



Breaking the Cycle

A Strategic Plan for Tasmanian Corrections 2011-2020

Incorporating the 2011-2013
Breaking the Cycle Action Plan





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A Strategic Plan for Tasmanian Corrections 2011-2020, incorporating the 2011-2013 Breaking the Cycle Action Plan.

CONTENTS	
MINISTER'S FOREWORD	
NTRODUCTION	
BACKGROUND	
/ISION	
PRINCIPLES	
AYOUT OF THE PLAN	

CONTENTS

GOALS		8
Goal I:	To reduce re-offending by providing rehabilitation and reintegration services to address issues which contribute to offending	8
Goal 2:	To provide infrastructure to meet the goals of the corrections system	10
Goal 3:	To support an appropriate range of sentencing options	
Goal 4:	To provide more effective and accessible service delivery through better integration with service providers	12
Goal 5:	To increase community engagement with the corrections system and the rehabilitation of offenders	13
Goal 6:	To provide appropriate workforce development, training and support	14
Goal 7:	To improve oversight, governance and research functions	15
APPFNI	DIX	16

MINISTER'S FOREWORD

Our corrections system interacts with some of the Tasmanians who most need support from government. It also offers significant opportunities to improve people's lives, and to deliver social and economic benefits to our community.

Tasmanians who come into contact with the corrections system have often experienced intergenerational poverty and unemployment. Many have low levels of education, and may suffer from mental illness and/or substance abuse issues. The challenge before us all is to deliver a corrections system which is as safe as possible for people who work there, treats offenders with dignity and respect, and also offers genuine opportunities for rehabilitation.

We must continue to ensure that our community is protected from those who pose a threat to public safety. Prison will continue to remain the appropriate place for some offenders. However, our corrections system needs to do much more than just deprive some offenders of their liberty. It must also provide appropriate non-custodial sentencing options, and help offenders to reintegrate into society and avoid reoffending.

An effective corrections system will provide programs and support to help people change their offending behaviour. Many offenders need support, education and training to improve their chances of leading productive lives. And people serving custodial sentences often need transitional assistance prior to and after their release, to assist with reintegration into our community and reconnection with family and friends.

I firmly endorse the principle that imprisonment should be a last resort. We therefore need appropriate sentencing options available to our Judges and Magistrates. Well structured community programs are not soft options, and are often more effective in changing behaviour than short terms of imprisonment.

The relationship between our corrections system and non-government service providers is crucial. This strategic plan will assist us to work closely together to provide services to offenders and to improve lives.

Our dedicated and experienced corrections staff in the Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections often work under difficult and challenging circumstances. Making sure we provide the safest possible workplaces, appropriate support and skills development is critical. And we must at all times find the right balance between staff safety, security and our human rights obligations to offenders.

The strategies outlined in this Plan will assist us to improve and expand services and programs for offenders. It will also lead to close relationships with partners in the non-government sector, improvements in our facilities and infrastructure, the development of alternative sentencing options and increased support to our workforce.

This is the first strategic plan developed for Corrective Services in Tasmania, and I thank my predecessor, Lisa Singh, for initiating its development. I also thank all of the stakeholders who participated in the comprehensive consultation process which informed this plan.

I am confident that working together we can build on the initiatives outlined in this Plan, and ensure Tasmania has a corrections system which continues to improve, and delivers better outcomes for staff, offenders and all Tasmanians.



Nick McKim MP Minister for Corrections and Consumer Protection March 2011

INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to be able to introduce the Breaking the Cycle Strategic Plan for Tasmanian Corrections 2011-2020.

I would like to start by thanking all those who have participated in its development. Thank you to Professor David Adams for chairing the Reference Group and all of the Members of that group for their contributions. Thank you also to the Members of the Steering Committee and to those who took the time to attend consultations or make a submission.

The Breaking the Cycle Strategic Plan will guide our direction in the area of corrections for the next decade.

The community rightly expects its corrections system to reform individual offenders.

While our corrections system has come a long way in the last ten years with the introduction of new facilities, new programs, improved reintegration services and increased support from non-government organisations, I believe we can continue to improve and deliver better results.

Although one of the major aims during the planning process has been enhancing community safety, there are also additional benefits to the community where offenders are genuinely reformed.

We all know that keeping people in prison is expensive, but it is not just the direct costs that should be of concern to the community. A person sentenced to imprisonment may also lose their accommodation and employment and be unable to care for their children. Often family and social relationships fail and there are immediately costs to the community such as foster care and welfare payments.

The strategies and actions contained in the following pages will help us reduce reoffending. The introduction of additional community-based sentences, offender interventions and improved community engagement in the corrections system will assist in diverting less serious offenders away from the prison system.

The Breaking the Cycle Strategic Plan provides a sound framework for corrections policy over the next decade: a policy that builds on the previous decade of improvements and one that ensures we target our resources to get the best response into the future and a policy that delivers on not only legal justice, but social justice as well.



Robert Williams
Director of Corrective Services

BACKGROUND

On 10 September 2009, the then Minister for Corrections and Consumer Protection asked the Department of Justice to develop a ten-year strategic plan for Corrective Services in Tasmania.

This is the first time that a strategic plan has been developed for the whole of Corrective Services in Tasmania.

The strategic plan will provide direction to the dedicated people who deliver services to offenders and ex-offenders in Tasmania and ensure a higher level of community safety through reduced rates of re-offending.

An inter-departmental Steering Committee was established to assist the Department of Justice in its task, comprising senior executives of relevant departments. In addition, a Stakeholder Reference Group was formed to provide expert advice, chaired by Professor David Adams, the Social Inclusion Commissioner for Tasmania. The Reference Group's members were drawn from a wide variety of fields including non-government service providers, academics, unions, business and advocacy groups.

The discussion paper released in January 2010 was designed to provide the community with an opportunity to have input into the future of the corrections system in Tasmania and was prepared following expert advice from the Stakeholder Reference Group, an examination of research into international best practice about what works in corrections and extensive consultation with those who work with offenders and ex-offenders, and offenders themselves. Over thirty written submissions were received, and a feedback summary was published in October 2010.

The Breaking the Cycle Strategic Plan covers the adult corrections system in Tasmania, including Community Corrections, the Tasmania Prison Service and their relationship with other government and non-government service providers.

This is the first time that a strategic plan has been developed for the whole of Corrective Services in Tasmania."

Many areas of key relevance to corrections outcomes are not directly under the control of corrective services. Laws related to sentencing are the domain of the Attorney-General, and sentences are imposed by independent Judges and Magistrates. Services of key relevance to corrections such as drug and alcohol treatment, mental health services and housing are delivered by the Department of Health and Human Services. Many crucial preventative and supportive programs are delivered by non-government organisations. Youth Justice and early intervention issues are the responsibility of the Minister for Children.

Rather than ignore these important areas, this Plan recognises the interconnectedness of the problems we face and the services we provide to deliver them. Only by working together with our partner organisations can we effectively address the underlying issues that contribute to offending.

A number of recent developments are also relevant here. The current Palmer Inquiry into the Risdon Prison Complex will look into issues of infrastructure, workplace safety and culture, and conditions for prisoners, while the Integrity Commission will add an additional ongoing layer of oversight to corrections. The work of the newly-established Sentencing Advisory Council will be of key importance to the development of new sentencing options. The corrections system, and hence the Plan, may also be affected by the proposed Human Rights Charter for Tasmania.

The body of this paper includes:

- » Our Vision
- » Our Principles
- » The seven goals of the Breaking the Cycle Strategic Plan
- » Strategies to realise the goals
- » Action items arising from the strategies

The Strategic Plan will be implemented by means of a series of Action Plans. The actions comprising the first Action Plan (2011-2013) are included in this document. A review of the Strategic Plan will be undertaken at the time of the development of the second Action Plan to ensure that the goals, strategies and associated actions remain pertinent.

VISION

THE MISSION OF THE TASMANIA PRISON SERVICE IS:

To contribute to a safer Tasmania by ensuring the safe, secure containment of inmates and providing them with opportunities for rehabilitation, personal development and community engagement.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS' VISION IS:

As a progressive organisation that has the trust and confidence of the public, Community Corrections will help protect Tasmanians by:

- Ensuring compliance and providing supervision for people on community based orders:
- » Working with offenders to facilitate change by developing pro-social behaviour; and
- Working with the community and other stakeholders to provide opportunities for reintegration.

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.

PRINCIPLES

The Department considered a number of principles to guide the development of this Strategic Plan, including those outlined in local legislation, national guidelines and various international standards.

The following principles underpin the Breaking the Cycle Plan:

- The community is entitled to an appropriate level of protection from illegal behaviour from those found guilty of offences. The prison system will safety and securely contain prisoners to protect the community.
- » People who are subject to any sentence retain their normal rights and responsibilities as citizens, except those limited in accordance with the law. All persons deprived of their liberty will be treated with humanity and respect and not be subject to cruel, harsh or degrading treatment.
- » Services and procedures should be fair, equitable and have due regard to personal dignity and individuality, as far as is consistent with the need for appropriate levels of security and control.
- » Individuals are capable of change.

- People subject to a period of imprisonment or other court imposed order continue to be members of the community and should be assisted to become socially responsible. Whilst their liberty is restricted to various degrees, demonstrated social responsibility should lead to less intrusive control and intervention.
- The corrections system in Tasmania should provide services and treatment for prisoners aimed at rehabilitation and reintegration and provide opportunities to address offending behaviour through programs, education and work opportunities tailored to individual needs.
- » Community organisations, employers and families should be provided with an opportunity to contribute to an offender's rehabilitation wherever possible.
- Staff working within the corrections environment are entitled to a safe workplace.
- The rights and needs of victims of crime should be taken into account in the management of offenders.
- Every person should be provided with opportunities to participate in society.

LAYOUT OF THE PLAN

In the course of the strategic planning process, the Department has identified seven goals that will be the focus of our efforts. These are:

- I. To reduce re-offending by providing rehabilitation and reintegration services to address issues which contribute to offending
- **2.** To provide infrastructure to meet the goals of the corrections system
- To support an appropriate range of sentencing options
- **4.** To provide more effective and accessible service delivery through better integration with service providers
- **5.** To increase community engagement with the corrections system and the rehabilitation of offenders
- **6.** To provide appropriate workforce development, training and support
- **7.** To increase oversight, governance and research functions

Strategies to achieve each goal are listed. These are, on the whole, expected to remain relevant for the ten-year period of the plan.

As described in the Background, the Department is currently developing a three-year action plan to take the strategies forward.

The actions are included in this plan under the strategies they refer to, and are shown in italics, e.g.

5.1 Improve communication with the broader community regarding corrective services

Strategy (ten-year plan)

ACTIONS:

- 5.1.1 Develop a community communications strategy for corrective services
- 5.1.2 Investigate opportunities for community outreach

Actions (three-year plan)

Goal I: To reduce re-offending by providing rehabilitation and reintegration services to address issues which contribute to offending

Reasons for this Goal

Expanding the range of interventions available to offenders to address the underlying causes of an individual's offending behaviour, both within the Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections, was identified by stakeholders as a key priority to reduce reoffending. Issues which have been shown to impact on offending ("criminogenic needs") may include substance misuse, lack of education or employable skills, anti-social attitudes, values and beliefs, and lack of activities and interests that are "pro-social" (i.e. positive towards others and in tune with social norms).

Other factors may not directly impact on offending, but may impact on our ability to work with the offender to address the criminogenic needs. For example, intellectual disability may make it difficult for an offender to participate in a group program. The presence of multiple issues, or "co-morbidity" (for example, substance misuse combined with mental health problems) may make offenders difficult to treat.

Additionally, some services may not directly address offending behaviour, but are important to provide positive activity within the prison context.

As discussed in the Background, while some interventions are provided directly by the Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections, many important services are delivered by partner organisations. By working more closely with our government and non-government partners, we will be able to increase the provision of programs and services for offenders with needs such as substance or gambling addictions, mental health issues or intellectual disability.

The transition from prison to the community is also a key time in an offender's rehabilitative pathway. Supporting the reintegration needs of offenders by expanding transitional services such as accommodation, assisting in engagement with education and employment, and increased assistance with reconnecting with family and support networks will help to reduce an offender's risk of re-offending on release and will enhance community safety.

Issues of compliance with community-based orders and enforcement of conditions are also linked to community safety. Public concern in relation to community-based sentences often focuses on the risk of reoffending while on such a sentence. Ensuring appropriate sanctions are applied for breaches of orders, such as failure to attend planned community service work or drug and alcohol counselling, will increase both compliance rates and community confidence in the corrections system.



Providing practical training which offers valuable employment skills is a great way to improve the long-term prospects of former offenders.

Strategies for Achieving this Goal

I.I Increase the provision of interventions addressing issues which contribute to offending behaviour

ACTIONS:

- Increase the number and diversity of therapeutic group programs addressing criminogenic need delivered by Community Corrections
- 1.1.2 Explore options for the expansion of service provision to remandees and inmates on short sentences
- 1.1.3 Work with partners to increase the provision of programs and services addressing key criminogenic issues such as substance misuse, including where co-morbidities are present
- 1.1.4 Work with partners to increase the provision of programs and services tailored to offenders with special needs e.g. intellectual disability, acquired brain injury
- 1.1.5 Work with partners to explore options for family support and family-based interventions
- 1.1.6 Investigate options for increasing the provision of services in regional / outlying areas (internally and through partner organisations)
- **1.2** Improve internal procedures supporting provision of programs, services and rehabilitative support to offenders

ACTIONS:

- 1.2.1 Review case management practices
- 1.2.2 Provide staff with training and resources to allow them to deal confidently and sensitively with offenders of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including Indigenous offenders, and with GLBTI offenders

Provide prisoner education and employment opportunities which contribute to employability on release

ACTIONS:

- 1.3.1 Work in partnership with the Department of Education to implement the Tasmania Prison Service Education and Training Strategic Plan
- 1.3.2 Expand employment support for inmates and offenders
- 1.3.3 Support the Literacy Co-ordinators provided by the Department of Education to expand provision of literacy and numeracy education to offenders (in prison and in the community)
- 1.3.4 Increase the relevance of prison vocational education and prison industries employment to employable skills
- **1.4** Expand services to support reintegration into the community and social inclusion

ACTIONS:

- 1.4.1 Enhance support for transition between the Tasmania Prison Service and Community Corrections
- 1.4.2 Continue to work to increase accommodation options for inmates on release
- 1.4.3 Engage the broader community (including key groups e.g. employers) to improve reintegration opportunities (see also 5.2)
- 1.5 Enhance monitoring of and enforcement of compliance with community-based orders

ACTIONS:

- 1.5.1 Review breach and compliance procedures within Community Corrections (see also 3.1.5)
- 1.5.2 Increase the provision of services for compliance monitoring (e.g. urinalysis)
- 1.5.3 Investigate options for introduction of electronic monitoring as an option for compliance monitoring of community-based offenders (see also 3.1)

Goal 2: To provide infrastructure to meet the goals of the corrections system

Reasons for this Goal

Having an appropriate range of prison facilities which enable the delivery of services and safe containment of inmates has been identified as critical to the safety of the community and effective rehabilitation of inmates.

Planning for additional maximum-security facilities is already underway. The lack of appropriate accommodation options for maximum-rated inmates, particularly those considered to be high risk or with behavioural issues or other special needs, has also been highlighted by the Ombudsman's Report into the Tamar Unit and Behaviour Management Program.

Community safety can be improved if on release offenders have the required skills to live responsible and offence-free lives in the community. Options for open, low-security correctional facilities include transition / reintegration centres, which would allow inmates to live in a shared-house setting and to take responsibility for their day-to-day lives while remaining in a supervised environment. This would also provide an incentive for good behaviour within the prison system.

The need for a remand centre in the North-West of the state has also been raised.



Education, program and prison industry facilities support rehabilitation.

Strategies for Achieving this Goal

2.1 Provide a range of prison facilities appropriate to the Tasmanian prison population

ACTIONS

- 2.1.1 Consider options for the restructure of resources to provide open, low-security facilities appropriate to the needs of the prison population, including transition / reintegration centres
- 2.1.2 Continue to progress the development of additional maximum-security facilities in line with need
- 2.1.3 Explore options to expand facilities for the delivery of programs and education (in line with 1.1 and 1.4)
- 2.1.4 Expand and improve prison industry facilities (in line with 1.4)
- 2.1.5 Explore options to improve facilities for interactions between offenders and their families
- **2.2** Explore options for the provision of better regional services

ACTIONS:

2.2.1 Explore options for the provision of short-term custodial facilities in the north-west

Goal 3: To support an appropriate range of sentencing options

Reasons for this Goal

It is acknowledged that some offenders should be subject to substantial prison sentences and removed from the community to protect the safety of the public. However, imprisonment is not always the most appropriate or effective rehabilitative option. The cost to the community goes far beyond the cost per prisoner per day and includes a broad range of social and economic costs including family dysfunction, the loss of housing and employment.

The expansion of sentencing options available to the Courts is seen as important, particularly non-custodial sentencing options. Community-based sentences provide an opportunity for offenders to address issues which contribute to their offending behaviour, while at the same time also including an element of punishment and accountability to the community.

To achieve this goal, the Department will need to work closely with those who have primary responsibility for sentencing, including the Attorney-General, judges and magistrates. The work of the newly-established Sentencing Advisory Council will also be of key importance.

Strategies for Achieving this Goal

3.1 Work with Attorney-General, judges, magistrates, police and other key stakeholders to develop and implement a wider range of sentencing options

ACTIONS:

- 3.1.1 Work with Tasmania Police to develop a proposal to trial electronic monitoring equipment for accused people on bail
- 3.1.2 Carry out a feasibility study of home detention with electronic monitoring as a sentencing option
- 3.1.3 Participate in the ongoing exploration of a "problem solving" court to improve provision of diversionary and treatment responses to a wide range of issues that contribute to offending behaviour
- 3.1.4 Explore options for the provision of hostel-style accommodation for accused persons on bail and parolees
- 3.1.5 Investigate options for improving legislation regarding community-based sentences to increase ease of enforcement (see also 1.5)

Goal 4: To provide more effective and accessible service delivery through better integration with service providers

Reasons for this Goal

Many offenders have difficulty accessing appropriate services. In addition to government departments there is a wide range of non-government organisations providing support and rehabilitative services to offenders.

Although the privacy of offenders must be respected, improved communication and information sharing among agencies would reduce duplication and improve service delivery. It would enable an offender's case plan, for example, to be shared on an as-needs basis with other service providers. This would generally be contingent on the offender's permission; however in some situations consent is not legally required.



The Reading Together / Books on CD program supported by our partnership with LINC Tasmania, which provides library and literacy services, encourages parents to read to their children.

Strategies for Achieving this Goal

4.1 Increase co-operation and collaboration between arms of corrective services, the broader justice system, and other relevant government departments and service providers

ACTIONS:

- 4.1.1 Enhance through-care for offenders moving between TPS and CC (see also 1.4.1)
- 4.1.2 Explore the expansion of multi-disciplinary treatment teams (MTTs) for offenders with complex needs
- 4.1.3 Increase communication and interaction with partner organisations (see also 6.3)
- 4.1.4 Explore the possibility of centralising funding for service delivery by NGOs to support longer-term and cross-disciplinary projects
- 4.1.5 Enhance relationship with UTAS for professional development and research
- 4.2 Increase information sharing within corrective services and with other government and non-government organisations

ACTIONS

- 4.2. Expand information sharing between TPS, CC and other justice outputs
- 4.2.2 Explore options for integrated assessment and case planning ("One Plan") with other agencies and NGOs
- 4.2.3 Explore options to integrate information technology systems to facilitate the sharing of information (see also 7.3)

Goal 5: To increase community engagement with the corrections system and the rehabilitation of offenders

Reasons for this Goal

Engaging the community and encouraging community participation in the rehabilitation of offenders is seen as critical. Building partnerships with community organisations and employers, for example, would increase opportunities for offenders on release and improve long-term outcomes.

Providing the community with an opportunity to become increasingly involved will add to the community's understanding of and confidence in the corrections system.

Local communities may be best placed to identify opportunities to assist in rehabilitation and reintegration, including the provision of advice on employment or training for offenders. They may also identify appropriate community service order worksites or provide information on the types of issues of concern to their local area. The Community Justice Panel model provides a forum for local communities to participate in this way.



Local organisations can identify opportunities for offenders to rehabilitate themselves and repay the community.

Strategies for Achieving this Goal

5.1 Improve communication with the broader community regarding corrective services

ACTIONS

- 5.1.1 Develop a communications strategy for corrective services
- 5.1.2 Investigate opportunities for community outreach
- 5.1.3 Regularly publish key information regarding corrective services
- **5.2** Expand community involvement in corrective services, particularly rehabilitation and reintegration activities

ACTIONS:

- 5.2. Research models for Community Justice Panels
- 5.2.2 Support non-government service providers who wish to develop schemes for volunteers to work with offenders (e.g. literacy, mentoring)
- 5.2.3 Improve communication with offenders' families
- **5.3** Expand opportunities for offenders to participate in restorative justice schemes

ACTIONS

- 5.3.1 Consider the development of a formal framework for, and enhance delivery of, victim-offender mediation
- 5.3.2 Work with local government to expand ways for offenders to repay the community

Goal 6: To provide appropriate workforce development, training and support

Reasons for this Goal

Increasing the capacity of those who work within the corrections system and ensuring they have the skills, abilities and experience and appropriate ongoing training to enable them to carry out their work effectively and to support the delivery of best practice in correctional services is critical to providing appropriate correctional services, including rehabilitation services to offenders.

Strategies for Achieving this Goal

6.1 Enhance recruitment and retention

ACTIONS:

- 6.1.1 Review recruitment strategy for key roles
- 6.1.2 Review working conditions and arrangements to enhance support of flexible working hours and work-life balance
- **6.2** Enhance training and development opportunities for corrections staff

ACTIONS:

- 6.2. Implement a professional development strategy to identify development needs, provide appropriate support and manage performance issues
- 6.2.2 Deliver additional training in areas of identified need
- 6.3 Support sector-wide skills and knowledge development

ACTIONS

- 6.3.1 Continue to hold sector-wide forums for sharing of views and expertise
- 6.3.2 Investigate opportunities for shared training with partner organisations
- **6.4** Enhance staff engagement and involvement in strategic decisions

ACTIONS:

- 6.4.1 Develop formal policies in relation to workplace consultation to enhance decision making and staff involvement
- 6.4.2 Work with staff and Workplace Standards Tasmania to address concerns and identify opportunities to improve safety in the workplace

Goal 7: To improve oversight, governance and research functions

Reasons for this Goal

In order to increase the community's trust in the corrections system in Tasmania, it is considered desirable to introduce additional oversight mechanisms to ensure the policies and practices of the corrections system are appropriate and that we are delivering a system that meets our national and international obligations.

The Department believes that by providing improved information about what happens within the system and ensuring appropriate resources are available for oversight, the confidence of the community can be increased.

Strategies for Achieving this Goal

- 7.1 Improve integrity and oversight functions
- ACTIONS:
- 7.1.1 Explore options for the establishment of an independent Prisons Inspectorate
- 7.2 Expand data collection, evaluation and research functions

ACTIONS:

- 7.2.1 Establish a mechanism for sharing relevant research among key staff
- 7.2.2 Investigate ways of recruiting research students to key projects
- 7.3 Enhance information technology functions

ACTIONS:

- 7.3.1 Increase capture and analysis of strategic items of internal data
- 7.3.2 Enhance transfer of information between internal systems
- **7.4** Continuously improve strategic planning and implementation

ACTIONS:

7.4. Work with partner organisations to align strategic directions

APPENDIX

Steering Committee:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Robert Williams, Deputy Secretary

Ginna Webster, Director, Community Corrections

Graeme Barber, former Director of Prisons

Greg Partridge, Acting Director of Prisons,

Tasmania Prison Service

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Alison Jacob, Deputy Secretary for Youth Justice, Housing, Disability, Child & Family Services

John Crawshaw, CEO, Statewide & Mental Health Services

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mark Sayer, former Manager, Skills Tasmania

Mike Brough, General Manager, Skills Tasmania

DEPARTMENT OF POLICE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Phil Wilkinson, Assistant Commissioner, Tasmania Police

Reference Group:

David Adams, Social Inclusion Commissioner (chair)

Jenny Begent, Salvation Army

Gary Bennett, Bethlehem House

Simon Cocker, Unions Tasmania

Tracey Currie, Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs Council of Tasmania

Ceridwen Davies, regional representative

David Dilger, Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI)

Susan Fahey, Women's Legal Service

Ken Hardaker, Advocacy Tasmania

Tom Muller, Tasmanian Council of Social Service (TasCOSS)

Sielito, Centrelink

Rob White, University of Tasmania

	NOTES



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