

# BREAKING THE CYCLE—A SAFER COMMUNITY

Strategies for Improving Throughcare for Offenders 2016-2020

## Major Initiatives

REPORT I

2017

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## Corrections Tasmania

One of the major initiatives contained within *Breaking the Cycle* is the creation of Corrections Tasmania – a new entity bringing the Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections together under a single organisational structure.

A planning and consultation process to support the creation of Corrections Tasmania has been underway for a number of months involving extensive consultation with staff of the Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections, union representatives and offenders. A number of non-government organisations providing services to offenders have also been kept informed through a

Throughcare Reference Group.

A key outcome of this reform is to move from an order-centred system to one focused on the needs of the offender. Corrections Tasmania will provide opportunities for a more efficient and effective model.

A single entity, Corrections Tasmania, will enable, for example –

- more targeted programs;
- better information sharing;
- more effective ongoing case management;

- more effective sentence management and improved service delivery;
- a corrections system that is more responsive to the needs of each individual.

It is anticipated that a draft Corrections Tasmania model, proposed Implementation Plan and a report on staff and offender feedback will be available in the near future.

If you wish to provide input to the Corrections Tasmania project, please contact the Project Team via email:

[Throughcare@justice.tas.gov.au](mailto:Throughcare@justice.tas.gov.au)

## Transitional Support and Housing

Funding has been received for the next four years to provide assistance to prisoners in securing transitional accommodation.

The Department is currently working with non-government organisations to work through the final scope of arrangements.

The focus will be on supporting the successful transition of those in prison back into the community utilising pre and post release services tailored to each individual's needs, including accommodation and links to support agencies.

We aim to deliver a throughcare service that is flexible and collaborates with other agencies, stakeholders and specialised services.

## Hidden Sentence Training

Thanks to a partnership between the Onesimus Foundation and the Tasmania Prison Service, hidden sentence training is now being delivered in Tasmania.

The feedback from participants to date has been positive and encouraging.

The one-day course provides an overview of the issues that affect prisoners' families, explores the impact of a prison sentence on children and families and provides a range of strategies and resources to help professionals to support them.

Through a combination of activities, presentations, videos and group discussion, participants

develop an increased awareness of:

- the criminal justice system and the offender and family's journey;
- the impact of imprisonment on family members and society;
- the specific issues for children with a family member in prison;
- the support needs of the family and children; and
- support services and resources that are currently available.

The training also includes tours of the visiting areas in the Risdon Prison Complex and Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison

(contact, non-contact and professional). The tour gives participants an opportunity to experience what it is like to visit someone in prison, with all the usual restrictions and security protocols applying.

As a direct result of attendees participating in a hidden sentence workshop, a local Children Affected by Parental Imprisonment Working Group has been developed with representatives from a number of government and non-government agencies. The purpose of the Working Group is to further develop ways in which the Tasmanian community can more effectively support children affected by parental imprisonment.

For further information in relation to hidden sentence training, please email: [Julie.Bunyard@justice.tas.gov.au](mailto:Julie.Bunyard@justice.tas.gov.au)



*Kids's Days at the Tasmania Prison Service provide a valuable opportunity to support the children of prisoners.*



*The O'Hara Cottages are set to be further expanded to provide additional prerelease accommodation.*

## Prison Infrastructure News

In August 2017, the Tasmania Prison Service opened *O'Hara 5*, a new cottage providing an additional four pre-release accommodation beds.

In addition, \$5 million of capital funding for new prison infrastructure has been provided over three years, which will be used to:

- increase capacity in the Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison by an additional 40 cells and address issues arising from aging infrastructure in the current facility;

- build four additional independent living units on the Risdon site, expanding the existing *O'Hara Cottages* to provide pre-release accommodation for an additional 16 prisoners;
- construct a new Mother and Baby Unit within the Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison which will not only provide a more appropriate environment for babies within the prison but also provide more capacity within the women's prison.

Capital funding of \$650,000 in 2017-18 has been provided to increase accommodation capacity in the Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison. \$375,000 of this funding has been recast from the 2016-17 financial year due to delays in the planning and procurement process. It is anticipated the works will be completed in 2017-18.

Funding has been provided for the next two years for a project team to manage these infrastructure projects and, importantly, recurrent funding has also been provided for the additional staff required to operate these new and expanded facilities.

## 2017-18 Budget



*Capacity will be increased by 40 beds at the Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison .*

*Deferred sentencing is now available for adult offenders.*

*Drug Treatment Orders are now available in the Supreme Court.*

In addition to infrastructure funding, the Department of Justice has received funding for the following initiatives:

- \$350,000 per annum for the next four years to employ parenting and family reintegration facilitators and to provide assistance for prisoners in securing transitional accommodation.
- Additional funding of \$4 million per annum has been provided to assist with the increasing cost and demand pressures the Tasmania Prison Service continues to face as a result of a sustained and significant growth in prisoner numbers.
- \$330,000 per annum has been provided for specialist data analyst positions to adapt the Victorian Justice system's demand analysis model for use in Tasmania. These positions will also maintain the model once operational, and undertake the necessary data analysis and reporting.
- \$2.4 million per annum has been provided as part of the Government's commitment to progressively phase out the use of suspended sentences. This funding is provided for the implementation of the first suite of reforms which includes:
  - ◇ the provision for Drug Treatment Orders to be available for matters before the Supreme Court;
  - ◇ providing for deferred sentencing for adult offenders;
  - ◇ the provision for a sentencing option of imposing a fine without recording a conviction; and
  - ◇ making minor amendments to the existing drug treatment order provisions.
- As a result of changes to the *Corrections Act 1997* that allow victims of family violence to register as eligible persons, additional funding of \$420,000 has been provided to the Victims Support Service over the next two years to maintain the eligible persons register and notify victims of changes in prisoner status.
- An allocation of \$150,000 in 2017-18 has been made for the preparation of detailed requirements for the redevelopment of the Department's key Justice ICT systems which are currently impeding our ability to effectively deliver services. The Justice Connect project will enhance efficiencies and improve policy outcomes through better information sharing, access to timely and trusted information and integration.

## Offender Activity / Community Service



A collection of artwork from a previous Artists with Conviction Exhibition.

Don't miss this year's  
Artists With Conviction  
Exhibition from  
4 to 12 November 2017  
Mawson's Place Pavilion

- Planning is well underway for the 2017 Artists with Conviction Prisoner Art Exhibition to be held from 4-12 November 2017 at Mawson's Pavilion.
  - The Prison Fellowship Australia's Art From Inside 2017 Exhibition was held in early July 2017 and displayed artwork from a number of Tasmanian prisoners.
  - A Men's Health Expo was held at the Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison in October 2016 with support from 15 organisations. Topics included suicide prevention, mental health support, alcohol and drug issues and domestic violence.
  - In October and November 2016 prisoners at the Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison participated in cooking classes.
  - ABC's Gardening Australia was on location at Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison recently to film a segment on the prison gardens. Presenter Tino Carnevale met with staff and prisoners to learn about their community work. The prisoners donate all of the vegetables they grow to SecondBite, which passes the fresh produce on to Tasmanian families in need.
- If you would like to view the Gardening Australia segment, go to <http://iview.abc.net.au/programs/gardening-australia>. You can find the segment in Series 28, Episode 17 and the prison garden segments leads the show.
- Community Corrections has developed close relationships with a number of community based organisations to diversity the range of Community Service Order project sites available.
  - A Prisoner Peer Council has been established. Regular forums are held in the Risdon Prison Complex medium security facility and similar forums in all facilities on the Risdon site are anticipated in the near future. These forums will serve as an engagement tool for both the Tasmania Prison Service and prisoners and provide a vehicle for communication with other bodies who wish to undertake consultation or communicate with prisoner, e.g. Custodial Inspector or Correctional Primary Health Services.
  - The Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra is collaborating with staff, volunteers and prisoners on a unique creative writing and performance project—*Convict Monologues*. Prisoners will research, write and perform a series of monologues inspired by the life and times of convicts from early Australian colonisation, exploring how they overcame adversity and forged successful lives. The project seeks to benefit prisoners in a number of ways, including developing written and oral communication skills, translating historical settings into script and developing interpersonal skills, teamwork and problem solving.
  - Prisoners in medium security have recently participated in various sport and recreation activities including a football coaching, tennis coaching clinics and chalk art competition.



Products produced for donation by the Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison Hand Made With Pride program.

# Hobart Reception Prison

*The Tier 2 Assessment has been amended to ensure relevant information about families and children is being collected.*

The Hobart Reception Prison (HRP) has recently been launched as the induction prison for the Tasmania Prison Service with the intention of quickly and effectively engaging prisoners in their sentence plan.

The aim is to identify the needs of each prisoner at the earliest opportunity to ensure the prisoner begins to address their offending behaviour and to encourage them to take responsibility for their conduct and progression while in prison. It will also ensure all prisoners are effectively and consistently inducted.

Prisoners leaving the HRP will have completed a Tier 1 and Tier 2 assessment as well as have a Foundation Plan.

The Tier 1 assessment is focused on identifying immediate welfare and security issues.

The Tier 2 has been amended and provides the Tasmania Prison Service with a more comprehensive picture of the issues a prisoner may be facing and the supports required whilst they are in our care.

The Tier 2 also informs the development of a Foundation Plan. This plan outlines three initial goals that the prisoner and the officer completing the Tier 2 have identified. These goals include identifying actions that:

- will see them “move through the system” (a compliance goal);
- reduces the impact of factors that contributes to their offending (a risk goal); and
- promotes protective factors, which decreases their risk of re-offending (a strength goal).

While at the HRP, the Tasmania Prison Service also aims to provide White Card (WH&S) and Food Handling training to ensure all prisoners are equipped with the necessary basic safety skills and knowledge to engage in activities within the prison.

Once a prisoner has been transferred to their accommodation area these goals can be reviewed and discussed by the Case Officer

and/or the Planning and Reintegration Officer assigned to them.

A working party has been established to look at the use of the Foundation Plan and the processes required to support case management. The working party will make recommendations around the training and development required to support these processes.

The revised processes and launch of HRP as an induction prison are intended to be the first stage in a strategy to increase activity opportunities for all prisoners and incentivise their participation in rehabilitative activities.

A review of the HRP trial and associated processes and documentation will be undertaken in the coming months. Initial feedback from people in custody in relation to having their needs assessed upon initial reception has been very positive, with individuals recognising the benefits of working more quickly on their offending behaviour issues.

## Prison to Work Project

The Department of Justice (including the Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections) and the Department of Premier and Cabinet have been working with the Australian Government as part of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Prison to Work Project.

The intention of the project is to develop ways to address barriers to employment on release and to support Indigenous people as they transition from incarceration to employment.

The Prison to Work Report was released by COAG following its meeting in December 2016. A copy of the final Report can be located at: <https://www.coag.gov.au/sites/default/files/reports/prison-to-work-report.pdf>.

The Report contains a number of findings and actions that could be taken to address those finding.

Tasmania is now working with the Commonwealth to address the Report’s finding.

## Other Important Initiatives

*The EQUIPS suite of cognitive skills programs is now being delivered in both the Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections*

- Operational changes made to enable staff in both the Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections increased access to information contained in the Custodial Information System.
- A new Induction and Case Management Director's Standing Order has been developed.
- A Working Party has been established to continue the review of case management and the processes required to support it. The Working Party will also make recommendations relating to training and development.
- Community Corrections has updated its Assessment Policy and Procedures in relation to home assessment for parolees.
- Community Corrections has been progressively introducing the suite of three Explore, Question, Understand, Investigate, Practice, Succeed (EQUIPS) cognitive skills programs aimed at offenders assessed as medium to high risk. The programs aim to reduce reoffending in the areas of addiction, aggression and domestic abuse.
- Community Corrections has developed policies and procedures to support the Courts in making recommendations in relation to an offender's suitability to participate in a deferred sentence.
- Prisoner Education and Training have been working with TasTAFE to develop a 2018 Vocational Education and Training Plan.
- Work is underway to increase the number of computer based off-line and on-line short courses.
- Community Corrections has been working with LINC Tasmania to increase the employability of offenders. It has assisted those on community based orders to obtain their construction industry 'white card', traffic management and first aid certificates and to undertake various education/personal development courses.
- The Tasmania Prison Service is working with the Department of Education, LINC and TasTAFE to address low levels of literacy and numeracy skills.
- LINC and TasTAFE respectively recruited a Foundations Teacher and a TAFE Curriculum Coordinator and Advisor specifically to work with the Tasmania Prison Service. This has seen a significant improvement in the training options available to prisoners.
- The Tasmania Prison Service is working with the Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies to develop an ongoing quality assurance framework and implementation strategy for continued quality program delivery.
- Funding has been secured to evaluate outcomes of family violence programs offered in the community and prison.
- The Tasmania Prison Service has developed an Activities Strategy aimed at increasing levels of activity and providing more opportunities for prisoner participation in education, employment and programs linked to offender rehabilitation pathways.

## KPMG Audit of Sentence and Remand Orders

In March 2017, the Government released the audit report produced by KPMG following the incorrect release of a number of prisoners.

The objective of the audit was to understand the inadequacies and improve compliance with the processes for obtaining, entering and validating sentence and remand orders, and calculating release dates.

The report includes a suite of recommendations for reforms to address the factors that contributed to the incorrect releases and to improve the accuracy and efficiency of the process for the future.

The Government's response to the audit recommendations was also released, outlining the actions that will be taken to prevent a recurrence of these issues. Work has already commenced to implement some of these responses.

The KPMG report (with some very minor redactions to remove sensitive information and to protect the privacy of a victim) and the Government's response are both available from the Department of Justice website -

[http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/371790/KPMG\\_Sentence\\_And\\_Remand\\_Audit\\_March\\_2017.pdf](http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/371790/KPMG_Sentence_And_Remand_Audit_March_2017.pdf)

## Further Information

For a copy of *Breaking the Cycle* please see [www.justice.tas.gov.au/correctiveservices/breaking\\_the\\_cycle](http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/correctiveservices/breaking_the_cycle). For further general information, please email [correctiveservices@justice.tas.gov.au](mailto:correctiveservices@justice.tas.gov.au).