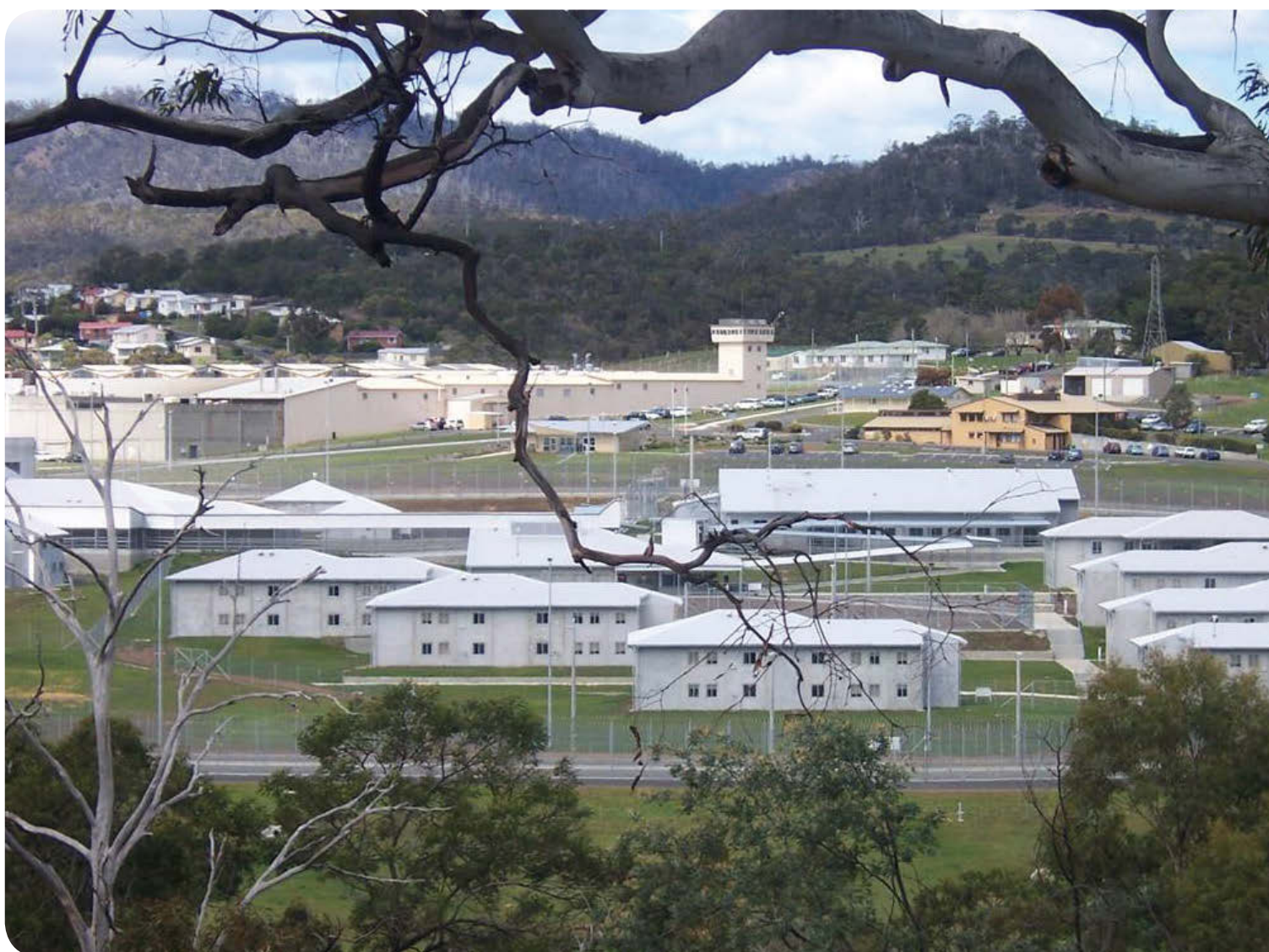




Breaking the Cycle – A Safer Community:

Strategies for Improving Throughcare for Offenders

2016 – 2020



The Risdon Prison Complex.

Cover page - Artworks produced as part of the annual Artists with Conviction exhibition, stone bridge constructed as part of the Risdon Vale Creek renewal with the Clarence City Council and inside the Risdon Prison Complex.

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Minister's Introduction



The State Government has made a conscious decision to invest in the future of Corrections in Tasmania to ensure that our community is as safe as possible. It has provided additional funding, including operational funding for new prison facilities to build on the already strong foundations in place.

Corrections is assisted by the excellent work undertaken by a broad range of government agencies and non-government partners who are enthusiastic and committed contributors to the support and development of people who find themselves in contact with the corrections system. We must continue to work on these relationships in a way that adds to our strategic agenda.

I was pleased when the former government commissioned the development of a long-term vision for Corrections. The *Breaking the Cycle* strategic plan and the articulation of a well-researched, considered, clear and achievable vision founded on broad community participation was a major step in the right direction.

While continuing to support the goals of *Breaking the Cycle*, we also need to increase our focus over the coming years on assisting the effective and smooth transition of people from their first contact with Corrections to successful reintegration into the community.

I want to ensure we have appropriate interventions for young adults in the 18-25 year age group to create opportunities to interrupt the cycle of offending and reoffending in our young people before it is too late.

I also want to ensure we pursue initiatives that will provide support to the families of those people in the corrections system with the aim of trying to break the intergenerational link to criminal offending. There is already some excellent work occurring in this area through the commitment and dedication of staff and a number of our non-government partners but I believe more can be achieved. Programs and initiatives to support families, involving families in plans for release and helping those people returning to the community maintain or restore relationships where this is appropriate, should be central to reintegration.

The government has announced a significant investment to reduce family violence in Tasmania and has made commitments in relation to progressively phasing out suspended sentences, introducing alternative sentencing options and introducing compulsory treatment for sex offenders in prison. We will need to work closely with our partners to ensure appropriate sentencing options and interventions are in place.

The rehabilitation of those in our corrections system is also a whole of community responsibility and Corrections recognises the need to increase its engagement with the Tasmanian public. We know the drivers of crime include lack of employment and employment skills, lack of education, homelessness or addiction issues among others. We can enhance public safety and reduce reoffending by addressing these risk factors and other needs that bring people to our attention in the first place.

I believe the goals and strategies outlined in this document will help us to ensure our community is safer. By enhancing throughcare we can help many Tasmanians get their lives back on track through appropriate support and interventions and we can reduce the number of future victims of crime.

This document was prepared with the assistance of a number of stakeholders and I would particularly like to thank the Throughcare Reference Group. Following a forum held in November 2015, over 20 non-government organisations and representatives from the Department of Justice, Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections volunteered to be part of the Reference Group. The throughcare approach was widely supported by the stakeholders consulted. In addition to the strategies contained in this document, many other ideas have been captured during the consultation process that fit within our higher level goals.

Dr Vanessa Goodwin MLC

Minister for Corrections

August 2016

What is Throughcare?

Throughcare is a coordinated, collaborative approach to reducing the risk of reoffending and successful reintegration into the community. It covers all those who come into contact with the justice system from their initial contact to completion of their sentence and return to the Tasmanian community.

Corrections in Tasmania aims to provide appropriate interventions for all individuals and acknowledges that every interaction is an opportunity to positively influence behaviour and encourage pro-social thinking.

Throughcare principles include:

- Coordinated and consistent services are provided in accordance with a person's assessed needs across Corrections and in the community.
- Interventions and reintegration strategies are resourced appropriately, prioritised, targeted and delivered at the right time.
- Relevant information is shared within Corrections, other agencies and service providers to avoid duplication and improve individual outcomes.
- Community and other government agencies are included as partners to enable services delivered pre-release to continue through to reintegration into the community.
- To the greatest extent possible, the same organisations and people work with and build relationships with individuals in prison and in the community following release.
- The individual is involved in planning and decision-making and receives support and services to meet their needs and the needs of their families in appropriate cases.

Background

The *Breaking the Cycle Strategic Plan for Tasmanian Corrections 2011-2020* was released by the then Minister for Corrections and Consumer Protection in April 2011. It was developed following a series of consultations with key stakeholders. A number of written submissions were also received in response to a publicly released discussion paper.

The final Strategic Plan contained seven goals and a number of strategies to assist Corrections in Tasmania to improve and expand services and programs, develop closer relationships with partners and the community, improve facilities and infrastructure, support alternative sentencing options and increase support to its workforce.

Breaking the Cycle received wide community and political support and continues to provide a clear focus and firm foundation upon which to move forward. The vision, goals and strategies remain very relevant.

Major reforms have occurred across Corrections and these reforms are starting to have a clear and significant impact. While the most obvious change within the Tasmania Prison Service has been perhaps the construction of the new facilities on the Risdon prison site, considerable work has been done to identify and implement interventions that address the drivers of crime, including literacy and numeracy skills development, vocational training, the treatment of addictions (specifically drugs and alcohol) and anger management. We continue to progress initiatives designed to assist those within the corrections system to acknowledge the damage caused by their actions, control their offending behaviour and prepare them for release into the community.

Corrections deals with many people transitioning in and out of the system. The following tables set out the new receptions and releases and average time served in prison during the 2015 calendar year, together with the average daily offender population in the Tasmania Prison Service and in Community Corrections during the 2015-16 financial year.

Tasmania Prison Service - Receptions and Releases 2015

Receptions	1554
Releases	1488
Average time served (sentenced prisoners only)	207 days
Average time served (sentenced prisoners and remandees)	120 days

Source: Tasmania Prison Service

Average daily offender/prisoner population 2015-16

	Male	Female	Total
Tasmania Prison Service	480	44	524
Community Corrections	1491	425	1916

Source: Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections

Over the coming years, Corrections will maintain its focus on the existing *Breaking the Cycle* goals. We will continue to work on improving our infrastructure, providing appropriate workforce development, training and support and work to support a range of sentencing options. We will also continue to ensure we have appropriate procedures in place to support victims of crime. At the same time, we will look at gaps in service provision as we move towards enhancing throughcare and a "person-centred approach", focusing on the needs of each individual, as well as delivering opportunities to engage in restorative or giving back activities.

Rather than operating in isolation, we must move our focus to the entire justice system and work closely with our partners to ensure appropriate interventions and supports are available to assist people to change and be productive members of our community.

This document contains additional goals and strategies that support throughcare and it will sit alongside the *Breaking the Cycle Strategic Plan for Tasmanian Corrections 2011-2020*.

The strategies are a mixture of long-term and short-term actions to be undertaken in Corrections. We will prepare a report on progress and implementation of the high level strategies annually for publication on the Department of Justice website.

Vision

The *Breaking the Cycle* vision for the Tasmanian corrections system is:

A reduction in reoffending and an increase in the ongoing safety of the Tasmanian community by providing a safe, secure, humane and effective correctional system with opportunities for rehabilitation, personal development, reintegration and community engagement.

Our vision for throughcare in the corrections system is:

To provide a quality and collaborative throughcare model in partnership with other agencies and the community that supports people across the corrections system, with coordinated assistance and interventions to maximise the potential of each individual.

How we will Enhance Throughcare

It is important to be clear about the role of Corrections in the criminal justice system. Corrections cannot be solely responsible for rehabilitation. An effective corrections system relies on all parties playing their role, including:

- the community - providing the mandate, resources and support;
- the corrections system - which is tasked to enhance community safety, and to provide programs and professional support responsive to the needs of individuals;
- the individuals themselves - who are encouraged to use opportunities provided to them through the corrections system.

The corrections system alone cannot redress the welfare, education, housing and employment needs of those we have contact with.

This places the onus on us as a government to ensure that we have created the right environment for our corrections system to have the greatest chance of success.

To this end we will create a new entity – Corrections Tasmania – to bring together the Tasmanian Prison Service and Community Corrections under the same organisational structure.

Whilst staff in both organisations have worked hard to ensure they are working together, there have been barriers in their way. These barriers have made it difficult to take a truly person-centred approach to rehabilitation across the Tasmanian corrections system.

This new entity under a single organisational structure will allow more targeted programs, better information sharing and more effective ongoing case management. It will help us to deliver centrally coordinated sentence management with improved service delivery and a corrections system that is more responsive to the needs of each individual.

Planning and consultation to create Corrections Tasmania will commence immediately.

Equally we need to ensure that other government services are playing their part in contributing to community safety through the rehabilitation of those in the corrections system, and that we are taking a whole-of-government approach. To this end the Minister for Corrections will chair a series of individual one-off meetings with the Minister for Health, Minister for Human Services and Minister for Education and Training to identify changes in practice in those areas and in Corrections that will lead to improved throughcare outcomes. The results of these meetings and associated actions will be reported to Cabinet by the middle of 2017.

To enhance throughcare processes within Corrections, the following overarching goals have been identified:

1. To improve the organisational structures across Corrections in Tasmania to support throughcare.
2. To improve the assessment and management of each individual from their first contact with the corrections system by enhancing our relationships with other service providers and through more effective sharing of information.
3. To contribute to a reduction in reoffending by case managing individuals throughout their sentence and by providing interventions and opportunities to enable each person to achieve positive and sustainable changes.
4. To recognise the valuable role community and family play in rehabilitation and reintegration by providing opportunities for individuals and their families to engage in mutually supportive activities during supervision or imprisonment and through increased community engagement.
5. To ensure that individuals have their reintegration needs met through post-release support services arranged pre-release and by supervision in the community where appropriate.
6. To enhance information technology systems across Corrections to support the integration of services and improvements to throughcare.

Strategies to achieve these goals are outlined on the following pages.

Goals

Goal 1 – To improve the organisational structures across Corrections in Tasmania to support throughcare

In order to achieve the goals outlined in this document, we must ensure the internal structures operating within the corrections system are appropriate to support throughcare.

We will oversee the implementation of the strategies contained in this document through a Departmental Steering Committee chaired by the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Justice and Director of Corrective Services to provide overarching governance and coordination.

We particularly need to work more closely and collaboratively across the Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections and move towards the development of a single case management plan for an individual, with increased contact and relevant information shared with other supporting agencies and organisations. Both areas deal with people with similar risks and needs and the staff face many of the same issues and share similar training needs.

Positive relationships already exist between staff of the Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections. By building on these pre-existing relationships and by coming together and increasing the exchange of knowledge, we can better understand the clients we work with, look at opportunities to share valuable training and program resources and work towards further enhancing coordination and facilitating shared goals. We must support and encourage staff to work more collaboratively to achieve a real commitment to throughcare.

The strategies we will progress to achieve this goal are:

- **Provide organisational structures and support to enable staff to work more closely and collaboratively to improve throughcare outcomes**
 - *Commence planning and consultation for the creation of a new entity – Corrections Tasmania – bringing the Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections together under a single organisational structure*
 - *Identify opportunities to combine resources, e.g. staff training and recruitment, programs delivery, reintegration functions and support roles*
 - *Implement any structural or operational changes required to support throughcare and sentence management processes for individuals transitioning from prison to the community*
 - *Increase the effectiveness of assessment tools and case management practices, improve consistency, reduce duplication and increase confidence in their use among staff*

Goals

Goal 2 – To improve the assessment and management of each individual from their first contact with the corrections system by enhancing our relationships with other service providers and through more effective sharing of information

A person's first contact with the adult corrections system in Tasmania could be through referral to a probation officer for a pre-sentence assessment or through the Tasmania Prison Service (either on remand or following conviction). By the time an alleged offender has come to the attention of the corrections system, they may also have a history of contact with agencies such as Tasmania Police or the Youth Justice system. Likewise, a person sentenced to a prison sentence may well have a history with Community Corrections.

Those people who have contact with the corrections system can have very diverse and complex needs including intellectual disability or acquired brain injury, other mental or physical health issues, addiction and substance abuse issues, low levels of education or lack of employment. They may have issues with family relationships, limited support networks or be affected by homelessness.

The identification of risk factors, health and human services needs and required interventions in the early stages of contact with Corrections is critical to a throughcare approach. As the Salvation Army noted in its submission to the development of these throughcare strategies, "assessment at initial contact must be comprehensive and completed with a view to effective exit planning". Assessments identify required interventions, supports and services, the external agencies required to deliver pre- and post-release services and the appropriate level of supervision for those sentenced to community based orders.

Corrections in Tasmania uses both risk-need-responsivity and strengths-based approaches to assessment and reintegration. It seeks to deliver an individually tailored plan and does not rely on providing broad based interventions or methods that are not evidence based.

The principles of a risk-need-responsivity approach are:

Risk – matching the level of service to the individual's risk of reoffending.

Need – assessing criminogenic needs and targeting them in treatment.

Responsivity – maximising the individual's ability to learn from a rehabilitative intervention by providing cognitive behavioural treatment and by tailoring interventions to the individual's learning style, level of motivation, abilities and strengths.

A strengths-based approach emphasises an individual's strengths and life achievements, including their priorities, goals and aspirations.

When used with actuarial tools and measures, these approaches identify an individual's needs and inform sentence planning.

Reintegration planning also strives to incorporate desistance principles and involves the individual in accessing or creating pro-social relationships, links to supports in the community (people or groups) and the building of quality relationships, as these are central to the process of desisting from crime.

For those sentenced to a period in custody, initial assessments to identify immediate management needs are applied to both remandees and sentenced prisoners. A health assessment to determine physical and psychological health is undertaken and may involve referral for specialist assessment, as is a basic social and welfare needs assessment. Those serving very short sentences may only be subject to these assessments. However, for prisoners serving longer sentences, further detailed assessments are undertaken. Individuals serving a community sentence are subject to detailed assessments if they are initially assessed as medium to high risk.

Pre-sentence reports and community service order suitability assessments are provided to the courts upon request and assist the sentencing Judge or Magistrate to arrive at appropriate sentences. The following assessments and reports were completed by Community Corrections in the 2015-16 financial year.

Community Corrections – Reports and Assessments 2015-16

Pre-Sentence Reports	1110
Screening Assessments	476
Community Service Order Suitability Assessments	137
Court Mandated Diversion Assessment Reports	135

Source: Department of Justice JOIST database

Improving linkages with the Courts and increasing the flow of information will enable Corrections to identify where any services provided to the Courts can be enhanced. For example, providing more information on the content and length of rehabilitation programs, and ensuring orders are appropriately supported and enforced, will assist in maintaining judicial and community confidence in the available sentencing options and the management and rehabilitation of those people sentenced to a period of imprisonment or a community based order.

Developing our relationships with agencies and services already known to an individual will lead to improvements in the assessment of risks and needs. By enhancing linkages and sharing information between agencies such as the Courts, Youth Justice, Police, Health and Human Services, education providers and relevant non-government organisations, all service providers can be better informed of a person's background, needs and previous interventions. There is goodwill amongst service providers to effect positive change and to contribute to client centred and coordinated approaches. Further developing our relationships with these agencies and improving our assessment processes will also assist us to identify opportunities for early intervention and interrupt patterns of offending earlier.

The strategies we will progress to achieve this goal are:

- **Enhance service delivery and improve linkages to the Courts:**
 - *Increase communication and consultation with the Courts to identify opportunities for improvements in the assessments provided, e.g. in the provision of pre-sentence reports or the information provided to support the diversion of individuals with mental health needs or other disability related needs*
 - *Increase the provision of information on services delivered by Corrections, e.g. additional information on intervention programs, to Judges, Magistrates and other Court staff*
 - *Ensure practices and procedures are consistent within Corrections relating to the enforcement and administration of program orders*
 - *Work with the Courts and other areas of the justice system to introduce program specific sentencing orders to enable sentencing direct to a community based rehabilitation program such as the Sober Driver Program*

- *Work proactively with our partners in relation to the administration of any new sentencing options*
- *Continue to pursue the use of new technology to increase efficiency and improve outcomes for individuals and victims of crime*
- *Pursue opportunities to introduce flexible working hours for operational staff, e.g. to enable program participants to attend interventions after normal working hours*



Minister for Corrections, Dr Vanessa Goodwin MLC celebrating the delivery of 5,427kg of fruit and vegetables with Brian Edwards, Director of Prisons and Pat Burton from Secondbite in January 2016

- **Improve assessment processes through enhanced relationships and information sharing**
 - *Ensure assessments are undertaken on all individuals who require them to identify risk factors and needs and barriers to motivation for change, including the expansion of needs assessments to different stages during a person's sentence*
 - *Continue to work with partner organisations and across Corrections to increase transparency and the sharing of relevant and timely client information, to increase the sharing of expertise and to research opportunities to develop shared forms or assessments and address any privacy issues*
 - *Further develop our relationships with other government agencies who have already had contact with an individual, e.g. Tasmania Police, Youth Justice, Child Protection, Department of Education*

Goals

Goal 3 – To contribute to a reduction in reoffending by case managing individuals throughout their sentence and by providing interventions and opportunities to enable each person to achieve positive and sustainable changes

Providing intervention programs and services to address issues which contribute to offending is a goal in the *Breaking the Cycle Strategic Plan for Tasmanian Corrections 2011-2020* and remains a major focus of the corrections system.

The development of case management plans is part of the throughcare process and involves identifying how the individualised needs of each person can be met from their first to final contact with Corrections. Planning for reintegration and transition feeds into all areas of a person's journey through the justice system and sustainable change can be achieved when effective case management guides and delivers the appropriate supports when they are required. In order to be truly successful we also need to change an individual's view of their identity from pro-criminal to pro-social and provide a sense of hope so they can desist from crime and see themselves as contributing members of society, parents or co-workers etc. rather than offenders.

Case management is a whole of service approach incorporating assessment, case planning and service delivery support for specialist rehabilitation and reintegration services, as well as facilitating links with an individual's support groups and external providers. It is a flexible and active process focused on the assessed needs of each person. It is also important to recognise and develop a person's strengths. Case management must be collaborative and allow for the individual to take ownership and be involved in planning and service arrangements.

All Corrections staff members who have contact with a person can have a positive impact on their engagement and behaviour and encourage pro-social thinking. Ensuring our staff are well trained, have the appropriate skills and expertise and continuing to build workforce capacity and engagement are high priorities within Corrections.

Alcohol or drug problems, anger management issues, gambling or mental health problems among other issues can contribute to offending. Individuals may require help with basic literacy and numeracy or other skills to assist them to obtain employment.

These diverse needs, and strategies to address them, are identified during the assessment and case management processes. By providing opportunities to participate in appropriate rehabilitation programs we can address the underlying causes of offending behaviour, build skills to obtain employment and keep the community safer by assisting people to live crime free and productive lifestyles. Developing partnerships with business and other stakeholders can improve work skills and enhance employability.

Prison can also represent an opportunity to intervene and treat particular conditions resulting in better health outcomes for individual prisoners and, as a flow-on effect, to the community as a whole. It is sometimes necessary to address a person's basic needs as a priority (including mental and physical health) in order to ensure that they are ready to participate in other interventions.

Productive out of cell hours increase opportunities for prisoners to be meaningfully engaged and to participate in work, education, intervention programs, recreation and other purposeful activities. General withdrawal programs as well as drug treatment and abstinence units will support those individuals who have an addiction and wish to become alcohol or drug free. These programs and activities relieve boredom, increase health, wellbeing and fitness outcomes, allow those in prison to visualise themselves in a useful and normative way and generally contribute to maximising an individual's potential and creating a safer environment for staff and prisoners.

Programs and interventions that target young adults in the 18-25 year age group can also create opportunities to interrupt the cycle of offending and reoffending and a gap in interventions for this group has been identified.

We will review the incentives we provide so that we can encourage individuals to engage in good behaviour and to participate in relevant interventions, and review the appropriate sanctions for non-participation where appropriate treatment has been deemed mandatory.

The strategies we will progress to achieve this goal are:

- **Improve case management processes through a whole of system approach**
 - Identify and implement a consistent assessment and case management approach based on best practice and what works
 - Provide training and support to Corrections staff to enable them to more effectively engage in case management processes
 - Increase collaborative case management, including the involvement of non-government organisations and families in appropriate circumstances
 - Ensure that case management plans contain structure and purposeful activity for those serving community based sentences
 - Ensure timely reviews of the case management process are undertaken



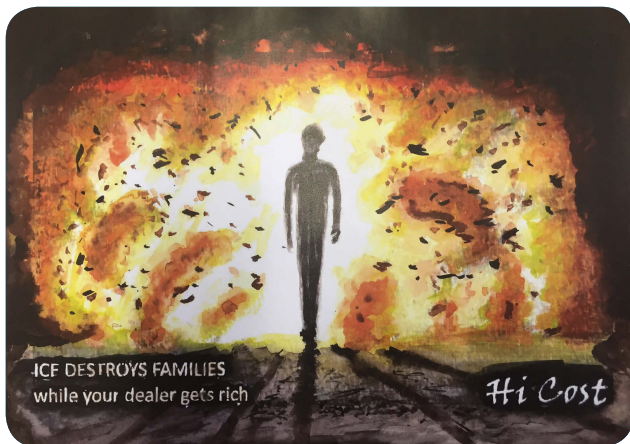
Graffiti removal in partnership with the Glenorchy City Council

- **Enhance the range of productive employment opportunities provided to increase skills and employability on release**
 - Pursue the development of employment programs and partnerships to increase employability, including a review of those initiatives operating in other jurisdictions
 - Work with community partners to explore the feasibility of developing a social enterprise to provide an employment pathway for participants
 - Enhance our focus on increasing a person's employability, skills and qualifications and identifying areas for personal development
 - Ensure employment service provision is included in sentence planning to prepare participants for vocational training, employment placement, work trials or career change
 - Increase our liaison with industry sectors and employers in areas with high labour demand or skills shortages to enhance opportunities for employment or targeted training for local markets
 - Provide increased opportunities for those in prison to engage in employment outside of the prison in a normal community environment and earning an award wage and review policies relating to such employment
 - Increase job readiness through engagement in voluntary community work or work experience through partner organisations and by identifying and removing any barriers to such participation where possible

Goals

- **Increase opportunities to engage in education and training**

- Work with the Department of Education (LINC Tasmania), the Department of State Growth (Skills Tasmania) and TasTAFE to increase the delivery of foundation skills courses (e.g. literacy and numeracy and work ready skills) and the delivery of vocational education and training
- Increase study options and opportunities for people in custody to practice work skills learned in a training environment and to encourage continued engagement in education and training on release
- Increase our engagement with education providers to explore opportunities for partnerships



1st prize winner in the Drug Strategy Group prisoner art competition

- **Continue to increase the provision of interventions that address issues which contribute to offending behaviour and address criminogenic needs such as substance misuse, anti-social attitudes, violent behaviour etc.**

- Ensure appropriate interventions are available to support the compulsory treatment of convicted sex offenders in prison
- Expand the range of programs and interventions aimed at young adults aged 18-25
- Develop and implement clear strategies for better dealing with aggressive and violent behaviour
- Continue to enhance interventions for those with substance abuse issues

- Improve our communication and engagement with government and non-government services willing to work with individuals who have substance abuse issues in the community and in custody and ensure we have appropriate procedures in place to coordinate and provide access to prisoners
- Ensure that interventions delivered within Corrections are of a high standard and evidence based (given the similar services provided in all Australian states and territories, some programs are evaluated in other jurisdictions)

- **Develop and introduce a purposeful activity driven working day for prisoners**

- Continue to increase levels of activity at the Risdon Prison Complex and Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison and implement a core day that reflects life in the community as closely as possible
- Provide opportunities through the Tasmania Prison Service and partnering non-government organisations in areas of sport, music, art and spiritually and culturally appropriate activities to assist prisoners to adopt more holistic, pro-social and constructive lives
- Encourage individuals serving a period of imprisonment to give back to the community through increasing the provision of programs developed in partnership with non-government organisations, e.g. the Community Gardens, Sustainable Prisons Project in the Risdon Prison Complex, Hand Made With Pride in Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison, and Pups on Parole in the Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison

- **Improve health and wellbeing**

- Continue to work closely with the Department of Health and Human Services to increase the sharing of information in relation to identified health and wellbeing issues that impact on the management of prisoners
- Develop and increase therapeutic support services and work closely with the Department of Health and Human Services to increase access to mental health services for individuals in prison
- Develop and implement a disability strategy and increase the provision of assessments to identify and enhance support for individuals with disabilities, and to identify opportunities to engage with and support those people through the National Disability Insurance Scheme
- Work in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services to identify opportunities to increase the delivery of primary health care and throughcare in the area of health services, e.g. referral to an external general practitioner, relapse prevention
- Improve the general health and wellbeing of prisoners and their families through the delivery of promotional activities and opportunities to learn, e.g. education concerning a healthy lifestyle
- Implement a Tasmania Prison Service Drug and Alcohol Strategy in consultation with stakeholders, e.g. the Department of Health and Human Services, based on a supply, demand and harm minimisation model
- Develop indicators to measure health outcomes for participants in the Court Mandated Diversion Program
- Pursue the expansion of specialised screening services, e.g. acquired brain injury, foetal alcohol syndrome or the need for speech pathology interventions and identify pathways for effective management and ongoing support



Men's Health Expo at the Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison



The Food on the Table Program at the O'Hara Cottages

Goals



Staff and volunteers at Kids' Day

Goal 4 – To recognise the valuable role community and family play in rehabilitation and reintegration by providing opportunities for individuals and their families to engage in mutually supportive activities during supervision or imprisonment and through increased community engagement

By placing an individual in their personal or social context, which might include being a son, mother, partner, employee, etc. and not isolating them simply as a prisoner or an offender, we can examine some of the factors that might have led to offending, the environment that they will be returning to and the conditions and assets that will help them to reintegrate into the community as productive citizens. Language and labelling are powerful forces in shaping identity and Corrections is keen to promote positive change and new identity rather than reinforcing negative pro-criminal stereotypes. Links to families and their extended relationships are important in developing a pro-social and community connected identity on release.

It is recognised that children and families are often adversely affected by another family member's contact with Corrections, and that the family can be an important asset in successful rehabilitation and reintegration. Initiatives that provide support to individuals and their families with the long-term aim of breaking patterns of intergenerational offending will be a priority for Corrections in the coming years.

Recent initiatives and partnerships with community organisations have seen significant improvements in support to families and children including video visits, Family Engagement Workers, affordable family accommodation near the prison, parenting programs, a Homework Club, Kids' Days and family friendly visiting areas. However, there is still further work that needs to be done.

Accurate statistics are not currently available but the Tasmania Prison Service estimates that around 75% of prisoners in Tasmania are parents. In its report *The Health of Australia's Prisoners 2015*¹, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare found that the proportion of prisoners who had children who depended on them for their basic needs was 46%. This report also noted that the proportion of prisoners reporting that one or more of their parents/carers had been in prison while they were a child was 17%. These figures further demonstrate the need for interventions that address intergenerational offending.

Families come in all shapes and sizes and where there are children involved, the welfare of the children must be the central concern. However, where the connection is ongoing and it is deemed appropriate and safe, families and children should be provided with support to maintain, repair and strengthen relationships during a period of contact with the corrections system, including collaborating with agencies that provide early intervention services for children and families exposed to negative or traumatic experiences such as drugs, alcohol or family violence.

¹ www.aihw.gov.au

A priority area for Corrections will be fostering our relationships and communication with the broader community and service delivery agencies that can work with individuals and their families both in the prison and the community. We will continue to work with our non-government partners to improve the services, opportunities and programs provided.

Increasing opportunities to develop life skills through a meaningful leave and reintegration program and partnerships with community groups or non-government organisations allows individuals to receive mentoring, develop pro-social skills and resilience and make non-criminal links to people and agencies that can be of assistance in the community. They can also provide a restorative element for the harm done to the community as a result of offending. These links to the community while in prison or under supervision can play a significant role in developing and maintaining positive connections and giving back to the broader community.

The Tasmanian community also has a role to play in the successful reintegration of people as productive citizens. We will work to engage the community in this task by informing the public about the principles of rehabilitation and throughcare, by promoting the work already being done in Corrections and by providing information about how individuals and communities can become involved in community service activities.

We will also aim to improve our engagement with those serving a period of imprisonment, those on community based orders and those who have returned to the community. As noted by Advocacy Tasmania in its submission to the development of these throughcare strategies, “consumers are experts in their own issues and can offer valuable contributions ... the process of collaboratively engaging consumers results in policies and services that consumers share ownership in and are therefore more likely to use or respect”.

The strategies we will progress to achieve this goal are:

- **Increase family engagement and involvement throughout an individual’s sentence**
 - *Review policies and processes to ensure that they reflect and support the value of family in effective reintegration and ultimately a safer community*
 - *As part of the government’s Safe Home, Safe Families response to family violence, take advantage of opportunities to develop relationships with service providers and support an integrated response to develop programs that will alter the attitudes and behaviours of perpetrators and support families*
 - *Formalise the introduction of the Family Engagement Worker role in the Tasmania Prison Service and develop a team of workers in the prison and community to support individuals and their families during incarceration and on release*
 - *Expand engagement with community services and agencies to facilitate increased community support for families, e.g. neighbourhood centres, local councils, men’s sheds*
 - *In order to consider family circumstances that inform case management, identify and collect relevant information about families and children of prisoners*
 - *Work with the Department of Health and Human Services to promote a joint working relationship and shared planning through the identification of common client families as part of the Strong Families – Safe Kids Project*
 - *Raise awareness with Corrections staff and professionals in the community of the impact of incarceration on children and families through the development of initiatives such as “hidden sentence training”*
 - *Consult with the community and government and non-government service providers about the development and implementation of support programs both for children while their parent is incarcerated, and to support parental reintegration into their families and communities on release*

Goals

- **Increase communication with the broader Tasmanian community, partners and stakeholders**

- *Develop a communication strategy for Corrections Tasmania*
- *Publish electronically corrections information and non-security related policies and procedures to increase community access to information*
- *Promote community understanding of the corrections system through positive messages, e.g. promoting the good work done in Corrections and innovative initiatives*
- *Work more closely with our partners to develop and utilise Peer Supporter / Peer Mentoring options*
- *Investigate opportunities to increase the use of technology to enhance communication*
- *Consider opportunities to engage and consult people in custody, those on community orders and individuals who have returned to the community to enhance decision-making and the development of corrections policy*



Products made for donation at the Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison

Goal 5 – To ensure that individuals have their reintegration needs met through post-release support services arranged pre-release and by supervision in the community where appropriate

Transition from prison to the community is a difficult time for people who have diverse and complex needs and many need support until they become established in the community. By meeting these needs we can increase the chances of long-term positive changes in behaviour, enhance public safety and reduce the number of future victims of crime. Individuals being supervised in the community also need access to similar suites of services around housing, family supports, employment, health and more.

Assistance may be needed accessing ongoing mental health services or drug and alcohol treatment. Other reintegration needs may include housing, job services or ongoing skills training, disability support or financial counselling.

Corrections will focus on providing unified consistent services by continuing to work closely with relevant government and non-government partners and stakeholders. Working with other agencies and organisations is critical to achieving our aims and it is impossible for Corrections alone to provide all the reintegration and transitional support required. By including external agencies in the pre-release phase of a person's sentence, reintegration planning is extended past the prison gate and into the community. It has the benefit of allowing an individual to see the same support person pre- and post-release and connects tailored resources to the individual's needs.

Similar to the services provided to the Courts and mentioned under Goal 2, Corrections also delivers critical services to the Parole Board. The Board takes many issues into account when considering the release of an individual on parole including information and reports provided by Corrections staff. In the 2015-16 financial year, Community Corrections completed 129 pre-parole reports for the Parole Board. The Tasmania Prison Service also provides comprehensive reports for each potential parolee on programs and interventions undertaken while in prison and general behaviour in prison. We must continue to ensure that we provide the Parole Board with comprehensive and timely information to assist the Board in its decision-making process and

ensure that we enhance community safety through the appropriate supervision of individuals released on parole.

The strategies we will progress to achieve this goal are:

- **Improve transitional support**
 - *Commence reintegration planning early and, where possible, establish personal throughcare relationships between prisoners and external services to provide continuity of care*
 - *Increase reintegration support for those transitioning from prison to Community Corrections, including the continuity of programs and post-release access to community based interventions*
 - *Work closely with government and non-government organisations to address the complex needs of individuals prior to and after release, e.g. housing, Centrelink, licensing, community health care, substance abuse support*



Transitional accommodation at the O'Hara Cottages outside the Risdon Prison Complex

Goals

- Formalise and lead multi-agency committees prior to the release of high-risk or dangerous prisoners and enhance processes to identify such prisoners and reduce the risk to the public
- Develop more strategic partnerships and agreements with non-government service providers applying for government grants to ensure new initiatives are tailored to optimise outcomes for individuals
- Work with councils and community groups to deliver purposeful community service activities for prisoners who are pre-release to increase reintegration opportunities and linkages
- Pursue the expansion of open security transitional accommodation allowing more contact for education and training providers, government and non-government agencies and family visits



The Pups on Parole program and dog temperament training in association with the Dogs' Homes of Tasmania



The Hand Made with Pride program produces blankets for the dogs that come out of anesthetic at the Dogs' Homes of Tasmania

Goal 6 – To enhance information technology systems across Corrections to support the integration of services and improvements to throughcare

To achieve the full benefit of introducing a throughcare model, it will be important to have the technological capacity and business processes in place to fully support it. Information technology and effective business rules are the keys to information sharing, not only across Corrections and the justice system more broadly, but also with external agencies.

All work undertaken now utilises information technology and an improved information technology system would allow timely access to information across Corrections, improved information quality and integrity, improved access to information about the individuals we work with by authorised people and organisations and improved collaboration between agencies.

Enhancing information technology would also enable Corrections to better understand the clients we are working with, improve our operational practices, case management and throughcare practices and evidenced based decision making and reporting.

There are also new and increasing challenges to address within Corrections, including new types of drugs, organised crime and extremism and increasing remandee numbers. Corrections needs the right data available to ensure there are appropriate policies and practices in place and to enhance the understanding and management of those in the corrections system.

The strategies we will progress to achieve this goal are:

- **Explore options to improve information technology systems operating within the corrections system to increase the capture and analysis of data and ease of access to information**
 - *Improve the capture, analysis and sharing of data in the corrections system, including case management information, intervention data and client outcomes*

- *Identify and agree on the information that should be readily shared and easily accessible to staff working with or providing services to individuals, e.g. pre-sentence reports or assessments, demographic information, release dates, case plans, referrals and key professionals, constraints to housing, risk factors or safety concerns*
- *Contribute to the ongoing development of nationally consistent statistical information and the exchange of data through bodies such as the Corrective Services Administrators' Council and the National Corrective Services Statistics Unit Advisory Group*
- **Increase our understanding of the offender population**
 - *Provide opportunities for projects, research, evaluation and data analysis to inform policy development through partnerships with tertiary education institutions*
 - *Encourage research by external parties that will inform policy development and increase the analysis of data, trends and forecasts, e.g. research to identify the cost of crime and how costs to the taxpayer can be reduced*
 - *Participate in pilots and projects that promote a better understanding of effective reintegration and examine international evidence based practices that can be adapted to the Tasmanian Corrections environment*





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