific offender management principles
<p>Management of offenders on probation and parole orders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses a whole person, evidence based, offender focused approach; • requires a focus on reducing the likelihood of re-offending through rehabilitation and a range of individualised responses; • requires partnerships with internal and external stakeholders to enable a whole system approach; • offender managers have the competencies and skills to effectively manage and support offenders; • works with an offender at various points along their criminal justice 	<p>Management of offenders on CSOs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses a whole person, evidence based, offender focused approach; • requires a focus on enabling an offender to complete an order without presenting risk to themselves or the community; • requires partnership with internal and external stakeholders to identify and maintain project sites; • offender managers and supervisors working with CSO offenders have the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively manage the offender in the work setting; • works with an offender at various points along their criminal justice pathway; and

General Community Corrections offender management principles	CSO specific offender management principles
<p>pathway; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requires resources and service responses to be individualised and matched to an offenders' needs, risks and circumstances; and provides responses that are flexible over time as needs, risks and circumstances change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involves supporting an offender to comply and co-operate with their order and, for non-compliant offenders, provides individualised, flexible management to address reasons for non-compliance.

5 Community Corrections management

Within the CSO scheme there are a number of functions that must be considered in order to provide effective responses to community based offenders and to meet the organisational objectives of Community Corrections, as shown in Figure 5.1, below.

Figure 5.1: Elements of the recommended program structure



Under the new model for CSOs, it is proposed that offenders on CSOs are considered under the same framework of offender management as offenders on other orders⁸. This means that the principles of offender management, including management, supervision and administration should apply equally to CSO offenders. However, in practice, as the purpose of the order is more focused on 'compliance', rather than rehabilitation, the intensity of management and supervision for CSOs will be less than for other orders.

Incorporating CSO offenders in an offender management culture and approach will help to address a number of concerns raised by stakeholders during the review, including:

- concerns about whether the suitability assessments are robust in identifying whether an offender is suitable for an order; and
- concerns that supervision that is available may not be suitable to manage risk, if required.

Under program management, a number of changes to the current CSO model are proposed that will ensure greater quality of the CSO scheme and better management of CSO offenders. These are that:

⁸ This is described in detail in section 7 of the *Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report*

- all offenders on a CSO should undertake a brief screening that identifies risk of reoffending as part of the suitability assessment and advice is provided to court that includes results from this screening;
- there are mechanisms in place to address non-compliance promptly and to support compliance in the future; and
- paid and volunteer CSO supervisors understand about their roles and responsibilities to the offender, to Community Corrections and to the community and are more closely managed and supported in their role as supervisors.

These are explained in more detail below.

5.1 Management of an offender on a CSO

Given the primarily reparation and compliance purpose of CSOs, the management of offenders on a CSO differs slightly from the management of offenders on other orders. Under the new model, the management of all CSOs should include:

- assessment of suitability for a CSO and screening of level of risk of reoffending to inform recommendations to the court to either proceed with a CSO or to seek a more in-depth assessment (PSR) to explore the possibility of other orders;
- consideration of the type of project site that would be suitable, in discussion with the offender, and identification of an appropriate project in discussion with the Statewide CSO unit;
- agreement with the offender on the structure and conduct of the CSO, e.g. hours, days, frequency of attendance, transport arrangements to attend, intended period over which the order will be completed;
- development and implementation of a brief ‘support plan’ to address non-compliance if appropriate; and
- liaison with other offender managers for management of offenders on concurrent orders (dual orders).

All decisions regarding CSO assessments and recommendations to court should be discussed and agreed with senior members of staff⁹, to ensure that the assessment has been thorough and accurate. This will also ensure that the decision is sound and will not place either the offender or the community at risk or disadvantage. This is a variation on current procedures in which only assessments of unsuitable recommendations are discussed with a more senior member of staff.

⁹ Either Team Leaders or Senior Offender Managers.

5.1.1 Suitability assessments for CSOs

Criteria for assessing suitability for CSOs are included in the CSO manual¹⁰ and include considering availability and ability to perform work, previous offences, issues that may impact on completion and previous performance on CSOs.

No recommendations are made to change these criteria. However, in response to feedback from stakeholders during the review, it is proposed that the guidelines (manual) relating to CSOs stresses the need to gather information from collateral sources, wherever possible, to provide a more robust assessment of availability and ability to undertake a CSO.

It is also suggested that the suitability assessment gives more focus to considering the skills and aptitudes that offenders have, to enable a better matching of offenders to project sites. Although this is explicit in the current CSO manual, consultations with stakeholders indicated that these were often not taken into account. Reasons for this were that there are strict occupational health and safety issues that dictate what jobs can and cannot be done, and that the existing number of project sites does not necessarily allow the flexibility to match skills to sites.

It is recommended that the suitability assessment is extended to include a brief screening that also indicates the level of risk of reoffending. This tool will need to be developed, based on the LS-CMI, and should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. The purpose is to provide greater consistency and robustness in identifying offenders who are at a high risk of reoffending and may benefit from supervision that addresses their criminogenic risk factors. The risk level may guide decision making about suitability for CSOs and inform recommendations to the courts, including when to advise that a PSR may be required.

Offender managers, following allocation of the case, should conduct all CSO suitability assessments. Staff undertaking CSO assessments are not required to demonstrate competence, as for PSR and pre parole reports (PPR) assessments.

5.2 Supervision of an offender on a CSO

In the context of CSOs, supervision has three purposes:

- day-to-day supervision of compliance at a project site;
- implementation of the CSO through inducting the offender onto the order; and
- general oversight of how well the order is being completed, including identifying and providing support for non-compliance, where required.

Different staff, as described in section 7 on roles and responsibilities will undertake these functions.

¹⁰ Implemented in January 2006. Criteria information is provided on page 6.

5.2.1 Supporting non-compliant offender on a CSO

There may be a number of reasons that offenders on a CSO are non-compliant. Clear guidelines are already in place for breaches and prosecutions, including a series of warnings that can be given for non-compliance. However, for some incidents of non-compliance, it may be suitable for additional support to be provided to the offender to enable them to continue with the order. Further guidelines should be developed and consulted on to inform this decision making process. Additional support might be considered in the following situations:

- if the non-compliance would not normally result in a recommendation that the order be cancelled;
- if the non-compliance is the result of a behaviour or activity that would benefit from professional intervention, e.g. attendance at a drug and alcohol, or mental health treatment service; and
- if the offender reports being open to the support and willing to accept it.

Any support that is required should be discussed with a senior member of staff and the offender and should be clearly documented in a brief support plan. The current legislation provides for an offender on a CSO to attend education and other programs if it will clearly contribute to the likelihood of a reduction in re-offending. Therefore if the suggested 'support' achieves this objective, the 'support' hours should be credited against the CSO. Other 'support' options may need to be attended on a voluntary basis, following sign posting to an appropriate service.

The benefits of providing additional support to offenders on a CSO are to:

- reduce administrative burdens involved in warning and breaching clients (although it is likely that providing the support will require an equal level of input from the offender manager);
- address behaviour and circumstances impacting on compliance and that are likely to lead to offending behaviour in the future; and
- improve the likelihood that an order will be completed, thereby reducing the number of returns to courts.

The primary intention of providing support is always to facilitate completion of an order and close monitoring will be required to ensure this aim. It is not the intention that support for offenders on a CSO is provided to the same extent as support to offenders on probation or parole with a condition attached to the order.

5.3 Administration of a CSO order

As with all community based orders, administering the order is an important part of managing CSOs. In addition to the administration functions for managing community based offenders in

general outlined in the *Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report*¹¹, administration of CSOs also involves additional tasks of:

- providing and collecting paperwork to record compliance at a project site;
- crediting hours that an offender has spent working against the total hours of the order; and
- liaising with a project site to provide information about starts, completion and closed orders; and
- maintaining information about the placement of offenders on a project site.

5.4 Management and administration of CSO project sites

Managing project sites that provide unpaid work opportunities for CSO offenders is a key function of the CSO scheme. Effective project site management involves recruiting, assessing, managing and reviewing sites and is important to ensure that:

- sites are available, appropriate, suitable and safe for both offenders and for the community; and
- there is consistency across the state in the quality and type of project sites, matched to the demand for sites.

Functions related to the management of CSO project sites are not offender focused; that is, they do not involve any direct contact with any offender.

5.4.1 Focused recruitment – increasing the availability and type of CSO project site

Currently, the availability of CSO sites in Tasmania is limited, with the scheme relying on a high proportion of individual or pensioner sites to meet demand. The following changes to the type and availability of sites are suggested, to move away from this situation and to address a number of other challenges identified with CSO sites:

- the majority of sites across the state should be bulk sites, with individual and pensioner sites being phased out over an appropriate period of time;
- the majority of sites should be encouraged to provide their own (volunteer) supervisors to move away from the heavy reliance on paid supervisors;
- the range of sites should allow CSO placements to be available seven days a week in metropolitan areas;

¹¹ Sections 7.4 and 9.5.

- the range of project types, e.g. the required work on the site, should be expanded to provide greater opportunity to match offender characteristics, skills or desired skill set (e.g. carpentry or plumbing skills) with a project site. The range of project types should include projects that involve indoor and outdoor work and that require both manual and mental labour; and
- a more innovative approach to CSOs should be established through ‘creating’ unpaid work for particular offenders who require particular considerations.

Bulk or group sites are those where a specified number of offenders can undertake community service through the one organisation and/or at the one site. Increasing the availability of bulk or group sites will provide a greater capacity to supervise offenders at sites and to minimise risk to the community. A move away from independent and pensioner sites may have an impact on other government services, as work undertaken by CSO offenders in these locations may now have to be picked up by another group. To minimise this potential impact, it is recommended that proposed changes, and rationale for the changes, are discussed with relevant stakeholders.

The majority of offenders subject to CSOs are located in metropolitan areas, particularly Hobart and Launceston. To meet the demand for sites in these locations (and in Burnie and Devonport) a range of sites should be available seven days a week. This will enable offenders that are working or have other responsibilities during the week (such as parenting/child care) to be able to complete their CSO hours in a timely way.

Developing a wider range of CSO project sites will also enable better matching of offenders to unpaid work if they already have a specific skill or are interested in developing such a skill. This will have potential longer term benefits for offenders by increasing their employability and connection to the community, and decreasing their likelihood of reoffending.

In addition to these improvements, the proposed Statewide CSO Unit should have the capacity to proactively seek opportunities for CSO project sites to be able to place offenders with specific needs. Examples might include seeking CSO project sites for offenders with a disability. More innovative approaches to finding CSO project sites might also include identifying a site in a particular remote location, or considering a range of one off activities that require volunteers, such as preparation for the Hobart show, or recovery or clean up work after heavy storms.

5.4.2 Requirements and guidelines for CSO sites

All activities related to CSO project sites should be strictly governed by clear guidelines, protocols and procedures. This should also provide clarity around the requirements and eligibility criteria for the sites themselves, to ensure they are:

- appropriate, in terms of providing reparation work to the community; and
- safe, in that offenders can be safely expected to undertake the work.

5.4.3 Maintenance of a central project site database

Effective management of project sites also requires support from an information technology based database that allows records to be kept of the number of sites, their location, the numbers of placements, the hours of operation, type of unpaid work and number of available places at any one time. A central database of project sites should:

- include details about CSO project sites including location, type of work, skills required or desirable, hours and days of operation, particular requirements (e.g. exclusions based on offence, equipment and tools required), number of places available;
- be updated as offenders start and finish work at a particular site, to provide a real time record of the number of available placements at any given time;
- enable the matching of offenders to a project site, based on information gathered in the CSO suitability assessment and on discussion with the CSO offender about their availability, ability and skills; and
- enable analysis to inform planning and targeted recruitment of sites to address gaps in the 'portfolio' of sites available across the state.

The Offender Information System (OIS) may already have the capacity to undertake some of these tasks. Consideration should be given to adapting the functionality of OIS to enable it to undertake all these tasks, in preference to developing a separate, standalone database.

Periodic audits should be conducted to ensure the information is accurate, that the system is used effectively and that it presents a comprehensive account of all project sites and offender placements.

In the short term, it is suggested that the database remain stand alone, accessible only by designated staff. This will enable the system to be set up and initially managed in a controlled way by a small number of people, until it is embedded more fully into 'standard' practice. This will also enable an initial focus on quality assurance, particularly while existing sites are being reviewed.

Over the long term, the database could be made available to offender managers across the state, within clear guidelines for use and responsibility for quality. Until this time, management and maintenance of the database will require close communication between the designated staff members responsible for the database and regional staff responsible for managing CSO offenders.

6 Organisational structure

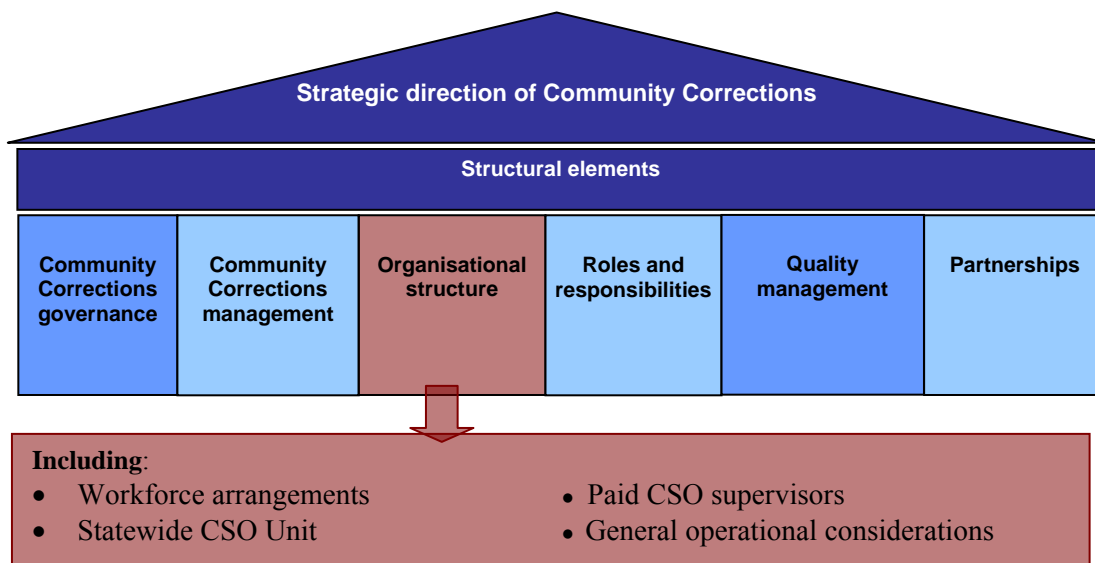
Feedback from the consultations highlighted a number of issues and challenges with the current organisational arrangements for delivering the CSO scheme in the North and North West. The following challenges were identified as a result of having separated roles for the management of the CSO scheme in these regions:

- the skills and expertise of offender managers are not being put to best use as the current management of CSOs primarily involves administrative tasks;
- there is a perception by staff that working only on CSOs is unchallenging, demotivating and deskilling;
- the current arrangements present an organisational risk as the knowledge about the scheme and about CSO offenders is held by a small number of people. This can cause problems if those staff members are not available;
- offender manager resources used in the CSO scheme cannot be used flexibly to deliver other aspects of the service during times of high pressure on resources; and
- separating out the management of CSOs from the core work of all offender managers, means that there is no opportunity to use CSOs, which generally require less robust assessment and supervision, as a learning opportunity for new staff.

These issues were not reported in the South, where a separate CSO Unit has recently been introduced to manage the scheme.

As outlined in Figure 6.1, this section provides an overview of the proposed organisational arrangements to undertake and administer the CSO scheme to address the identified issues and to align to changes proposed to the wider Community Corrections model.

Figure 6.1: Elements of the recommended organisational arrangements



6.1 Workforce arrangements

Changes to the existing CSO scheme workforce arrangements are proposed to:

- delineate between functions required to manage offenders and those required to manage CSO project sites;
- drive change in the culture and perceptions of the CSO scheme in the North and North West to improve outcomes for staff and for CSO offenders;
- provide better supervision of offenders at project sites; and
- maintain and reinforce effective work with the scheme currently being undertaken by the CSO Unit in the South (where greater economies of scale exist).

Under recommended improvements to the scheme, it is proposed that:

- a ***Statewide CSO Unit*** is introduced to undertake work relating to project sites and to the recruitment and screening of paid CSO supervisors;
- ***designated offender managers in the South*** manage the larger numbers of offenders on CSOs (as is current practice). To recognise the distinct roles and responsibilities of CSO staff in the South, it is proposed that these positions are entitled Offender Manager – CSO (OM-CSO);
- ***all Offender Managers*** in the North and North West conduct tasks relating to management of offenders on CSOs. This is in contrast to current practice, in which only designated staff have responsibility for the scheme. It is not suggested that Senior Offender Managers are involved in managing CSOs; and
- ***paid CSO supervisors*** are considered as part of the professional response to supervising CSOs.

Examples from the literature and from practice in other jurisdictions, illustrate that CSO schemes should be managed by separate, but integrated, groups of community corrections staff. The rationale for this is that managing CSO schemes (or similar) requires a different skill set to managing offenders on other orders. For example, skills required to manage project sites are predominantly administrative and consultative. Compared to managing other offenders, managing offenders on CSOs requires fewer specific skills and experience around assessing and managing criminogenic risk and triggers of offending behaviour, compared to managing other offenders.

The proposed changes in Tasmania recognise this through:

- strengthening the separate CSO team in the South; and
- introducing the Statewide CSO Unit that provides a centralised, discrete, but linked, approach to tasks that are not “core business” of offender managers.

The new model proposes to retain the current arrangements of a separate CSO scheme structure in the South because:

- the volume of CSOs in the south warrants the creation of a discrete number of positions to manage the scheme¹²;
- the larger number of staff required to manage CSOs in the south will reduce operational risks as knowledge of the scheme will be shared across more staff; and
- feedback from stakeholders in the South report that the unit has demonstrated good outcomes for the scheme since it commenced, in terms of better relationships with project sites and ensuring more consistent, quality supervision of offenders.

The change to current arrangements in the North and North West seems contrary to evidence relating to CSOs, but given the number of offenders on CSOs and overall lower economy of scale, is proposed to bring about the changes required to address issues and challenges identified in those regions.

6.2 Paid CSO supervisors

Findings related to CSO supervisors raise some concerns over the quality of the supervision provided to offenders on a CSO, as highlighted previously. Examples of poor quality supervision include:

- supervisors are not clear about what is and is not appropriate behaviour on an order and are not enforcing appropriate behaviour; and
- incidents are not reported back to community corrections in a timely way.

Under the improvements to the scheme it is recommended that paid CSO supervisors are considered and supported as professional members of the team delivering the CSO scheme and are provided with induction, training and professional supervision in line with this.

6.3 Statewide CSO Unit

A significant proposed change to the CSO scheme is the introduction of a Statewide CSO Unit. The Unit is proposed as a statewide resource to:

- provide a dedicated resource to identify, recruit, manage and monitor CSO projects sites and conduct ongoing quality assurance; and
- recruit and conduct initial screening of paid CSO supervisors across the state.

¹² On 10th October 2008, there were 485 CSOs in the south, 298 in the north and 245 in the North West.

The identification, recruitment, assessment and management of sites are critically important to ensure that offenders can be safely and appropriately placed on an unpaid work placement, following an order from the courts. The proposed statewide CSO Unit will bring about a number of improvements over the current CSO scheme, including:

- enabling a clear distinction between the tasks and skills required to manage project sites and to manage offenders on CSOs;
- relieving pressure on offender managers who are currently responsible for finding, recruiting and maintaining relationships with CSO sites;
- ensuring that there is consistency across the state in the quality and type of project sites and the capabilities of the CSO supervisors to effectively supervise offenders;
- enabling statewide and regional planning to ensure that there are always sufficient sites available and that these are suitable and sustainable over time and offer a range of different types of unpaid work options;
- capacity to maintain links and relationships with sites and volunteer supervisors, even when there is no offender currently working at the site. This will be particularly important in remote areas;
- a resource to monitor the 'performance' of sites (at a whole of CSO level, rather than at offender level) to ensure that they remain appropriate, suitable and safe over time;
- capacity to conduct evaluations into how the type and characteristics of a site contributes to the outcome of an order and to recruit sites accordingly;
- ensuring that paid CSO supervisors have the necessary skills to undertake the role; and
- an ability to recruit paid CSO supervisors in line with changes in the portfolio of project sites and to ensure that there are sufficient paid supervisors available to meet demand.

Further details on the roles and responsibilities of the Statewide CSO unit are outlined in *Section 7* of this report.

It is proposed that the Statewide CSO Unit is located in the South, as this is where the majority of CSO offenders are located, and that it be based in the Rosny Office.

It is also suggested that OM-CSOs are located within the Statewide CSO Unit. This would create strong links between the Unit and the offender managers managing CSOs in the South, which would be helpful to support management of both offenders and project sites. A co-location would also create efficiencies in administrative support.

6.3.1 Operational considerations for the Statewide CSO Unit

There are a number of options to consider relating to the organisational arrangements of the Statewide CSO Unit. These are as follows.

Option 1: The Unit is staffed entirely by OM-CSOs, who undertake all roles and responsibilities relating to managing offenders, managing the CSO project sites and conducting administrative tasks related to offenders and sites.

The benefit of this option is that tasks and activities can be managed more flexibly between different staff to maximise use of resources. This option may also bring an added layer of quality to managing both sites and offenders, as the OM-CSOs will have a good understanding of all aspects of the CSO scheme and how elements impact on each other.

Option 2: The Unit is staffed by both OM-CSOs, who have responsibility for all tasks relating to managing offenders (including management, supervision and administration of the order) **and** by CSO Officers¹³, who have responsibility for managing project sites.

The advantage of this option is that there is clear delineation between the different functions of the scheme, which will make it easier to identify and deliver targeted training and support to staff and to manage workloads and priorities. Another consideration of this option is that distinguishing between administration and offender management tasks will allow the application of a range of award bands, as appropriate to the role undertaken.

Depending on the approach adopted following this review, the roles and responsibilities of OM-CSOs and Administration Officers described in Section 7, below, may need to be reallocated to reflect the staffing profile of the Unit.

6.4 General operational considerations for the CSO scheme

Operational considerations for CSO scheme include:

- staff from the Statewide CSO Unit who are responsible for managing CSO project sites may be expected to conduct some travel to visit project sites across the state; and
- it is suggested that CSO Officers are “General Stream” positions under the Public Sector Union Wages Agreement¹⁴, as recommended for all Community Corrections staff (see section 8.2.1 in the *Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report*).

Despite the slight differences in the overall roles and responsibilities of OMs and OM-CSOs, it is recommended that these positions are remunerated at the same level to recognise the skills and knowledge required to manage offenders in the community.

In the future, once change has been embedded and current challenges have been addressed, as described above, it may be appropriate to revisit the structure of the scheme in the North and

¹³ This is equivalent to an Administration Officer.

¹⁴ Sourced from <http://psmo.dpac.tas.gov.au> on 5th December 2008.

North West to consider separating out the functions in the future. This may include considering how the Statewide CSO Unit could provide more support to regional staff, for example by undertaking more of the administrative functions that do not require face to face contact with offenders or CSO supervisors.

6.5 Summary

By moving to a Statewide CSO Unit, the CSO scheme can be managed in a holistic fashion that reduces some of the burden currently placed on offender managers in the regions. Further, it allows for greater focus on recruitment of appropriate CSO project sites by tasking specific resources with this responsibility, enabling more flexible and responsiveness project work for those offenders on CSOs.

A restructuring of the CSO scheme working arrangements in the North and North West is expected to bring about required change to address issues that are currently reported in managing the scheme in these areas.

7 Roles and responsibilities of managing offenders on a CSO

This chapter describes the roles and responsibilities for managing offenders on Community Service Orders. As shown in Figure 7.1, there are number of elements and responsibilities outlined in this section.

Figure 7.1: Roles and responsibilities for managing offenders on community based services



To ensure the CSO scheme is run safely and efficiently it is important that roles and responsibilities of staff and supervisors are clearly articulated and understood by all staff. Under improvements to the scheme, it is proposed that *management of offenders* on a CSO (incorporating management, supervision and administration) will be undertaken by:

- Team Leaders;
- Offender Managers (OMs) in the North and North West;
- Offender Manager- CSOs (OM-CSOs) in the South;
- Administration Officers; and
- volunteer and paid CSO supervisors.

It is also proposed that *management of CSO project sites* will be undertaken by staff located in the Statewide CSO Unit.

7.1 Role of the Team Leaders in the CSO scheme

It is proposed that Team Leaders undertake the following roles and responsibilities in relation to the CSO scheme:

- allocating court requests for suitability assessments and for addressing issues of non-compliance;
- final review and approval of all decisions regarding suitability and placement of offenders on CSO. This is in contrast to existing arrangements where a review is only conducted for offenders that are not recommended for a CSO;
- provision of professional advice and guidance to OMs/OM-CSOs relating to management of CSO offenders who are non-compliant;
- conducting monthly meetings with all paid CSO supervisors (as a group) to identify and discuss general issues or concerns and to provide any relevant organisation information;
- conducting professional supervision of paid supervisors and providing ad-hoc support to them as required; and
- identifying potential CSO project sites for targeted recruitment, as part of general networking and relationship building.

7.2 Role of Offender Managers and OM-CSOs in the CSO scheme

Under the new model, it is proposed that OMs and OM-CSOs have responsibilities relating to:

- conducting suitability assessments for CSOs and providing advice to courts;
- overseeing induction of offenders onto the CSO scheme;
- supporting Team Leaders in interviewing and selecting paid CSO supervisors;
- supporting the recruitment of CSO project sites through conducting visits on behalf of the CSO Statewide Unit;
- investigating and addressing issues of non-compliance and changes in circumstances which may result in non-compliance through providing additional support to those on CSOs, in discussion with a Team Leader; and
- undertaking tasks relating to breaches.

It is proposed that all other tasks relating to offenders on CSOs are conducted by Administration Officers, as described below.

7.3 Role of Administration Officers in the CSO scheme

Under the new model, it is proposed that Administration Officers undertake a significant role in relation to CSOs to free up OM resources. In recognition of this, it is recommended that the follow tasks are undertaken by an executive administration officer grade:

- liaison with the Statewide CSO Unit to inform them when offenders commence and end an order, to help maintain the central project site database;
- liaison with the project site to initiate placement onto a site and to provide relevant initial information (e.g. photo, duration of order, any physical or mental disabilities) and paperwork;
- occasional visits to the project site, while the offender is there, to check on progress and discuss any issues that relate directly to the offender with the site management and/or volunteer supervisors;
- day-to-day contact with paid and volunteer CSO supervisors to provide, receive and verify paperwork showing attendance and hours, to seek feedback on compliance and other issues and to discuss any support needs of the CSO supervisors;
- facilitating support for CSO supervisors through liaising with the relevant Team Leader for paid supervisors and with the Statewide CSO Unit for volunteer supervisors;
- providing timely responses to information regarding non-compliance with an order, by escalating the matter to the Team Leader for allocation to an offender manager to address non-compliance with the offender;
- updating records with attendance and number of hours to be credited against an order and completing paper work for expired or closed orders; and
- providing administrative support to OMs to issue warnings and conduct breaches for CSOs.

7.4 Role of CSO Supervisors

Paid and volunteer supervisors play an important role in delivering the CSO scheme as they provide day-to-day contact with offenders while conducting their unpaid work. While the supervision and management arrangements for paid and volunteer CSO supervisors vary slightly (see section 8, Quality Management), their roles and responsibilities relating to offenders are the same, as follows:

- forming an appropriate, professional relationship with the offender to establish clear boundaries and expectations;
- motivating offenders to comply with an order, when necessary, within clear professional boundaries (i.e. this should not overlap with the role of an offender manager in supporting an offender to address non-compliance);

- on site supervision of an offender while conducting unpaid work;
- monitoring compliance (attends site, completes work satisfactorily, behaves appropriately, counts hours) and reporting non-compliance to Administration Officer or OM-CSO within 48 hours of the incident; and
- checking offenders have the necessary equipment upon commencement of community service at the site and maintaining equipment owned by Community Corrections.

In addition to this, paid CSO supervisors should attend sessions that are run to induct offenders onto the CSO scheme. They should also take part in monthly meetings and in three monthly professional supervision sessions with the regional Team Leader¹⁵. Volunteer CSO supervisors may have contact with the OM-CSO who manages the project site as part of ongoing reviews of the sites and during periodic reviews.

7.5 Roles and responsibilities of Statewide CSO unit

It is proposed that the Statewide CSO Unit will undertake a number of functions relating to CSO project sites and recruitment of paid CSO supervisors, informed by guidelines, protocols and procedures. Suggested functions of the Unit are:

- advertisement for new sites;
- recruitment of sites, through responses to advertisements and through proactive approaches to suitable sites;
- assessment to ensure sites meet specified criteria;
- recruitment and initial screening of paid CSO supervisors; and
- management and periodic review of sites to ensure continued suitability.

These are described further below.

Further roles and responsibilities of the Statewide CSO Unit are:

- maintenance of a central project site database to match offenders to sites and liaison with offender manager to maintain validity and accuracy of the database; and
- quality assurance through evaluation to identify ‘what works’ and to continually develop and improve CSOs over time. This is discussed under section 8, Quality Management.

¹⁵ Or the Team Leader of the Statewide CSO Unit in the South.

7.5.1 Advertisement, recruitment and assessment of sites

Selecting project sites for CSOs is an important, but onerous and time consuming task. Under the current model, project site recruitment is often not a primary focus. This may mean that opportunities are lost to increase the range, frequency and type of available CSO hours and to truly fulfil the objective of reparation to the community.

The purpose of recruiting project sites is to have a 'portfolio' of suitable sites that includes a range of different work opportunities that are available seven days a week. To achieve this, advertising and initial recruitment of potential CSO project sites should:

- be based on a statewide project site recruitment plan, which considers the location and demand of CSO offenders in geographical locations. This might be articulated in terms of targets for numbers of site placements available in a geographical location;
- be guided by clear eligibility criteria (see below);
- involve proactive and responsive recruitment. Proactive recruitment ensures that there are always enough sites available to meet the demand. Responsive recruitment may be necessary to find a project site that is suitable for a particular offender's need or skills. For example, this might be to find a work project that could be undertaken by an offender with a physical disability.

It is suggested that various methods of advertising and recruitment are used, and that these are creative and innovative in their approach. Examples include using newspaper and web-based advertisements, targeting specific groups or organisations (such as bowling clubs, schools, parks, police task forces, such as anti-graffiti taskforces), and seeking and following up personal and professional contacts.

The Statewide CSO Unit should undertake a number of activities and tasks to assess and recruit project CSO sites, including:

- identification of potential sites through responses to advertisements, referrals and contacts from other stakeholders, and direct, targeted approaches;
- provision of detailed verbal and written information about the CSO scheme, the eligibility criteria for sites and the expected role of sites and Community Corrections;
- provision of an application to be completed by the site and returned for initial screening and to seek further information from the site if required;
- a visit to assess the suitability of the site following screening. This might include reviewing the lay out and location, understanding the type of work and discussing the arrangements that will be in place to supervise the offender; and
- notification of the project site about the outcome of the assessment and reasons for the decisions.

Visits to assess potential CSO project sites in the South should be conducted by Unit staff. It is proposed that visits in the North and North West are conducted by an offender manager in that region, in discussion with the Statewide CSO Unit. All decisions to recruit a CSO project site must be agreed with and signed off by the Team Leader of the Statewide CSO Unit.

7.5.2 Management of CSO project sites

The purpose of managing a site is to ensure that the project site understands its role in managing offenders on a CSO and continues to be appropriate and safe, both for offenders and for the community. In particular, ongoing management is important for Community Corrections to stay informed of any changes to the site or to volunteer supervisors that may impact on delivering CSOs. Management of sites will also facilitate the placement of offenders and will provide a mechanism to address any concerns that may be raised by the site, Community Corrections, or members of community.

It is recommended that the following tasks are undertaken to manage project sites:

- initially, (for a new site) and then periodically as required, an induction should be conducted to inform the site management and volunteer supervisors about CSOs and to clearly explain roles and responsibilities and basic principles of supervising an offender on a CSO;
- telephone contact with the sites, to keep in touch and to identify and address any issues or changes the site may have while offenders are on a placement;
- responses to requests and queries from project sites, for example updating the central project site database if placements to the site are halted for a period of time;
- periodic telephone contact with the sites who do not have offenders on placement to keep in touch and discuss any changes at the site that may impact on it being a suitable (and willing) CSO project site;
- planned, site visits to review the site and to ensure that CSO work continues to be safe and to be of benefit to the community; and
- communication with offender managers managing offenders to discuss site specific matters that may have an impact on or be impacted by the offender. To facilitate this relationship, this may involve staff from the Statewide CSO Unit conducting periodic visits to each region, to meet with offender managers and to visit the CSO project sites.

Management activities should be informed by clear guidelines that identify the frequency and nature of site contacts and visits and the actions that should be taken as a result of the contact. This may vary depending on a number of factors, including, for example, the size of the site (how many offenders they take) and the competence of the site management and volunteer supervisors. For this reason, it is important that the OM-CSO has a good professional relationship with the site and is able to identify and take positive action against any concerns the site, or Community Corrections, may have.

7.5.3 Review of CSO project sites

In addition to ongoing management, formal reviews of sites should be conducted against clear criteria which indicate whether the site is still suitable. It is recommended that reviews are undertaken every two years and outcomes of reviews are documented. Formal reviews should involve a visit to the site and a meeting with the site manager and any volunteer supervisors, where possible. To ensure consistency and high standards, review outcomes should be signed off by the Team Leader of the Statewide CSO Unit and subject to external verification by the statewide Senior Practice Consultant¹⁶ (SPC).

A review should include an inspection of the site and should consider:

- any changes to the site, management or provision of volunteer supervisors that may impact on suitability. This might also include consideration of any legislative requirements that impact on being able to place offenders on the site¹⁷;
- whether the site continues to meet eligibility criteria, e.g. is not-for-profit, is not cutting paid positions to provide CSO placements, and is able to appropriately and safely manage offenders on site;
- how well the site/ volunteer supervisors meet the requirements of the role, including, for example, prompt feedback to OMs, accurate completion of attendance and timesheets; and
- how well the site continues to match the profile of CSO offenders, in terms of geographical location and type of work.

It is also suggested that, in the future, offenders and other community members are asked to participate in the review of the site by providing feedback on their experience and identifying possible opportunities for improvement. Feedback from offender managers in contact with CSO offenders will also provide important information for reviews.

Extraordinary reviews may be requested by the Directorate or other stakeholders if there are concerns about the supervision or type of work provided by the site. Requests for extraordinary reviews may be as a result of a complaint from an offender, a member of the community, and/or a member of Community Corrections staff or the site staff. Any doubts or concerns about the safety of an offender or the general public should be dealt with immediately.

It is proposed that the possible outcomes of a review are that the CSO project site:

- is removed from the register so that they can no longer provide work for CSOs;
- is allowed to continue, but on the condition that further support is provided to address any issues identified and then a further review takes place within a specified time frame; or
- is approved for another two years.

¹⁶ See section 9.2 in the *Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report* for a description of this role under the new Community Corrections model.

¹⁷ An example of this may be the introduction of the need to hold specific 'certificates', or similar, to undertake specific tasks, such as working with elderly people.

The outcomes of all reviews should be shared with the site management and with the Team Leader and offender managers in the region where the site is located.

It is suggested that over the short to medium term following this review, all existing project sites are reviewed to ensure they are suitable and should continue as project sites.

7.5.4 Recruitment and initial screening of paid CSO Supervisors

Paid supervisors play an important role in the CSO scheme as they often have the most contact with offenders on a CSO and are responsible, day-to-day, for ensuring compliance with an order. Paid CSO supervisors should have a good understanding of the requirements of an order, what to do in cases of non-compliance and must also be able to build rapport with an offender on an order.

However, the review found that there is considerable variation in the competence and capabilities of existing paid CSO supervisors to work with offenders in the manner required. Findings indicated that some supervisors did not demonstrate a good understanding of their role and were unable to set appropriate boundaries or identify when to report offenders' behaviour to an offender manager.

A recommendation in the proposed CSO model is that paid supervisors undertake a more 'professional' role within the scheme and are more accountable to Community Corrections. This will require more careful selection of potential CSO supervisors against clear criteria, as well as a focus on professional supervision and development, discussed in Section 5.2.

To achieve consistency and an improved standard of paid CSO supervisors across the state, it is proposed that the Statewide CSO Unit undertakes recruitment activities and conducts initial screenings and checks of applicants. Following successful screening, interviews should be conducted in the regions to determine whether to recruit.

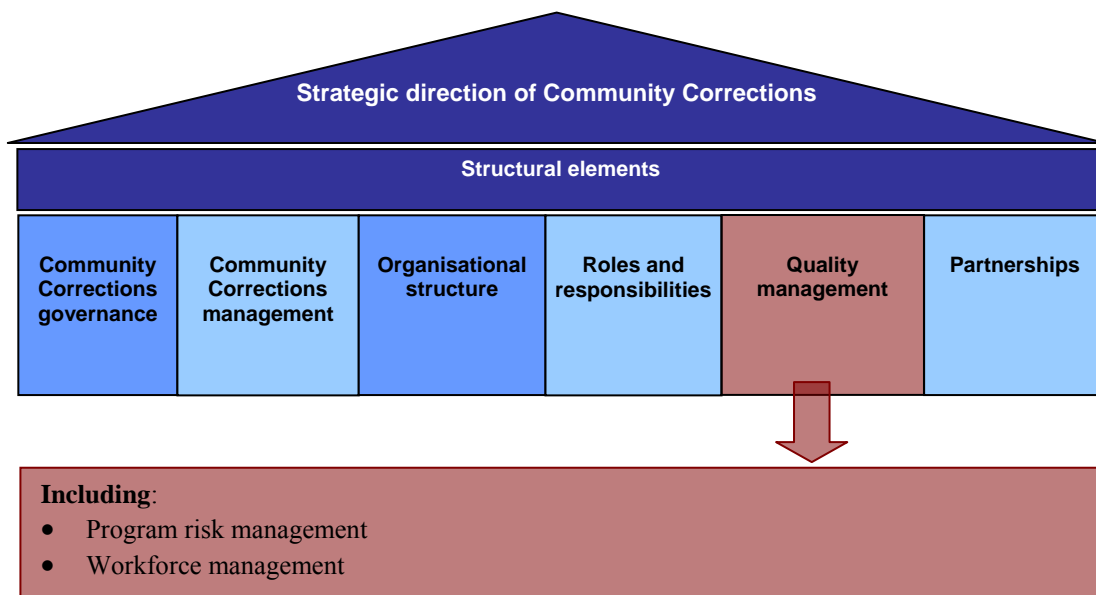
Recruiting and screening paid CSO supervisors at a central level will also enable the Statewide CSO Unit to match recruitment of CSO supervisors to the recruitment of project sites. This means that the use of project sites that do not provide their own supervisors is not restricted by unavailability of paid CSO supervisors.

8 Quality management

The changes described so far for the CSO model describe new or refreshed ways of working to deliver better outcomes and a more controlled CSO scheme. As with all proposed changes across the whole of Community Corrections, changes to the CSO scheme must be underpinned by strong accountability and sound guidelines and procedures to minimise any risk related to the scheme.

A number of elements are considered relating to quality management for the CSO scheme, as illustrated in Figure 8.1, below.

Figure 8.1: Elements of quality management under the proposed model



Quality assurance and accountability for the CSO scheme will fall under the general framework described for the whole of Community Corrections. However, specific to CSOs, a number of refreshed program and practice guidelines should be in place to support the delivery and strengthen accountability of the scheme and are outlined below, under Community Service Order Risk Management.

It is proposed that workforce management specifically required to deliver the CSO scheme is considered within the wider Workforce Management Strategy recommended in the Community Corrections Report. However, it is recommended that a few elements are adapted and/or tailored to provide effective support for staff involved in delivering CSOs, in the following areas of the strategy:

- workforce planning and forecasting – this aligns to Community Corrections but specific attention should focus on paid CSO supervisors;
- attraction and recruitment of quality staff with appropriate qualifications or experience – specifically targeted to the attraction of paid CSO supervisors;

- professional learning and development including induction, ongoing training, professional supervision; and
- retention strategies that provide a framework for reward and recognition, for paid CSO supervisors.

8.1 Community Service Order risk management

CSO risk management deals specifically with:

- CSO scheme (program) guidelines:
- practice guidelines;
- Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S);
- ongoing management and review; and
- evaluation and continuous improvement.

These are detailed below.

8.1.1 Program guidelines

Program guidelines specific to the CSO scheme should include the following elements:

- an overview of the scheme's aims and objectives including principles of managing offenders on CSOs;
- detailed description of staffing roles and responsibilities (and location), including CSO supervisors;
- strengthened selection criteria and responsibilities of CSO supervisors;
- roles of Statewide CSO Unit, including:
 - processes to recruit, assess and manage and review CSO sites;
 - criteria to inform decisions about CSO site suitability and review of sites periodically;
- use, management and audit of the central project site database; and
- roles and responsibilities of CSO project sites.

Guidelines relating to assessing and recruiting CSO sites should consider factors such as the timeframes for response to enquiries for information, the nature of assessment and areas for consideration in the assessment.

Program guidelines should also be available, perhaps in an adapted format, for reference by stakeholders outside of Community Corrections who have an interest in the CSO scheme

8.1.2 Practice guidelines

Practice guidelines should also be developed to provide guidance to community corrections staff and CSO supervisors on the day-to-day delivery of the CSO scheme. It is suggested that the current CSO manual be updated to incorporate changes adopted following this review. Examples of the elements to be included in practice guidelines are:

- criteria to inform the decision making process for assessing offender suitability for CSOs (see below);
- description of the CSO suitability assessment and processes, including a description of a new risk assessment tool that is recommended;
- clarity on when to request a PSR to further investigate concerns raised by the suitability assessment;
- clarity on the number of hours that can be counted for each type of activity;
- responding to non-compliance, including a decision making tool to inform when to implement support and when to initiate breach proceedings, timeframes, actions to be taken and staff to be involved;
- conducting breaches, including clarity regarding gathering information, timeframes, and issuing warnings;
- level of on-site supervision required by a CSO Supervisor, either paid or volunteer, for each offender; and
- criteria regarding allocation of assessment and non-compliance work to OMs and OM-CSOs.

Program and practice guidelines should lead to more consistency and professional practice but practice must be closely monitored by Team Leaders. This is particularly important for CSOs, as the review indicated that many offender managers considered CSOs to be a lower priority than other orders, in spite of the higher tariff of the sentence. Unless there is explicit performance management and monitoring of elements of the CSO scheme, there is a danger that this attitude will continue and improvements to the structure and model of the scheme will not be realised on the ground.

8.1.2.1 Eligibility criteria for sites

Criteria for eligibility to become a CSO project site are important to ensure that the sites are appropriate and safe. A number of jurisdictions have gone down the route of accrediting the sites that they use for CSO placements¹⁸. In the short to medium term this may be an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy in Tasmania, but guidelines should be developed to inform recruitment and ongoing management decisions about CSO sites.

It is recommended that CSO sites demonstrate the following characteristics¹⁹:

- that the site has a not for profit status and is community based;
- the work to be undertaken is of benefit to the community or to community members;
- work provided to offenders does not take away any paid or Work for the Dole jobs already in existence;
- the site provides a safe working environment and is able to provide the appropriate support to an offender to undertake the work. This includes a commitment to maintaining tools and equipment in working order, if provided by the site; and
- the site is able to facilitate or put in place supervision arrangements that are appropriate for the management of offenders. This may include enabling a paid CSO supervisor to attend the site or providing a volunteer supervisor already working at the site.

To become a project site, the organisations should also be prepared to:

- participate in occasional training that may be required to ensure that the offenders are safely managed and supervised;
- take part in ongoing management and monitoring of the location as a suitable site;
- work with offenders in a constructive way that improves social attitudes of the offender and facilitates their interaction with the community;
- undertake the role as a CSO site within the regulations and guidelines stipulated by Community Corrections. This might include timely reporting of behaviour that breaches the conditions of an order; and
- sign a 'contract' to illustrate their commitment and accountability to their roles and responsibilities.

¹⁸ Sites in NSW have to be accredited and Queensland is looking at this as an option in the future.

¹⁹ It is acknowledged that the CSO Manual, implemented in 2006 includes details about site criteria (page 24).

8.1.3 Occupational health and safety

A significant concern raised by staff and project sites during the review was that offenders on CSOs do not always have access to appropriate equipment to enable them to undertake their work safely. This limits the number of sites they can work on and, in some cases, presents a safety risk to the individual offender.

Issues were raised during consultations over the type of work that offenders could undertake. In some cases offenders with practical skills/ trades and qualifications (e.g. in plumbing) were unable to use these skills in unpaid work due to health and safety reasons and to comply with workers compensation conditions. It is suggested that this policy is reviewed to determine circumstances in which offenders can use their skills to undertake their order. This will improve the range of project types that are available and will provide good opportunities for practical reparation to the community.

8.1.4 Tools and equipment

Part of the process of ‘matching’ offenders to sites will require a consideration of the equipment needed to undertake the tasks. Offenders should only be matched to particular sites if they have or are able to access appropriate equipment and if they have the required skills. Tools and equipment can be provided:

- by the offender;
- by the project site; or
- by Community Corrections, allocated and maintained by the paid CSO supervisors.

While these requirements are not necessarily new to the CSO scheme, consultation feedback indicated that this was managed inconsistently across the state and in some cases was a barrier to offenders completing CSO hours. Therefore, there is an opportunity within the scope of the proposed changes for there to be far more effective monitoring of availability and access to equipment through:

- seeking out and actively recruiting sites that are able to provide their own tools and equipment; and
- providing a greater range and type of sites to provide alternative work for offenders who do not have their own equipment.

The Team Leader of the Statewide CSO Unit should approve all placements of offenders on a site. This is described as part of the roles and responsibilities under Section 7.1. Approval should include consideration of the equipment needs and how the equipment is provided. This is particularly important for equipment provided by the offender, to ensure that there are checks in place to ensure the equipment is safe and in good working order.

It is also recommended that the Statewide CSO Unit holds a small budget to purchase tools and equipment as one off expenses where this would be beneficial. Guidelines should be developed to inform this decision making.

8.1.5 Ongoing management and review of CSO sites

Under the proposed model, all CSO project sites will be allocated a key contact member of staff at the Statewide CSO Unit. This individual is likely to be the member of staff who conducted the initial screening (and visit if the site is in the South). The key contact will be responsible for maintaining links with the site, ongoing management and review and addressing any concerns an issues that arise.

Ongoing management and review of sites is important to ensure that sites continue to be suitable and able to appropriately supervise and/or provide work for offenders by:

- ensuring that sites continue to be suitable and appropriate for a CSO. Consultations identified that often sites, particularly individual or pensioner sites, have not been reviewed for a number of years and no longer fulfil the criteria of providing a benefit to the community;
- maintaining relationships with sites and with volunteer supervisors, particularly at sites where there may be long periods of time between the placement of offenders. At these times it will be important for the CSO Unit to maintain contact and a good relationship with the site so that they remain prepared and willing to accept offenders when there is demand for that site;
- providing an opportunity for sites and volunteer supervisors to raise concerns and get issues addressed that do not directly relate to any one individual offender;
- ensuring that sites are informed about any changes to the CSO scheme, including legislative requirements, that may impact on them; and
- providing a mechanism to remove unsuitable project sites from the 'register' of available project sites.

Management and review of project sites could be conducted as part of planned or routine ongoing management, independently of the placement of offender, or in direct response to a particular trigger or incident involving offender(s).

Under the proposed model, the Statewide CSO Unit will provide a dedicated resource to undertake and coordinate the majority of these time consuming tasks, which were previously conducted by the regions. Activities that require visits to a site may require support from offender managers in other regions.

8.1.6 Evaluation and continuous improvement for CSO project sites

Within a quality culture, it is important to ensure that CSO project sites continue to operate to same standards and guidelines across the State and that they remain safe and appropriate for CSO offenders. It is also desirable to conduct ongoing evaluation of outcomes for offenders on project sites and to identify the types of project sites that deliver the most positive, consistent outcomes. This information should then be used to inform targeted recruitment of sites to enable the best outcomes for offenders, in terms of completion of orders and achievement of positive goals.

It is proposed that evaluation and continuous improvement of project sites be conducted by the Statewide CSO Unit through ongoing management and review of sites and also through targeted evaluation exercises.

8.2 Workforce management

Workforce management relating to the CSO scheme is broadly aligned to the wider workforce management outlined in the *Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report*. However, for the CSO scheme, workforce management requires consideration of:

- learning and development for offender managers specific to the CSO scheme;
- learning and development for CSO supervisors;
- professional supervision of paid CSO supervisors; and
- workforce retention.

8.2.1 Professional learning and development for offender managers

To support offender managers to deliver the scheme effectively, efficiently and safely some consideration will need to be given to ensuring that induction, orientation, training and professional development needs that relate specifically to CSOs are addressed. This might include:

- specific, or more in-depth training on the protocols, procedures and guidelines that inform the CSO scheme;
- recognising triggers for non-compliance and understanding how and when to provide support;
- training on the brief risk screening tool to be used as part of the CSO suitability assessments;
- sharing findings from quality assurance and continuous improvement of project sites, e.g. discussing “what works” with offenders on particular sites; and

- raising awareness about contemporary best practice and understanding how to introduce effective practice into the Tasmania CSO scheme.

Supervision of staff involved in CSOs should also include a specific focus on the quality of response to offenders on CSOs and may include addressing particular challenges staff face in addressing non-compliance.

For newer staff, involvement in assessing and managing non-compliance for CSO offenders may provide on the job training opportunities.

8.2.2 Learning and development for supervisors

The review found that paid and volunteer CSO supervisors are currently not receiving the level of support, training and development that they need to be able to effectively supervise offenders within the conditions of an order. In part, this is because CSO supervisors are not considered part of the 'professional' structure of individuals providing a response to offenders in the community.

Induction and orientation of CSO supervisors

It is important to ensure that CSO supervisors understand the roles they undertake and are clear about the expectations of them in delivering the CSO scheme. All new CSO supervisors should be required to undertake a specific induction when they first start. For paid CSO supervisors, this should be conducted by the Team Leader and at least one OM/ OM-CSO in the region in which they will be working. Induction for volunteer supervisors should be conducted by an offender manager, in consultation with the Statewide CSO Unit, usually at the project site.

Community Corrections already has an induction package; the same package is used for both offenders and paid supervisors on a CSO. However, feedback from consultations indicated that, in spite of this, supervisors may still not be appropriately supervising offenders. Examples given were the inability (or unwillingness) to set boundaries or to report back to offender managers on inappropriate behaviour while on the site. To meet the objectives of the proposed model, it is suggested that the current induction package is reviewed and an adapted version is developed for specific use with paid CSO supervisors.

The induction package should provide clearer information and reiterate the roles and responsibilities of a CSO supervisor. It should include:

- an overview of the aims and objectives of the CSO, including requirements for compliance;
- an overview of types of offences and behaviours typical with CSO offenders;
- an introduction to basic skills, such as communication, building rapport and setting boundaries;
- a description of the roles and responsibilities of all staff and others involved in delivering the CSO scheme;

- tasks related to supervision, including how to complete paperwork; and
- professional reporting and management lines, how to report incidents and seek support and examples of when this may be necessary.

It is equally important to conduct an induction session with volunteer CSO supervisors and project site managers before an offender is placed at the site. This induction package must also provide clarity around roles and responsibilities, but may be an abbreviated version of the one used with paid CSO supervisors to recognise the voluntary nature of the supervisors.

Ongoing learning and development for CSO supervisors

It may be appropriate for some paid CSO supervisors to attend Community Corrections or other training to support their role in delivering CSOs. This might include training related to new approaches or systems or soft skills training, such as setting boundaries. It might also include First Aid or CPR training. Attendance at training should be discussed with Team Leaders as part of professional supervision sessions as there may be impacts on cost (to pay for attendance) and program content (some adaptations may be needed to the training).

It is not proposed that volunteer supervisors be included in learning and development training generally. However, there may be some occasions where they could be invited to attend briefing sessions that they may find useful, such as a briefing on changes to the CSO scheme.

8.2.3 Qualifications and experience of CSO supervisors

Although not part of the 'professional' group that manages offenders, volunteer and paid CSO supervisors should be required to demonstrate a basic level of skills and required personal characteristics, for example:

- basic understanding of the criminal justice system and principles of offender management and risk factors relating to offending behaviour, or the ability to acquire this quickly;
- ability to supervise people in a fair, firm, consistent and non-judgemental manner and to monitor and report on behaviour;
- ability to work independently and to use initiative within established guidelines and policy;
- skills in setting boundaries and ability to model behaviour; and
- understanding of, and, ability to maintain confidentiality.

As paid members of Community Corrections, paid CSO supervisors in particular should be required to demonstrate how they continue to meet these skills and behaviours during monthly meetings and three monthly supervision sessions with Team Leaders.

In contrast, skills and behaviours of volunteer supervisors, where it impacts on the safety and appropriate delivery of a CSO, will be addressed indirectly through ongoing management and contact between the Statewide CSO Unit and the management of the CSO project site.

8.2.4 Supervision of paid CSO supervisors

Under the new model, paid CSO supervisors are considered a more central part of the Community Corrections professional structure, although still employed on a casual basis. This is to reflect the critical role that paid supervisors play in delivering the CSO scheme and maintaining the safety of offenders and the community.

To support them in their role, it is proposed that Team Leaders conduct a professional supervision session with each paid supervisor every three months. This may be conducted face-to-face or by phone. The supervision session should be informed by feedback from OMs/ OM-CSOs who work closely with the paid supervisor, who may also be invited to attend the session. Professional supervision will include discussion of general performance, such as timeliness of providing paperwork, maintenance of equipment, rapport and relationships with offenders, as well as specific issues to be raised by Community Corrections or by the paid supervisors. The sessions should also highlight any areas for potential training or support.

It is not proposed that direct supervision be offered to volunteer CSO supervisors, although any support needs they have may be addressed by the Statewide CSO Unit.

8.2.5 Workforce retention within the CSO scheme

As described in the *Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report*, the retention of competent staff should be a key focus of Community Corrections. In the context of the new CSO scheme model, a number of elements are introduced that should lead to improved retention of staff and CSO supervisors, including:

- opportunities to use the CSO scheme to develop the skills and abilities of new staff as part of on the job training;
- in the North and North West, a move away from a discrete CSO focused role that is perceived as deskilling and leading to low motivation levels; and
- more structured learning and development opportunities to enable professional development for paid CSO supervisors.

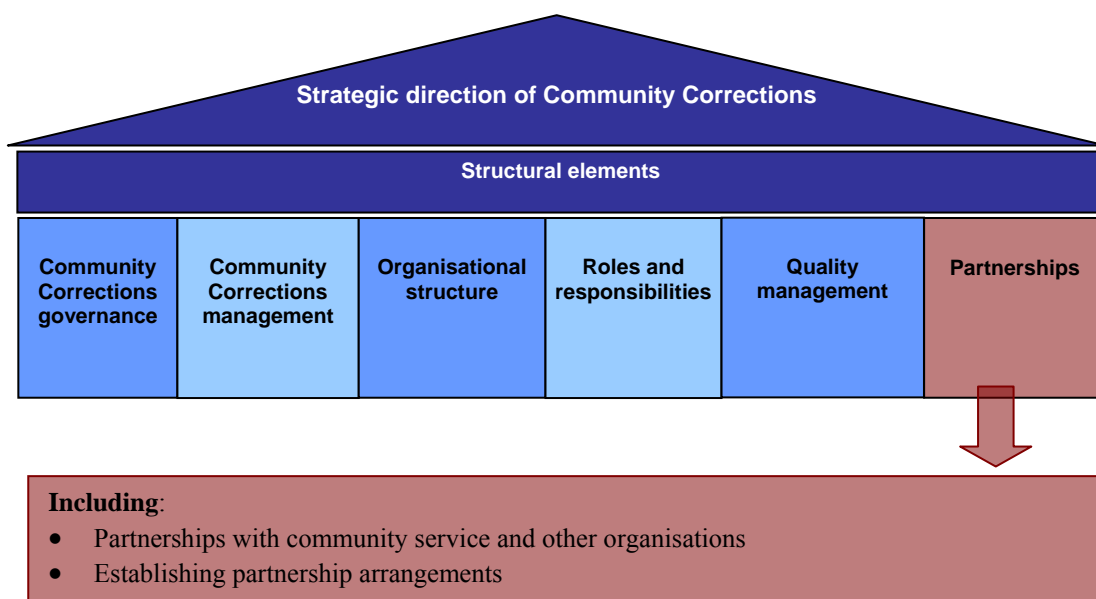
8.3 Summary

Introducing these quality management elements, within a framework of quality assurance and monitoring and evaluation against clear performance indicators, will provide accountability and assurance that the scheme is delivered and managed safely and in line with CSO objectives. This should be further embedded through the reinforcement of a professional work culture.

9 Partnerships

As described in the *Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report*, addressing criminogenic risk factors and reducing reoffending cannot be the sole responsibility of one organisation. As with the wider Community Corrections Service, achieving the aims and objectives of the CSO scheme, requires support from and links to a range of other stakeholders. Creating these partnerships requires identifying key stakeholders and establishing partnership arrangements, as illustrated in Figure 9.1 below.

Figure 9.1: Elements of partnerships and integrated working under the proposed model



A key element of improvements to the CSO scheme is the expansion of the range, type and availability of CSO project sites, undertaken by the Statewide CSO Unit. This will require the Statewide CSO Unit to engage with and build partnerships with community based organisations, including government and non-government.

Establishing and creating constructive working relationships with relevant organisations and services will not only improve opportunities to recruit appropriate CSO project sites, but will also:

- enable a better understanding of the requirements, parameters and challenges faced by the community organisations who assist with the provision of CSO project sites. An example would be better mutual understanding between the CSO scheme community organisations about the purpose (and therefore required elements) of providing CSO project sites;
- lead to the creation of mechanisms to address challenges and issues that arise, for example offenders who are non-compliant with attending project sites; and

- foster a positive relationship with mutual respect and confidence, which in time should strengthen the input that CSO project sites are prepared to put into providing and supervising CSO offenders.

9.1 Partnerships with community service and other organisations

In order to provide a range of appropriate CSO project sites, consideration should be given to creating links and partnerships with a wide range of organisations that might be able to provide unpaid work for CSO offenders. These might include:

- rotary clubs;
- churches or other religious organisations;
- bowling clubs;
- hospitals;
- parks and reserves;
- schools;
- charity organisations
- nursing homes;
- local councils;
- housing organisations; and
- golf clubs;
- community centres.

9.2 Establishing partnerships arrangements

Protocols to govern relationships between the CSO scheme (specifically the Statewide CSO Unit) and other stakeholders will need to consider:

- information sharing, including information to be shared and when;
- dispute resolution; and
- expectations and relative roles and responsibilities, relating to CSO offenders, of each organisation.

Partnerships should be formalised through developing:

- memoranda of understanding (MOUs);
- information sharing guidelines;
- specific purpose guidelines, e.g. relating to the provision CSO project sites; and
- formal 'contract' arrangements that state roles and responsibilities of CSO project sites.

These arrangements should be developed by the Statewide CSO Unit, in consultation with the Directorate and agreed in consultation with the stakeholder to whom they relate. MOUs,

contracts and guidelines should form the basis for regular feedback about the nature and outputs of the relationship. An example would be that a formal ‘contract’ arrangement between the Statewide CSO Unit and community based services would inform discussion about how well each organisation is achieving its roles and responsibilities in relation to the provision of project work. This might include the suitability of the work, issues to do with supervision of offenders on CSO and any quality/safety issues that need to be addressed throughout the life of CSO project sites.

Some arrangements may relate to relationships between organisations in a specific region, others may relate to arrangements at a whole of organisation, statewide level – such as government departments with whom CSO project sites can be arranged (i.e. working in National Parks, or on graffiti removal teams for local government or police).

9.3 Summary

Partnerships are critical to the success of the CSO scheme, as it is this foundation that enables the scheme to offer appropriate and flexible arrangements to assist offenders in meeting the requirements of their order. Further, the more relationships developed with external stakeholders, the better the outcomes for both the CSO scheme and offenders more broadly.

10 Next steps

The review recommends a number of areas for improvement to the CSO scheme, based on feedback from stakeholders and from comparisons for evidence based practice. It is suggested that improvements to the CSO scheme are taken forward in line with those recommended to implement a new Community Corrections model. Therefore, next steps discussed below mirror those recommended in the *Review of Tasmania Community Corrections Report* for the whole of the Community Corrections organisation.

10.1 Development of an implementation plan

To support the implementation of the improvements presented in this report, an implementation plan will be developed that outlines actions, timeframes and responsibilities for taking forward change. The implementation plan will:

- consider all areas of governance and operation in which improvements are required;
- state the current context and arrangements and identify the required ‘end point’ as a result of improvements;
- describe tasks and activities required to implement improvements;
- define and consider short, medium and long term goals; and
- identify, in consultation with key stakeholders, who will be responsible for the tasks and activities.

10.2 Development of a communication and consultation strategy

Communication with a range of stakeholders will be important to facilitate a number of changes that will be required and to communicate the outcome and impact of changes on all stakeholders. It is strongly recommended that a communication and consultation strategy is developed that identifies key stakeholders, internally and externally to Community Corrections, and describes how stakeholders will be engaged and kept informed of improvements to the service.

The communication and consultation strategy should be developed by the Directorate, with input from the Regional Operations Manager and Team Leaders.

It will be important to ensure that existing CSO project site stakeholders are kept informed of and, where necessary, involved in implementing recommendations to improve the CSO scheme.