

# 18

Report No.



**Report of an Announced  
Inspection of Albany Regional Prison  
September 2002**



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR  
OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**Cover photo: Albany Regional Prison's carpentry shop.  
Excellent facilities and emerging potential.  
See Recommendation 5.**

**Report of an Announced Inspection of Albany  
Regional Prison - September 2002**

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# The Inspector's Overview

## THE ALBANY WAY - 'GETTING ON WITH THE JOB' SENSIBLY AND PROFESSIONALLY

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Albany has long had a reputation in Western Australia for being a well-run prison. This formal inspection has broadly confirmed that this reputation is justified. Within the perimeter, simple things such as visits are done well and difficult things such as cell extractions are made simple. The latter is a cogent example in that the prison's culture is very much to let a prisoner 'cool off' after some untoward incident rather than immediately try to restrain or forcibly remove him, so that long-term prisoners could testify that they recalled only one, or at most two, such incidents over several years. In a context where Albany is a dispersal prison for prisoners who have proved intractable in other locations, this is an emblematic achievement.

The Report discusses in detail the various strong points about the prison. Perhaps the most outstanding is the excellent community relations that it has established. Local residents, community leaders and service agencies are actually proud of their prison. There is an impressive in-reach presence of tutors and volunteers into the prison and an impressive outreach from the prison by way of work camps.

Walpole work camp is the longest established in the State and, as described in the Report, has a strong rapport with the community. Its contributions to community resources and services have been notable. It is a model of reparation, as well as preparation for re-entry. The problem it faces, however, is that of maintaining a sufficient flow of qualified minimum-security prisoners. To be viable economically and in terms of work output, it really needs about eight prisoners. Recently, it has not been able to meet that number.

Yet, paradoxically, there are considerably more minimum-security prisoners than there are minimum-security beds around the State. Whilst it is well understood that not all minimum-security prisoners are ready or suitable for what is in effect 'open security', nevertheless it does seem that this end of the incarceration continuum could be given more attention and be better planned by the Department.

Walpole's dilemma has been exacerbated by the fact that the minimum-security Pardelup Prison Farm was downgraded to an 'open security' work camp early in 2002. The two sites are thus competing for prisoners, and the generally superior physical conditions of Pardelup plus its advantage in being near a more accessible town (Mount Barker) has meant that Pardelup has tended to be favoured. Local management could have managed this problem more positively, rather than deferring somewhat passively to prisoners' apparent preferences.

The downgrading of Pardelup meant the loss of about 50 prisoner places and thus put pressure on staff levels. The initial response of moving those staff to Albany Prison itself came under pressure when the Department decided to close one Unit. Staff losses became inevitable. This has had a profound effect upon morale. On the last scheduled day of our inspection staff actually went on strike, along with uniformed officers throughout the State. Previously, one would have said that Albany would have been the last place to have a strike, such was the pride and confidence of the staff.

The Department has a considerable amount of ground to make up now, in terms of staff trust and

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loyalties. In our follow-up liaison visits in the year since the on-site phase of the inspection, it is apparent that some of the pride has been lost. For all that, it remains a 'can-do' environment, but is a little more fragile than it was or should be.

The thrust of this Report is that Albany's skills are not being fully utilised. There are tasks it could do better than other prisons – for example, handling the most vulnerable protection prisoners – and which would facilitate the operations of the system as a whole. In its response to recommendation 9, the Department has undertaken that it will re-examine the profile of the prison along the lines we have suggested. It has also indicated that it will endeavour to spread the good practices of Albany through the remainder of the system.

The Report includes a review of the Pardelup Farm by Department of Agriculture experts. This was the second such review we had commissioned (Karnet was the first) and the third to be published (Wooroloo, a later inspection, has reported earlier). The three farm reports have provided the Department with a comprehensive review of the whole of its food-chain activities, tying them in also with the related reparation and training services. I would like to express my appreciation to the CEO of the Department, Dr Graeme Robertson, and his staff at the various locations for their assistance.

This Report has taken longer to be completed than should ideally be the case. The delay was mitigated by the fact that, as is now the common practice, a thorough de-brief was made available to the Department and local management within two weeks of the completion of the on-site phase of the inspection. A partial explanation for the delay was that Andy Fitzgerald, the inspections officer who was the liaison link with Albany and who was responsible for the first draft of this report, died suddenly in June 2003. This Report is, in a small way, a memorial and a tribute to him. He would have been glad and proud that 'his prison' came out of a rigorous inspection so creditably.



Richard Harding

**Inspector of Custodial Services**

*3rd September 2003.*

# Chapter 1

## THE ALBANY REGIONAL PRISON INSPECTION

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### ALBANY PRISON IN PERSPECTIVE

1.1 The formal inspection of Albany Regional Prison took place between 1 and 6 September 2002. The Albany Prison Inspection was the eleventh carried out by the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (the Inspectorate) and the fourth Inspection of a regional prison. Albany Prison is located several kilometres west of Albany and 408 kilometres to the south of Perth, in the South-West region of Western Australia. The prison is operated by the Department of Justice (the Department) as a maximum-security facility. It is the only maximum-security facility outside the Perth metropolitan area. The prisoner population originates from locations predominantly in the Perth metropolitan region with smaller numbers coming from the interior and north of Western Australia.

### A brief history of imprisonment in Albany

1.2 The history of prisons in Western Australia stems from the first penal settlement established in Albany in 1826 as part of an effort by the British to annex the then Western Australia colony. The British Government was concerned about the possibility of French expansion into the area. It sent three ships from New South Wales containing twenty-three prisoners. The later establishment of a settlement at Swan River and the development of Perth from 1829 saw the idea of establishing a formal penal settlement at Albany abandoned. The only prison structure in the area in those very early days was a punishment block erected in the town until a purpose-built prison was constructed in 1836 to meet the needs of the local population. In the 1850s a 'convict-hiring depot', built with prisoner labour, was established in Residency Road. The depot was used to disperse prisoners as farm labourers and hired hands throughout the region until 1868. In 1872 the hiring depot became the town's local prison and is now the town's main museum.<sup>1</sup> The current prison was built in 1966 some 10 kilometres from the Albany city centre. The prison was originally commissioned with a capacity of 72 minimum-security cells. It was upgraded to a maximum-security prison in 1979. Its capacity was expanded to 126 single cells in 1988. In 1993 the last extensive upgrade to the prison was completed, with its capacity rising to 186 standard beds. It also brought with it a major increase in facilities for the prison, including the Visitors Centre and Staff Amenities Centre.

### Walpole and Pardelup work camps

1.3 The Walpole Work Camp opened in January 1998 as the Department's first work camp. It is located on 1.9 of hectares of land owned by the Department, some 120 kilometres from Albany Prison. Prisoners at Walpole are involved in various community work projects and the work camp has developed a significant degree of community support for its operation. The Pardelup Work Camp is located on two and a half thousand hectares of land owned by the Department, 78 kilometres from Albany Prison. Pardelup began operation as a prison farm producing substantial quantities of livestock and vegetables for the prison system food chain. As a result of the decline in the number of prisoners sent to Albany Prison, in February 2002 Pardelup's Prison Farm was reclassified as a work

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<sup>1</sup> J. E. Thomas and A. Stewart, *Imprisonment in Western Australia: Evolution, Theory and Practice* (UWA Press, 1978), pp. 1–3.

camp. Its prisoner population was steadily reduced from an average of 80 prisoners to the 13 there during the time of the Inspection. We discuss the work camps associated with Albany Prison in detail in Chapter 5.

### ALBANY PRISON IN SEPTEMBER 2002

#### The prison's purpose

1.4 Albany Prison is managed subject to the Department's overarching correctional responsibilities outlined in the *Prisons Act (WA)* 1981 and in accordance with the Department's Policy Directives and correctional framework as articulated in the 'four cornerstones'. Although the majority of prisoners do not come from the area, the prison's primary purpose is to provide prison services in the South-West region of Western Australia.<sup>2</sup> The prison has further defined its purpose to focus attention on what it considers its core functions, namely:

- To receive and house sentenced prisoners;
- To assist long-term prisoners address specific offending behaviours; and
- To act as a dispersal prison for long-term prisoners.

The prison has developed its own management systems over time, including unit and case management systems and prisoner hierarchical incentive structures that have assisted in creating, when compared with other comparable prisons in the system, a positive and productive correctional environment. We focus on these systems in Chapter 3.

#### Good practice and changing demands

1.5 Albany Prison has long held a reputation among prisoners as a good prison to serve time in and among prison staff as a good prison in which to work. Albany represents one of the best examples of a well-functioning prison inspected by this Office. It is successful at providing prison services to a wide variety of prisoners<sup>3</sup> as well as prisoners from the local South-West Region. This is principally due to the quality of its staff and sustained periods of good prison management that have been the driving force for promoting good interaction in the prison, most importantly between prisoners and staff. These conditions translate into a maximum-security prison culture where prisoners on the whole feel safe and interact well with staff. It is a prison where prison managers actively pursue a balance between security and prisoner wellbeing. The prison also has good relationships with the local community in Albany as well as with communities in the vicinity of the work camps. The prison demonstrates that its security obligations to these communities are taken seriously and this in turn reflects a healthy degree of acceptance and encouragement by these communities. This has resulted in very positive outcomes in the development of work projects for prisoners and in the quality of reparative work conducted by prisoners for local communities.

<sup>2</sup> See Department of Justice, 'WA Prison System: Role and Function Profile', published May 2003.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the basic minimum-, medium- and maximum-security classification prisoners, Albany manages a diverse range of prisoners including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal prisoners, foreign nationals, protection prisoners and sex offenders – the exception being women prisoners.

## THE ALBANY REGIONAL PRISON INSPECTION

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- 1.6 While there is much that is to the credit of Albany Prison there are areas of prison service delivery and performance that are of concern. These include some areas of prisoner accommodation, particularly in Unit One, which are in need of significant improvement<sup>4</sup> as well as the manner in which the prison's hierarchy system dictates how accommodation is allocated.<sup>5</sup>
- 1.7 The backdrop to the Inspection was a prison that was experiencing something of a crisis in confidence by prison staff. Several officers were facing the prospect of 'forced' transfers to other prisons as a result of a recently held review of the prison's security operations (the Corcoran Report). This Report was commissioned by the Department to identify how Albany Prison should respond to diminishing prisoner numbers across the prison system. Staff watched in January 2002 as one of the prison's accommodation units, Unit Two, was mothballed, reducing its capacity from 186 to 126. Then in February 2002 came the re-classification of Pardelup Prison Farm, which had a capacity to hold up to 84 prisoners, to the status of a work camp designated to hold no more than 20 prisoners.
- 1.8 These issues are pre-empted here for two reasons. First, the principal objective of this Report is to analyse how Albany Prison delivers prison services. Second, the downsizing of staff numbers is an issue that could impact on the way services are delivered now and into the future. These matters are further discussed from paragraph 6.4.

### The prison estate

- 1.9 Albany Prison sits on a six-hectare site on 121 hectares of land. The prison buildings are set inside four-metre high steel-linked, razor-wired mesh fences. A 22-metre wide road separates the fences. At the time of the Inspection armed prison officers patrolled this area. The night patrols ceased in September 2002, the day patrols are still carried out.

- 1.10 The prison's three accommodation areas are located just beyond the administration building. Unit One is part of a group of buildings that also includes the Education Centre and the kitchen and forms a square



*The Albany Prison Gatehouse*

<sup>4</sup> See from paragraph 4.2.

<sup>5</sup> See paragraph 3.13.

around an uncovered garden area. This group of buildings comprise the original prison, which was completed in 1966. Unit One consists of five separate accommodation areas, containing 72 cells in all. Unit Two, which was constructed in 1988, is located to the left of the administration building. It is a double storey, 56-cell unit, which has been closed since January 2002 because of low prisoner numbers. Prisoners have been involved in refurbishing this unit. Unit Three, constructed in 1993, is located on the north-eastern side of the prison. It is a double storey, 60-cell unit that operates as a self-care unit. The library, canteen and program/peer support group operate in purpose-built buildings located between Unit One and Unit Three. The workshops (upholstery, textiles, carpentry, metal shop and laundry) are located in the group of buildings at the rear of Unit One. The prison has a full-sized oval, which occupies the northern area of the prison site.

### Prisoner profile

1.11 On the first day of the Inspection Albany Prison was responsible for 131 male prisoners:

- Four of these were minimum-security prisoners resident at the Walpole Work Camp and 13 were minimum-security prisoners resident at the Pardelup Work Camp;
- 31 (24%) prisoners were from Albany and the surrounding South-West region. Some 83 (65%) prisoners were from other locations in Western Australia; three were from interstate and 14 prisoners (11%) were foreign nationals;
- 36 prisoners (just over 27%) were Aboriginal;
- Of the total prison population 28 (21%) were classified as minimum-security prisoners, 64 prisoners (49%) were medium-security and 39 prisoners (30%) were classified as maximum-security prisoners;
- One prisoner was aged less than 21 years of age and there was one over 70 years of age. The majority of prisoners (65%) were over 30 years of age.

1.12 Most prisoners at Albany were classified as long-term prisoners. One hundred and fifteen prisoners were serving parole or non-parole sentences of more than 12 months. Thirty-two prisoners were serving indefinite sentences, meaning that they were serving life sentences or sentences at the 'Governor's Pleasure'. Seventy-eight prisoners were serving effective sentences over five years. The remainder were serving effective sentences of 12 months or less, or were on remand.

### Staff profile

1.13 There were 89 uniformed, five management and three administrative staff employed at Albany Prison during the Inspection period. Uniformed staff at the prison included 13 senior officers, 13 first-class prison officers and 12 industrial officers. All except one prison officer were permanent employees.

### The daily routine in the prison

1.14 Prisoners' cells are unlocked at 7.30 a.m. Breakfast is available from 7.30 a.m. to 8.15 a.m. Work or

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study begins at 8.30 p.m. At noon prisoners return to their living units for lunch. The lunch period ends at 12.45 p.m. Work and access to education services in the prison cease at 3.30 p.m. From this time until 5.30 p.m. prisoners have recreation time and access to the prison oval. Cooked meals are delivered to accommodation units from 5.30 p.m. Following the evening meal prisoners must remain in the Unit areas until lock-up commences at 7.00 p.m.

### INSPECTION PHILOSOPHY AND METHODOLOGY

1.15 The philosophy and methodology used to guide the Albany Prison Inspection was consistent with the models used in all previous inspections conducted by this Office.

#### Inspection philosophy

1.16 We have adopted, with modification to take into account Western Australia conditions, the Healthy Prison Test to guide our inspections. This model was first developed by HM Inspectorate of Prisons of England and Wales to provide a framework for establishing benchmarks for assessing prison services.<sup>6</sup> In the context of inspecting Albany Prison, this involved Inspection staff looking at the following four broad questions:

- Does every prisoner at Albany Prison feel safe;
- Are all prisoners at Albany Prison treated with respect;
- Are all prisoners at Albany purposefully occupied and given opportunities to improve themselves;
- Can all prisoners at Albany Prison strengthen links with their families and prepare for release?

1.17 Inspectorate staff are also guided by the Department of Justice's operational philosophy for prison management, the 'four cornerstones'. This philosophy rests upon prisons operating in a way that achieves balance between four outcomes that are required of imprisonment, namely, custody, care and wellbeing, rehabilitation and reparation.<sup>7</sup> The use of both of these models in the analysis of the delivery of prison services provides, in the case of the Healthy Prison Test, a prisoner-centred assessment approach and, in the case of the four cornerstones, criteria which guide the Department in its care of prisoners. It is also staff-centred (resources and systems).<sup>8</sup>

#### Inspection methodology

1.18 The Albany Prison Inspection followed a very similar process to that of preceding prison inspections. It took place in two linked phases. The first, pre-Inspection phase involved drawing together information about the prison from field notes prepared by staff from this Office following several

<sup>6</sup> See HM Inspectorate of Prisons, *Healthy Prisons – Expectations*, March 2000.

<sup>7</sup> Further guidance is provided by international human rights law, domestic human rights and equal opportunity legislation. *The Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (1991) (and recommendations made in that Report), is also very much at the foreground of guidance for Inspectorate staff.

<sup>8</sup> The Prisons Division of the Department of Justice has since January 2003 produced a 'Monthly Performance Report'. This sort of information will, in future, allow Albany Prison's performance to be analysed over time and to be compared with other regional prisons.

liaison visits to the prison in the 18 months prior to the Inspection, from information from Independent Prison Visitors to the prison and from explanatory documentation provided by the Department of Justice on how services are delivered at the prison. This was followed, in August 2002, by a visit to the prison by the Inspectorate's Research Team when prisoners and officers at Albany were given the opportunity to complete questionnaires that involved answering questions about their experiences of life at Albany Prison. Of the 50 questionnaires that were distributed to prisoners in accommodation areas, 45 (90%) were completed and returned. In addition 61 (67%) rostered uniformed officers completed questionnaires about their work in the prison. The questions in both surveys were related to the four main areas in the Healthy Prison Test.

1.19 The formal physical Inspection of Albany Prison's services, facilities and operational standards, followed this planning phase. The formal Inspection lasted four and a half days, with an additional day utilised to visit and inspect the Pardelup and Walpole Work Camps. Inspectorate staff visited every part of the prison including prisoner cells, the kitchen and dining room and prisoner work, education and recreation locations. They observed the daily routines in the prison and the style and nature of interactions that occurred between prisoners and staff.

### CENTRAL THEMES AND OUTLINE OF THIS REPORT

1.20 The Inspection of Albany Regional Prison revealed six broad themes that reflect the standards, policies and practices in the prison. These themes are addressed in this Report:

- Albany Prison is a healthy prison;
- Albany Prison demonstrates good practice in relation to several key areas of its performance;
- Prisoners at Albany are well managed and treated with respect;
- Interaction between staff and prisoners is good;
- The prison is community-orientated and has broad community support;
- The prison faces challenges as a result of the current trend of lowering prisoner numbers across the State.

1.21 Chapter 2 commences with a discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of this Report. This involves expanding upon the basic principles of the Healthy Prison Test, the four cornerstones and other guiding frameworks in order to construct an overview of a model of good practice in Western Australian prisons. In this way we articulate the standards against which the performance of Albany Prisons has been assessed.

1.22 In Chapter 3 we move forward to discuss the management systems at Albany Prison in the context of the prime purpose of imprisonment: protecting the community and preparing prisoners for release. We describe and make judgements about how Albany Prison manages the balance between its security and prisoner care and wellbeing obligations. We consider how unit management operates in

the prison. This involves analysing the correctional systems the prison uses, such as its case management, reception and orientation, prison hierarchy and education, training and offending behaviour programs to prepare prisoners for release. We also look at arrangements that are made to assist prisoners to re-enter the community.

- 1.23 In Chapter 4 attention is centred on assessing the quality of basic prison services at Albany, including prisoner accommodation, prison health services, family contact, visits and canteen services. We focus on the prisoner welfare services including the Prisoner Counselling Service, the Peer Support Group and Peer Support Officer, as well as the Aboriginal Visitors Scheme and the Chaplaincy service. We also look at how the prison needs to expend more effort to better involve Aboriginal prisoners in the hierarchical incentive structures, most notably in the area of accommodation. We offer suggestions about how the prison might address these issues.
- 1.24 In Chapter 5 we commence with a general discussion on prison work camps in Western Australia, the basic philosophies that have underpinned the development of the camps and how the Department has undertaken its rollout of work camps project in the State. We then focus on how the Pardelup and Walpole work camps operate and conclude by arguing that the Department needs to incorporate the work camp concept into the mainstream of prison service planning and operation.
- 1.25 In Chapter 6 we discuss the implications of a reduction in the number of prisoners sent to Albany and the way that the Department and the prison have been managing these changes. We look at how this process has and will affect the operation of the prison: the effects on staff and staff morale, the operation of security in the prison and the potential effect on the quality of services delivered at the prison. We conclude with comments about how Albany Prison can adjust to its evolving prisoner profile. We suggest that Albany Prison's achievements, in relation to its very good officer/prisoner interaction and the generally good service delivery, make it an ideal location as a prison specialising in protection prisoners and for a prison that specialises in prisoner rehabilitation.

# Chapter 2

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD PRISON ENVIRONMENT

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- 2.1 This Chapter considers what is meant by a well-functioning prison, what facets of the corrections environment are crucial to this end, what standards are expected in a 'successful' prison, and how standards and practice interact to positive effect. The discussion is important because Albany Prison embodies many of the characteristics of a well-functioning prison. If the prison is to influence policy and practice elsewhere in the sector the connection between theory and practice, and good ideas and the daily regime, needs to be transparent.
- 2.2 A good prison is one that is able to achieve its core correctional purposes; namely, to maintain an environment where:
- Prisoners are secure;
  - Prisoners and staff feel safe;
  - Prisoners and staff are treated with respect; and,
  - Prisoners are able to participate in rehabilitative activities and prepare for release.
- 2.3 As an Inspectorate we have measured the system's and individual prisons' achievements in these areas against national and international good practice standards. The principal source of guidance for good practice in prisons can be found in international instruments such as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules, the European Prison Rules, the International Handbook on Good Prison Practice (Making Standards Work), as well as the locally produced derivative of these documents known as the Standard Guidelines for Corrections in Australia. These documents establish the basic reference points for the 'healthy prison test'. Locally, reference points are provided by the 'Request for Proposal' for Acacia Prison and the Department's own 'Four Cornerstones'.<sup>9</sup>
- 2.4 A complex mix of factors determines whether a prison has an environment that supports its core correctional purposes being achieved, including:
- The relationship between safety, interaction and security in the prison;
  - The effectiveness of prisoner management systems;
  - The quality of prison leadership;
  - The professionalism of prison staff;
  - The prison's community profile.

All five components must be examined to determine the nature of a prison environment.

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<sup>9</sup> This philosophy rests upon achieving an appropriate balance between four outcomes that are required of imprisonment, namely: custody, care and wellbeing, rehabilitation and reparation. What is appropriate will depend upon the profile and correctional objectives of the particular prison. As with the healthy prison test, staff attitudes and concerns are integral to the balanced achievement of the four cornerstones.

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### SAFETY, INTERACTION AND SECURITY

- 2.5 The healthy prison model stresses that a 'healthy' prison environment is one where the weakest prisoner feels safe. Prisoners feel safer when they are in prisons that are skilful at balancing security obligations with the wellbeing of prisoners.
- 2.6 Good interaction is essential at all levels of a prison's operation. The most important form of interaction is between prisoners and prison officers as it has the most direct impact on the safety of prisoners and staff and the security of the prison:

*It is now generally acknowledged that prisons run safely and positively with the cooperation of prisoners. External security (freedom from escapes) and internal safety (freedom from disorder) are best ensured by building positive relationships between prisoners and staff. This is the essence of dynamic security: security depends upon positive relations in prisons and on positive treatment of prisoners.<sup>10</sup>*

#### Dynamic security

- 2.7 A prison's security profile consists of two major themes; the way a prison is constructed to achieve its security purpose and also the way prison officers are deployed to maintain security in the prison and to control prisoner behaviour. There are two broad types of staff deployments in a prison: 'static' and 'dynamic' deployments, which are intended to achieve different security outcomes. Static security generally involves prison officers supervising barrier control posts in order to restrict prisoner movements as well as serving as observation and control points in strategic areas of the prison. Alternatively, dynamic security describes the daily interactions between prison officers and prisoners. From a prison security perspective these relationships impact significantly on the general atmosphere of a prison and the general character of security regimes that predominate in a prison.
- 2.8 Good dynamic security includes open and active lines of communication between prisoners and prison officers. It can include communication that indicates how prisoner wellbeing is being affected by prison security regimes and communication about safety issues in the prison. Good communication and effective intelligence gathering leads to confidence building between both sides and this helps reduce the need for more traditional forms of static security controls. Poor interaction in a prison often translates into reliance on static security arrangements that can diminish relationships between officers and prisoners with the consequence that operational intelligence is not fully effective.

### PRISONER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

#### Management philosophy

- 2.9 The principles of unit management stress the importance of prison officers being closely involved with the prison population. This approach assists the prison to gather intelligence related to the good

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<sup>10</sup> *Making Standards Work – Section VII Prison Staff, An International Handbook on Good Prison Practice* (Penal Reform International, Astron Printers Ltd, Section VII Prison Staff, Second Edition 2001), p. 118

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order of the prison and to identify and address the individual needs of prisoners.

### Preparing prisoners for prison

2.10 Prisons have a responsibility, which they principally discharge through the delivery of reception and orientation services, to prepare prisoners for prison so they can manage their sentences as effectively as possible. To do this prisons are required to identify the needs and potential vulnerabilities of individual prisoners. They are also required to provide prisoners with sufficient information, reinforced in ways that all prisoners can understand, about prison life and how they can use their time there to prepare for release.<sup>11</sup>

### Preparing prisoners for release

2.11 In order for prisoners to be prepared for release in an appropriate and timely manner sentence planning and prisoner management systems need to conform to several basic good practice standards, including:

- All prisoners have management plans that are prepared in accordance with their assessed individual needs;
- Prisoners' management plans are developed in consultation with relevant parties in the prison;<sup>12</sup>
- Prisoners' management plans are reviewed at regular intervals;
- Prisoners are involved in constructing their plans, which are explained to them and to which they have ready access.

### Prisoner health services and monitoring prisoner wellbeing

2.12 The Prison Service has a duty of care to ensure prisoners' wellbeing is maintained. The physical and mental wellbeing of prisoners is the responsibility of every member of staff as well as prisoners themselves. There are four basic standards that prison health services are expected to meet, namely that prisoners have:<sup>13</sup>

- (a) Access to prison healthcare staff and services that is open and unhindered.<sup>14</sup> This includes

<sup>11</sup> This includes information about (i) the prison's culture and ethos in relation to interaction between staff and prisoners and the basic rules of the prison, (ii) the sentence planning arrangements of the prison, (iii) prisoner safety, e.g. the prisons anti-bullying strategy, the prisons emergency procedures, (iv) access to prison services, e.g. making applications and requests, grievance procedures, incentives and privileges regimes and the prisons hygiene standards, (iv) the opportunities for constructive activity in the prison (education, employment and recreation) and the availability of offender behaviour programs, (v) prison health services and how they can access support services in the prison and how their families can access support services outside the prison. See HM Inspectorate of Prisons, *Healthy Prisons – Expectations*, March 2000.

<sup>12</sup> For example, the plan has the input of behavioural program staff so that targets for addressing offending behaviour can be reached well before release and education staff can provide an assessment of the education and training needs of the prisoner.

<sup>13</sup> See Michael Levy's 'Prisoner's Rights to Health and Safety' in D. Brown and Meredith Wilkie (eds), *Prisoners as Citizens – Human Rights in Australian Prisons* (Federation Press, 2002), pp. 240–254.

<sup>14</sup> At a broader policy level this means that in order for prisoners to have confidence in prison health services it is important that their health needs are not subjugated by the security aspects of the prisons operation.

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adequate access to preventative health care services and health promotion programs that encourage prisoners to live healthier lifestyles in prison and upon release;

- (b) Continuity of care so that prisoners are effectively linked with community healthcare providers upon release;
- (c) Equivalency of care in comparison to health services provided to people in the community;
- (d) Respect for their confidentiality as patients<sup>15</sup> and their right to informed consent in respect of medical procedures.

### Welfare services

2.13 Prisoners and their families have financial, relationship and accommodation issues that can adversely affect a prisoner's ability to adapt to the prison environment and to prepare for release. All Western Australian prisons provide vital prisoner support in the form of basic welfare monitoring by prison officers and by access provided to Prisoner Support Officer, Peer Support Group and Aboriginal Visitors Scheme services. However, these important support structures are limited as to their role and purpose in what they can do to assist prisoners.

2.14 The preferred model, which operates in a limited number of prisons in WA, extends the scope of support by involving community organisations to assist prisoners and their families with financial and relationship counselling and with arranging release accommodation.<sup>16</sup>

### Family contact

2.15 Prisoners need to be able to re-establish and maintain their links with their families or other significant people in their lives. This is important in terms of the basic human need for contact with people who are of significance as well as the practical assistance that these contacts can provide to support prisoners both before and after release. To support and encourage family contact prisons need to comply with key basic principles,<sup>17</sup> namely:

- Prisoners should preferably be placed in prisons near to where they live;
- Prisoners should have reasonable access to telephones and writing materials;<sup>18</sup>
- Prison policies and rules need to acknowledge alternative and expanded conceptions of 'family', particularly in relation to different cultures;<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Medical staff are required to regard information about prisoners they treat as confidential, only communicating it to members of their own profession, and with the approval of the prisoner, except when that information might affect the security of prisoners or safety of other prisoners or staff.

<sup>16</sup> These types of services are available at Hakea Prison, Casuarina Prison, Bandyup Prison and Nyandi Prison.

<sup>17</sup> *Making Standards Work – Section VII Prison Staff, An International Handbook on Good Prison Practice* (Penal Reform International, Astron Printers Ltd, Section VII Prison Staff, Second Edition 2001), pp. 101–109.

<sup>18</sup> Access here also refers to the cost of using telephone services.

<sup>19</sup> This has particular reference policies relating to prisoners attending 'family funerals' and the different conceptions of what family and significant relationships mean in western culture and Aboriginal culture.

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD PRISON ENVIRONMENT

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- Prison environments should be conducive to family visits;
- Prison visitors should be treated with respect and not unduly subjected to security regimes.

### Privileges and incentives regimes

2.16 Privilege and incentive regimes play an important role in establishing and maintaining safe prison environments. They can be employed to encourage responsible behaviour, participation in work and other constructive activity and give incentive to prisoners to progress through the prison system.<sup>20</sup> Research into privilege and incentive systems reveals three basic principles that need to be observed in their formulation:<sup>21</sup>

- They need to be implemented fairly and not used as a way of applying punishment to prisoners;
- They need to be applied consistently; and
- Privilege and incentives regimes should be appropriate for the particular prisoner population and prison environment.

### LEADERSHIP

2.17 The challenge of leading the delivery of prison services to respond to a very complex mix of demands requires highly competent strategic and local leadership.

### Strategic leadership

2.18 In the Western Australian context senior managers in the Prisons Division of the Department of Justice provide the policy link between the Department and individual prisons.<sup>22</sup> These senior managers can greatly influence how a particular prison operates through their direct line-management of the prisons superintendent and by their participation in the business and financial planning for the prison. Research into the role of senior prison managers suggests that to be effective they need to be competent at scrutinising the work of prison superintendents and the operations of prisons. In short, this role requires:

*[The] active scrutiny of the operation of each prison to ensure [governors] are given informed support. It is about trouble-spotting and even trouble-shooting but is more about pre-empting trouble altogether. It must involve guidance and assistance but of a kind which will neither undermine and double guess the governor nor stop short of giving direction and instruction when such is required.<sup>23</sup>*

<sup>20</sup> Individual prisons should develop privilege and incentive schemes that best suit their particular circumstances. Particular types of earnable privileges can include: (a) enhanced accommodation, (b) access to private cash, (c) extra and improved visits, (d) earned community visits for suitably classified prisoners, (e) own clothes, and (f) time out of cells.

<sup>21</sup> See *Monitoring Prison Regimes – ‘Prison Incentive Schemes’* (Prison Reform Trust, 1999).

<sup>22</sup> The Director General of the Department of Justice is ultimately responsible, subject to the conventions of Ministerial accountability, for the Western Australian prison system. The Executive Director of Prisons manages a team of senior managers, including the General Manager of Public Prisons and the Director of Regional Prisons.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Review of the Role of Area Managers and the Work and Staffing of Area Offices, March 1995’, in D. Wilson and S. Bryans, *The Prison Governor – Theory and Practice* (HMP Leyhill, 1998), pp. 117–118.

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### Local leadership

2.19 The competency and skill level of prison superintendents is a crucial factor in determining whether good practice will guide the delivery of prison services. The position holds the key managerial role in the prison system. This is the case in terms of their role in leading the Department's operational philosophy inside prisons, and in terms of the significant power and discretion they have over the every day lives of prisoners.<sup>24</sup>

2.20 Consequently, prison superintendents need to be able to demonstrate several fundamental skills in order to manage a prison and create a good prison environment.<sup>25</sup> They need to have:

- Competency at motivating and empowering staff to work according to the legislative framework and core values of the prison service;
- Public sector management skills that enable them to understand and navigate the policy, political and legal dimensions of prison decision-making. Importantly, superintendents must be aware of their powers and the limits of their powers;
- Incident command management skills that equip them to take commanding roles in responding to major incidents, such as fires, escapes and hostage situations in the prison;
- Skills at leading the management philosophy of the prison; and,
- Skills in advocating for prisoners and for their prison. This includes skills in advocating for their prison within the prison system and for their prison in their local communities.<sup>26</sup>

Above all prison superintendents are required to have extensive knowledge about their prison population, the prison staff (uniformed and non-uniformed) and the prisons environment, and how they can positively influence it.

### PRISON STAFF

2.21 Prison staff, both uniformed and non-uniformed, are at the forefront of determining the quality of a prison environment and the extent to which good practice standards do in fact shape the delivery of prison services:

<sup>24</sup> On the order of a Superintendent prisoners can be segregated, transferred, confined to their cells, strip-searched, refused physical contact with their families, sentenced to 'additional days' of custody, released temporarily and released early. See s.36 (3) and (4) *Prisons Act 1981*.

<sup>25</sup> Shane Bryans is a prison Governor in Britain and a Fellow at the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cambridge. See 'Governing Prisons: An Analysis of Who is Governing Prisons and the Competencies which they Require to Govern Effectively', *The Howard Journal*, Vol. 39, No. 1. (February 2000), pp. 14–29.

<sup>26</sup> They need to have an understanding and be able to put into practice adjudicative principles, including impartiality, procedural fairness and natural justice in respect of their role to solve disputes between prisoners and between prisoners and staff. They need to be competent at being accountable for their prison to Parliament through inspections conducted by monitoring authorities such as this Office, the Health Department and the Auditor General. A good Superintendent will maintain open communication with the media, with different sections of the community in which a prison is located, and with groups who can communicate the problems, needs, hopes and fears of prisoners.

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD PRISON ENVIRONMENT

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*Staff deal with prisoners on a daily basis, cater for their needs, are responsible for the smooth running of the prison and for security and safety, and identify and tackle problems. Prisoners have very little say, being dependent on fellow prisoners and on staff for their requirements, their food, the general atmosphere, work and the minutiae of everyday life.<sup>27</sup>*

2.22 This central role in communicating with prisoners, in implementing prison rules and regimes and in delivering prison services places a great amount of responsibility on the shoulders of prison officers. Officers need to be guided in their duties by clearly articulated standards of conduct and supported to perform their duties with appropriate infrastructure and resources.

### Professional standards

2.23 The prison service must aim to promote a culture of integrity and openness in prisons. Staff need to be supported to develop and maintain working environment where dishonesty, discrimination and inappropriate relationships are not tolerated.<sup>28</sup>

### Interpersonal skills

2.24 The quality of interaction between prisoners and prison officers depends very much on the attitudes of both parties. However, prison officers are in a powerful position to influence the attitudes and conduct of prisoners and fellow staff:

*Members of staff should be aware that the way in which they treat prisoners has a considerable effect on the ways in which colleagues function and in which prisoners and staff treat each other. A positive relationship emphasises a person's better qualities and represses their worst side. This role model function directly influences working relationships and the atmosphere within the establishment, thus furthering the prison's objective of rehabilitation.<sup>29</sup>*

2.25 Officers need to have respect, to display good attitudes and behaviour to demonstrate to prisoners the type of conduct that will assist them to reintegrate into the community.

### Officer training

2.26 Before commencing duty, prison officers need to receive training in their general and specific duties. They are required to pass theoretical and practical tests to establish their understanding of the Department's correctional philosophies. During the course of their careers, officers receive ongoing training to maintain and improve their knowledge and skills.<sup>30</sup> This training should reflect the need

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<sup>27</sup> *Making Standards Work – Section VII Prison Staff, An International Handbook on Good Prison Practice* (Penal Reform International, Astron Printers Ltd, Section VII Prison Staff, Second Edition 2001), p. 151.

<sup>28</sup> In February 2002 the UK Prison Service launched its 'Professional Standards Unit' that was set up to 'ensure that all staff act with honesty and fairness, and to identify and challenge those that do not'. See <http://www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk> for further information.

<sup>29</sup> *Making Standards Work – Section VII Prison Staff, An International Handbook on Good Prison Practice* (Penal Reform International, Astron Printers Ltd, Second Edition 2001), pp 157–158.

<sup>30</sup> Officers in public prisons in Western Australia are not trained in accordance with the Australian National Training Authority Correctional Services National Competency Standards, which are the benchmark for best practice in correctional training.

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD PRISON ENVIRONMENT

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for balance between prison security and prisoner wellbeing.<sup>31</sup>

### Conditions of service

2.27 The high level of skill expected of prison officers needs to be acknowledged and valued if men and women of the right calibre are to be attracted to work in prison services. They have a rightful expectation that they will work in safe, professionally congenial environments, in buildings suited to their purposes.

### Support staff

2.28 Support staff in prisons<sup>32</sup> are bound by the same responsibilities as uniformed staff to maintain the security of the prison and to support prisoner wellbeing. However, they ought not to be making security-related decisions about prisoners, although their participation in decision-making is important where prisoner welfare is concerned. This is an important distinction as it identifies the clear role that these staff have to provide services that support prisoners to prepare for release. Involvement in security-related decision-making undermines their purpose in the system.<sup>33</sup>

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

2.29 A good prison environment is one where, amongst other things, effort is made to minimise the differences between prison life and life in the community. This is achieved through two principal strategies to engage the community in supporting the prison to prepare prisoners for release. First, by involving prisoners in projects in the community where they have the opportunity to develop employment skills and to participate in education or recreation activities. This principally occurs in WA through prisoners having the opportunity to participate in s.94 activities or to attend work camps in the community. Second, community organisations are encouraged to come into the prison to deliver costed services (normally welfare services) or to provide voluntary activities that engage prisoners in personal development or recreational pursuits.

2.30 Prisons that are able to successfully develop both of these strategies tend to provide prisoners with the widest range of opportunities to prepare for release. Importantly, such interaction with the community also assists in gaining support and confidence in the strategies of the prison service to rehabilitate offenders.

<sup>31</sup> A significant part of officer training involves education about how to communicate with prisoners in order to reduce the need for force. A prison culture that has values consistent with minimising harm to prisoners and staff will ensure that any use of force involving prisoners is no more than is strictly necessary and that any such event is reported to supervisory staff. Training should also include subjects in law, interpersonal skills, health, cultural awareness and any other discipline that has relevance to different types of prisoners in the system.

<sup>32</sup> E.g., doctors, nurses, psychologists, educators, prisoner support officers

<sup>33</sup> The distinction is clear in the *Prisons Act*. The 'Duties of Officers', s.12, which includes support staff and the 'Powers and duties of prison officers'; s.14, provides that prison officers have extra security responsibilities and may use force.

# Chapter 3

## MANAGING PRISONERS AT ALBANY PRISON

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### STAFF AND PRISONERS: INTERACTION AND ATTITUDES

3.1 The general quality of interaction between prisoners and prison officers at Albany Prison was very good. Indeed, it is this fact more than any other that characterises the Albany Prison environment to the extent that it shapes both individual contact between prisoners and officers as well the operation of prisoner management systems. This conclusion was drawn from prisoner and officer surveys, from discussions with individuals and groups of prisoners and officers, and from Inspection staff members' observations. The reasons for this are complex and varied but stem from three basic conditions that exist at Albany Prison, namely:

- Good quality staff who have sustained correctional experience and good communication and interpersonal skills;
- A prison culture that demonstrates respect for prisoners, prison staff and prison visitors;
- The prison is community-oriented to the extent that community groups are encouraged to enter the prison and to participate in the rehabilitation of prisoners.

3.2 Prisoners made comments about what they saw as the generally constructive attitudes of prison officers and managers at the prison. Many said that officers treated them with respect, that they were not rule driven and that they generally were more flexible in their dealings with prisoners than staff encountered at other prisons. Examples of this include the fact that the prison does not require prisoners to wear name badges and that staff address prisoners by their first names. Most prisoners knew who their case officer was and who the prison managers were. It was significant that comments about officers and prison managers were characterised by a lack of name-calling or disrespectful labels.

3.3 The good quality of interaction between uniformed staff and managers at Albany Prison has been another contributory factor positively impacting on the environment of the prison. Recently, this has been under some strain due to pressures placed on both groups as an outcome of the Corcoran Report, which recommends reductions in staff in the prison.

### SECURITY, CONTROL AND SAFETY IN THE PRISON

3.4 The security and safety arrangements at Albany Prison were very much live issues at the time of the Inspection. The Department had conducted an investigation into the security arrangements of the prison as part an assessment of Albany Prison's role in the context of decreasing prisoner numbers across the State. The ensuing report, by Mr Kevin Corcoran (The Corcoran Report),<sup>34</sup> and the imminent implementation of some of the recommendations had produced considerable anxiety among staff that was very apparent in the Inspection period.

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<sup>34</sup> See from paragraph 6.4 for discussion of the broader impacts of this Report on staff. Department of Justice, 'Review of security systems and processes–Albany Regional Prison' (2002).

## MANAGING PRISONERS AT ALBANY PRISON

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- 3.5 The Inspector has accepted the Corcoran Report as an 'Expert Report' on the security arrangements of the prison. In relation to the overall security profile of Albany Prison Corcoran reported that the physical, static and dynamic elements of security at the prison were functioning well. He observed on page five of his report that:

*Apart from a few relatively minor security issues the staff have a high level of security awareness and there is generally an above average adherence to critical safety procedures.*

### Perimeter security

- 3.6 Albany perimeter security consists of two, four-metre high steel-link fences. Each fence consists of 4 x 1.8 metre coils of razor wire. Three coils are secured to the internal face and one coil is secured to the top of each fence. The fences are separated by a 22-metre wide response road. Corcoran reported on page eight of his report that:

*The perimeter at Albany regional prison meets all the requirements for a maximum-security perimeter in that it provides delay, detection, deterrence and a response capability.*

### Albany Security Unit

- 3.7 The Albany Security Unit (ASU) provides armed surveillance of the inner prison, the property outside the outer perimeter fence and of the external boundary of the prison. The group is led by the Assistant Superintendent Security and contains selected uniformed staff from within the Albany Prison roster. All ASU officers also rotate through the prison roster to undertake prison officer duties. This assists in maintaining the skill level required for shift officer duties, and helps maintain contact and rapport between these officers and other staff, as well as with prisoners.
- 3.8 The Corcoran Review recommended two significant changes to the security arrangements at Albany Prison that have been accepted by the Department. First, the Review recommended that the perimeter armed security patrol conducted by the ASU cease operating at night. Staff and local community representatives have expressed concern about how this measure may affect the prison's overall security capabilities. Mr Corcoran also recommended, as a consequence of the removal of the perimeter armed security patrol, that 'high security escort prisoners'<sup>35</sup> should no longer be transferred and accommodated at Albany Prison. The prison has, for several years, provided a place where such prisoners who have been management problems elsewhere in the system have been accommodated successfully. Accordingly, the loss of this capacity will have adverse consequences for other prisons, especially Hakea and Casuarina, as well as for Albany Prison.

### Use of force

- 3.9 There is a clear policy across the prison system that dictates that cell extractions and the use of restraints should only be used as a last resort. Prisoners and staff advised us that the culture in the prison was focused on letting a prisoner 'cool off' after some untoward incident, rather than trying to

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<sup>35</sup> This term is used to identify maximum-security prisoners who have been assessed as posing the highest risk of escape.

forcibly restrain or remove the person, the ethos being that talking to prisoners can be relied upon and has almost always succeeded in the prison. Long-term prisoners said that they could only remember one or two incidents in the prison which had involved cell extractions or the use of restraints.

### Prisoners and staff feeling safe

3.10 As many as 93 per cent of respondents to the prisoners' survey said that they always or mostly felt safe at the prison. This is the highest percentage of prisoners feeling safe ever recorded in our surveys. Prisoners also reported very low levels of aggressive or intimidating behaviour by prisoners or staff.

3.11 There were several aspects of security observed by Inspection staff that represented good practice and contributed to both prisoners and staff feeling safer. These included:

- Effective privilege and incentives regimes;
- Minimal use of restraints or force in the prison. The culture of the prison is one where officers lean more towards letting prisoners 'cool off' after some untoward incident, rather than trying to forcibly restrain prisoners;<sup>36</sup>
- Prison visitors are managed appropriately. There is no evidence of prohibited substances or other contraband getting into the prison in large quantities through this route;
- Prison searches are conducted regularly on prisoners and staff and are generally well managed;<sup>37</sup> and
- Security arrangements in the prison facilitate good access to the prison by local community organisations and volunteers.

### Privilege and incentive systems

3.12 Albany Prison operates privilege and incentive systems principally through a graduated system of accommodation allocation called the 'hierarchy system' in the prison. There are three levels of accommodation in the prison; basic (Unit 1, Blocks A and B), superior (Unit 3) and self care (in D Wing of Unit 1) (see from paragraph 4.2 for discussion of prisoner accommodation).

3.13 Following reception procedures new prisoners are usually allocated to Unit One, Yard A or B. Prisoners are put through prison orientation procedures from these yards and they are assessed for their suitability for work and education opportunities in the prison. Decisions about progression to Unit Three accommodation are based on the length of time the prisoner has been in the unit, the preferences and behaviour of the prisoner as well as their suitability to fit into the Unit Three

<sup>36</sup> There have been five recorded incidents in three years of restraints being used in the prison.

<sup>37</sup> Records from 22/1/02 through to 04/09/2002 indicate that a total of 398 staff searches were conducted. This longstanding practice is supported by staff and well integrated into the prison's security regimes.



*The Self Care Unit is the peak of the hierarchy system*

environment. Unit Three is generally quieter and more relaxed than Unit One. Like Unit One, it has no cooking facilities, and prisoners have unrestricted access in and out of the unit during un-lock hours.

3.14 The self-care unit located in D Wing of Unit One represents the peak of the hierarchy system.

Prisoners here have their own keyed access to the wing. Prisoners in Units 1 and 3 are supervised by officers, while prisoners in the self-care wing are generally unsupervised.

3.15 Prior to the closure of Unit 2 in February 2002 the prison had an intermediary level of 'enhanced' accommodation. This unit provided prison managers with more options to further develop the prison's hierarchy system. Its closure has reduced these options and prisoner placement flexibility generally. There is a perception among prisoners that recently arrived prisoners have moved on from Unit One to Unit Three without earning their advancement.

3.16 Inspection staff had some concern about how elements of the prison's hierarchy system operated.

First, there appeared to be little awareness among prisoners about the hierarchy system.<sup>38</sup> Second, several Aboriginal prisoners expressed a view that the hierarchical system leads to discrimination against them as a group. To progress to Unit Three prisoners must have good work and discipline records. Some Aboriginal prisoners perceive that they are stereotyped in the prison as unmotivated to work and that they are unfairly (overly) represented as a group of prisoners who are disciplined.

<sup>38</sup> The system is explained in the prison orientation materials but as we point out in paragraph 3.24, prisoner orientation services require improvement.

## MANAGING PRISONERS AT ALBANY PRISON

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These prisoners maintain that by remaining in Unit One they are vulnerable to greater infractions of discipline because of the environment there. They feel that they have to 'hang tough' to survive before their peers in Unit One. The prison has made efforts to place several Aboriginal prisoners in Unit Three but the proportionate number of Aboriginals in the better accommodation has continued to be comparatively low. The issue requires further investigation and the development of strategies that assist Aboriginal prisoners to move on to Unit Three in sufficient numbers to allow them to feel comfortable there.<sup>39</sup>

### *Recommendation 1*

*There should be positive initiatives from the prison to facilitate Aboriginal prisoners progressively moving through the various levels of incentive accommodation on the basis that it is an expectation. This should be done in a way that does not create disharmony by displacing non-Aboriginal prisoners who have satisfied the selection criteria.*

### Grievance procedures

3.17 From January 2002 to June 2002 four prisoners had lodged formal complaints using the Department's Grievance Procedure.<sup>40</sup> In the same period, the Office of Health Review received no complaints and the Ombudsman received six complaints. These related to canteen spends, accommodation placement, employment, programs and visits issues. Albany Prison has the same array of complaints and grievance mechanisms as prisoners in any prison. However, we understand from prisoners and officers alike that the very good level of interaction in the prison results in most matters being resolved before formal proceedings become necessary. This also means that several of the barriers to accessing grievance procedures that we have documented in other prisons are minimised at Albany.<sup>41</sup>

### Discipline proceedings

3.18 The prison's disciplinary proceedings before the Superintendent and the Visiting Justice of the Peace were observed. Proceedings in both instances were carried out with fairness and procedural propriety. Even though this is generally so throughout the prison system, it was a particularly notable factor at Albany Prison.

## RECEIVING PRISONERS INTO ALBANY PRISON

3.19 The successful resettlement of prisoners is the intended outcome of a process that begins with a prisoner's first entry into the prison and should end with the provision of effective support for prisoners for community reintegration. In this section we discuss how Albany Prison addresses this continuum of release preparation. We look at the prison's reception and orientation procedures; and

<sup>39</sup> See from paragraph 4.2 in relation to accommodation in the prison on this point.

<sup>40</sup> This means that four complaints went beyond resolution at the unit level.

<sup>41</sup> See Report No. 14, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison* (Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services, April 2003), from paragraph 6.40 for discussion of the range of grievance and complaint mechanisms and the barriers prisoners face using them.

the available education, work and offending behaviour program opportunities. We also examine how the prison uses management systems principles to coordinate prisoners' access to these services and planning for eventual release.

### Reception and orientation services

- 3.20 Inspection staff were very impressed by the thoroughness and courtesy of officers involved in the prison's reception process. We observed that staff were respectful to prisoners and efficient, firm and fair in all aspects of reception procedures. The reception building was found to be orderly and well maintained with various prison and welfare service-based information on posters and in written materials.
- 3.21 We were advised that for a significant proportion of the time the Reception Officer must conduct his duties alone due to staff shortages or redeployment of reception staff to other areas of the prison<sup>42</sup>. This has significant consequences, especially in relation to security aspects of the reception area. There are also consequences for conducting prisoner strip-searches and handling prisoner property alone. The prison should ensure that reception duties are always conducted by at least two officers.
- 3.22 The reception area is used as a multi-purpose area within the prison. It is common for officers to conduct orientation sessions and urine tests in the same office area. This potential for congestion and thoroughfare of staff and prisoners can work to prevent the appropriate type of environment for conducting reception procedures.
- 3.23 There was no peer support group involvement in the reception or orientation processes, though one prisoner does assist the Reception Officer. It is important for there to be some link between peer support prisoners and prisoners in the reception and orientation process. Prisoners can understand from their first entry into the prison that peer support is available to them.
- 3.24 It was of some concern that orientation of prisoners appeared to occur on an ad-hoc basis. Scrutiny of prisoner files, prisoner surveys and interviews with prisoners and staff revealed that few prisoners had actually been through formal orientation in the prison. Almost all prisons in the WA system are at the early stages of introducing comprehensive orientation procedures and to some extent the good interaction prevalent between prisoners and officers at Albany militate against its failings in this area of service delivery. However, good practice dictates that prisoner orientation needs should be addressed by programmed responses rather than by word of mouth. The prison began to address these issues when deficiencies in services were pointed out by the Inspection team.

#### Recommendation 2

*That the prison's reception and orientation processes are reviewed to ensure that a comprehensive service is delivered to all prisoners coming into Albany Regional Prison.*

<sup>42</sup> Subsequent to the Inspection the Department advised that two officers are now assigned to the area for the busier reception times

## MANAGING PRISONERS AT ALBANY PRISON

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### THE AIPR PROCESS

- 3.25 The 'Assessment and Integrated Prisoner Management Regime' (AIPR) is the name given to the Department's management tools for rehabilitating and preparing prisoners for release. The Department introduced AIPR into the Western Australian prison system in early 2002 and to Albany Prison in July 2002. Unit management is the core organising feature of AIPR, within which case management, behavioural programs, education and work opportunities are coordinated. Unit management as a method of managing prisoners relies on consistency in management personnel, appropriate delegation of authority for certain tasks from the Superintendent to staff, and good communication between prisoners and staff at all levels in the prison.
- 3.26 The AIPR procedures for all prisons are based on the remand, receipt and assessment procedures at Hakea Prison designed for newly sentenced male prisoners in transit to metropolitan and regional prisons across the State. Prisoners processed at Hakea Prison undergo initial reception and orientation procedures that include an immediate prisoner health assessment. In the following 72 hours prisoners are processed through a Management and Placement checklist (MAP), which is used to assess immediate risks that the prisoner may pose or needs the prisoner may have. The checklist also determines the prisoner's initial security rating, his placement in the prison system and next sentence review date.
- 3.27 Prisoners who have received effective sentences in excess of nine months have an Individual Management Plan (IMP) developed in the following 28 days. In this time the prisoner's security rating, offending behaviour as well as education and skills training needs are assessed.<sup>43</sup> As the IMP is completed the prisoner is assigned a case officer. This officer attends a case conference to discuss the needs of the particular prisoner and to ensure that these needs are reflected in the IMP. The case officer then presents the completed IMP to the prisoner, who is invited to comment on its contents. From this time it is the case officer's duty to act as a resource and support contact for the prisoner. The case officer also organises the review of the IMP at designated points during a prisoner's term of imprisonment. Most prisoners move on to other prisons following their assessment and those on IMPs are allocated a new case officer.

### The Albany experience

- 3.28 At the time of the Inspection few prisoners at Albany had been processed through the new AIPR system. This could have been expected given the tasks and requirements that the new system imposes on the prison, including the short time-span since the introduction of the system, and the comparatively limited resources Albany Prison has to devote to operating it.

<sup>43</sup> It is noteworthy that the medical staff have limited involvement in the process (at all facilities). The prisoner receives a standard medical upon receipt. Other than this there appears to be no further involvement. The FCMT also are not actively involved in assessing prisoners' needs for IMP purposes. The system could be improved if the Department allocated resources for their inclusion.

### Unit management

3.29 Albany Prison has operated according to unit management principles for some years. Unit management involves the delegation of responsibility and decision-making for the day-to-day management of a unit (of accommodation), to a specified senior officer. There is good interaction between all levels in the prison, and particularly between prison officers and prisoners. The prison has benefited demonstrably from stable and experienced managers who communicate and interact well with uniformed staff and prisoners. Daily briefings are held between prison managers, unit managers and support staff. Uniformed staff in the units meet weekly. Managers believe that the good quality of interaction between prisoners and staff obviate the need for formal meetings between the two groups and so these do not happen in any formal way. Given what prisoners say about the responsiveness of staff this would seem to be an acceptable deviation from unit management principles.

### Case management

3.30 Despite the difficulties the prison had encountered in introducing and adapting to the new AIPR system, its transition to formalised case management has been its real success. Case management involves the allocation of 'cases' (prisoners) to uniformed staff in a particular prison, for the purpose of progressing the prisoners on his or her caseload through their sentences. The prisoner survey revealed that a high proportion of prisoners have good knowledge and understanding of their IMP and what they were required to do to meet the requirements set out in it. It is fair to say the prisoners at Albany are possibly the best informed about their status of any prisoners in the system. Prisoners expressed a little more ambivalence about the allocation of case officers. Whilst most prisoners believed that they had good contact with their case officers, a sizeable minority believed that it was difficult to access their case officers. Reasons they gave for this included access problems caused by the shift roster system or because of what they saw as officer disinterest.

### Prisoner throughcare

3.31 There is a good working relationship between the Department's local Community Justice Service (CJS) and the prison. The CJS employs a 'prison to community liaison officer' who provides advice and support to prisoners who are nearing release at all three prison and work camp locations.

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PRISONER RESETTLEMENT

3.32 Prisoners reported that they felt supported in preparing for release into the community. This has been achieved by a well-organised and systematic approach that the prison has developed to ensure prisoners are exposed to a range of advice and support options as release approaches. The prison has strong links with several local community support agencies and individuals who attend the prison at regular intervals. Staff from Albany's Men's Resource Centre (ARMC) and the Family Futures organisation; ARMC is available to all prisoners; Family Futures concentrates on Aboriginal prisoners, and attends at the prison to assist prisoners to arrange accommodation, family and

## MANAGING PRISONERS AT ALBANY PRISON

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employment matters. Staff from Centrelink make contact with individual prisoners prior to release to ensure that they have access to income.

3.33 Local volunteers are also involved in a wide range of less structured, self-development activities in the prison. These activities range from theatre production, (a prisoner group has recently received a scholarship to publish their work), a choir (which includes a uniformed officer), as well as activities which include prisoners learning relaxation techniques. These forms of activity assist in the process of providing a positive prison environment where prisoners can gain socialisation skills in readiness for release.

# Chapter Four

## PRISONER ACCOMMODATION AND SERVICES

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4.1 In this Chapter we evaluate prisoner accommodation, health services, prisoner welfare and support services, family contact services, prisoner food and dining arrangements, canteen and recreation services.

### ACCOMMODATION

4.2 Prisoner accommodation conditions at Albany Prisons differ markedly between the two currently used accommodation units, Unit One and Unit Three. While some of these differences make sense as part of the prison's hierarchy system there is concern that accommodation conditions in several areas of Unit One are unacceptable and in need of urgent refurbishment. Yards A and B, which have 24 cells each, are used as 'standard supervision' cells, and are particularly susceptible to streaming wind which can make the central recreation areas of the yards very cold. We were advised by prisoners and some staff that the yard are also regularly flooded after large downfalls of rain, which occur often in winter months.<sup>44</sup>

4.3 The Department has been advised by the Health Department in a health assessment in June 2002 that the ablution block in A Yard had mould on the walls and ceilings, that it was unclean and had broken and missing toilet doors and broken wall tiles. Yard B received attention in the same report in relation to exposed drains that result in flooding and smelly, stagnant water in the yard.

4.4 Some discussion centred on why Unit Two rather than Unit One had been closed for refurbishment given the evidently greater need of an upgrade of the latter unit. We were advised that Unit One has specialised functions that cannot be provided in the same way in Unit Two. Unit One provides accommodation for protection prisoners (12 cells in C Yard), self care prisoners (ten cells in D Yard) as well as accommodation for prisoners in medical observation cells and in punishment cells (seven cells in Section E).<sup>45</sup> Prison managers indicated that this sort of segmentation is not possible in Unit Two. They did say that they were considering keeping protection, self-care and E Section prisoners in Unit One and moving Yard A and B prisoners to Unit Two once it has been refurbished. They said that this would require Head Office to secure extra staffing hours to accommodate this. The prison must choose between one of these two options; either fully refurbish yards A and B or move the prisoners in these yards to Unit Two.

4.5 Aboriginal prisoners are mainly accommodated in Unit One and non-Aboriginal prisoners in the superior accommodation of Unit Three.<sup>46</sup> We were advised that some Aboriginal prisoners prefer to be in Unit One in order to be with their friends and relations and that the yards there provide

<sup>44</sup> The Albany region receives an average of 1,200 millimetres of rainfall each year, with approximately 600 millimetres falling in an average of 63 rain days between June to August. This compares with an average of 800 millimetres of rainfall for the Perth region, and approximately 300 millimetres falling in an average of 54 rain days between June to August.

<sup>45</sup> Four punishment cells, two medical observation cells and one multipurpose cell.

<sup>46</sup> Unit 1, Yards A and B, contained 23 Aboriginal prisoners (59%). Unit 3 contained ten Aboriginal prisoners or 17% of the population there.

## PRISONER ACCOMMODATION AND SERVICES

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prison managers with greater flexibility in dealing with outbreaks of family disputes.<sup>47</sup> It was evident that prisoners in Unit Three have much better living conditions than prisoners in Yards A, B, and C in Unit One. However, rather than there being any element of racism at play in the operation of the hierarchy system this situation has more to do with the prison not sufficiently prioritising strategies to encourage a more equitable distribution of accommodation among prisoners. A prison such as Albany, where management values and structures are so robust and healthy, should have little difficulty in correcting this apparent imbalance. This issue needs to be addressed promptly: see further Recommendation 1 above.

### PRISONER FOOD AND DINING ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.6 Albany Prison has purpose-built dining areas in each unit. All meals are taken from the kitchen and served in the accommodation units. Breakfast is available from 7.30 a.m. to 8.15 a.m., lunch between 12.00 noon and 12.45 p.m. and cooked evening meals are delivered to the units from about 5.30 p.m. Eighty per cent of the prisoners surveyed said that they thought that the food at the prison was either good or very good. This is a significantly higher satisfaction level that we find in most prisons.<sup>48</sup>

### HEALTH SERVICES

- 4.7 There are three basic issues of significance in relation to the provision of health services at Albany Prison. First, the prison provides prisoners with ready access to a good range of quality health services. There is also an absence of the bureaucratic barriers to accessing these services that we have witnessed at some other prison locations.<sup>49</sup> Second, the prison has a difficult health profile which includes an aged population with increased cardiovascular risk factors. There is also a comparatively high ratio of prisoners with Hepatitis C located at the prison. Finally, the continuity of care and follow-up procedures of the prison's health clinic are in need of some improvement.

#### Scope of service

- 4.8 The Albany Prison Health Clinic, which had recently been renovated, presented as a clean and satisfactory medical environment. The clinic operates from 7.15 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. seven days a week. Seven nurses cover shifts in pairs, with one nurse on call when the clinic is closed outside of these hours.<sup>50</sup> The prison has a contract with the Southern Regional Medical Group (SRMG) for them to provide doctors to the prison for one four-hour session per week. This is adequate to deal with primary health care needs but more time should be allocated if a good preventive service is to be

<sup>47</sup> Disputes between different Aboriginal relations creates significant problems in the prison and great care has to be taken to separate the various family groupings. This is not always successful and there have been assaults and damage as a result. The prison argues that to deal appropriately with Aboriginal family disputes compromises its ability to freely move prisoners between various incentive accommodation units and as a result some prisoners' access to their designated incentive regimes has been forfeited. This issue has been further accentuated by the closure of Unit Two, which has meant that the prison's dispersal options have been further reduced.

<sup>48</sup> See paragraph 4.18 for information on special diets and paragraph 4.52 for information about Aboriginal prisoner access to traditional food.

<sup>49</sup> Roebourne Regional Prison being the most notable.

<sup>50</sup> Nurses at Albany, unlike their counterparts at other prisons, are paid an hourly rate for on-call work.

## PRISONER ACCOMMODATION AND SERVICES

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delivered. While the arrangement operates well, it does mean that prisoners often see different doctors when they visit the clinic. This means that prisoners do not receive the consistency and continuity in care one would normally expect in the community. The prison needs to remedy this situation.

### Allied health services

4.9 The major concern that prisoners had about health services in the prison related to waiting times for dental treatment. At present, the clinic allocates a half a day for dental appointments for emergency treatments only, meaning that prisoners must wait extended periods for non-urgent treatment. Also, several prisoners said that they had waited for extended periods for prescribed dental equipment to be delivered to the prison. The nurse manager confirmed that the clinic had no follow-up mechanisms that ensured timely delivery of dental prescriptions. A comprehensive review is needed of how dental services operate in the prison.

4.10 Optical services are provided by OPSM, an outside contractor. Staff from this company attend the prison when there are about six prisoners requiring a consultation. Pathology services are provided by the Albany Regional Hospital at no cost to the Department. In respect of radiology services the prison has its own x-ray machine. However, only one of the clinic's nurses is qualified to operate this machine. Consequently, prisoners are regularly taken to Albany Regional Hospital for x-rays that could easily be conducted at the prison if more nurses were trained to operate the machine. A physiotherapist attends at the prison for half a day a fortnight and sees an average of five prisoners per session.

### Clinic access and confidentiality of prisoner medical files

4.11 Prisoners at Albany, unlike their counterparts in many other prisons, are not required to register or request to see medical staff in writing. Prisoners are able to advise prison staff that they wish to see medical staff and staff will contact the medical centre to arrange an appointment. Prisoners are either directed to proceed to the clinic or wait in the units until an appointment becomes available. Prisoners and staff said this system worked well. Prisoners said that officers did not ask them why they wanted to see medical staff, which means that the system presents minimal confidentiality concerns.

4.12 However, there are concerns about the risks to confidentiality of prisoner medical files. These files are located on open shelves in a room that also accommodates the medical clerk and which leads into the office of the clinic manager. The medical clerk works part-time, two days per week. These files would be best kept in a separate locked room or in locked filing cabinets to ensure that access to them is restricted to the staff of the clinic.

### Emergency training and equipment

4.13 Prison service entry requirements stipulate that officers must have senior first aid certificates. Only three officers at Albany had current certificates. We were advised that there are no subsidies offered

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by the Department to encourage officers to keep their first aid skills up to date and that they are required to pay for and arrange certificate renewal courses themselves. Most officers had received in-house CPR training, though few had been trained to operate the prison's emergency resuscitation equipment.

### At-risk prisoners

4.14 At the time of the Inspection Albany Prison's systems for identifying and supporting at-risk prisoners functioned appropriately. However, we believe there is room for better coordination to exist between key players involved in identifying, monitoring and supporting prisoners at risk.

4.15 The prison's full-time psychologist oversees at-risk prisoner strategies, policies and procedures.<sup>51</sup> She also undertakes one-to-one counselling with prisoners who either self refer or have been identified as being at-risk. For interim support, until the psychologist is able to assist, the Prisoner Support Officer provides an important role in responding to prisoners' immediate needs.

4.16 A psychiatrist attends the prison once a week and has an average of 25 appointments a month. The clinic operates an organised and well-maintained mental health appointment and follow-up system that provides good monitoring of appointment and medication review dates. The psychiatrist is, on a regular basis, involved in educating both health and uniformed staff in relation to mental health issues.

4.17 The prison holds 'disturbed and vulnerable' meetings once a month. The prison's psychiatrist, psychologist, the clinic manager, the assistant superintendent and a unit senior officer attend these meetings. The main aim of the meetings is to identify prisoners before they reach crisis and are placed on the At Risk Management System (ARMS). They discuss prisoners who may be exhibiting the early signs of at-risk behaviour or prisoners who may be vulnerable. Also, prisoners who may have been cleared through the ARMS system are monitored at the 'disturbed and vulnerable' meetings for a short time as a safeguard to ensure that they are coping in the prison. This system is working extremely well. Only 20 prisoners had been on the ARMS system in the six months preceding the Inspection. It is also likely that the operation of these systems has resulted in the comparatively low number of prisoners at Albany on the Prisoners at Risk Assessment Group (PRAG) system.

### Prisoners with special dietary requirements

4.18 There is generally good coordination between the clinic and the kitchen in relation to providing for prisoners special dietary requirements. However, several prisoners with Hepatitis C (self-identified) said that they believed that they were unable to get meals that are sufficiently low in fat for their conditions. They believed that the prison should have placed them on special diets to assist in managing their health conditions. The cook instructor advised us that the prison did not provide low-fat meals targeted at specific groups of prisoners. He said that all meals in the prison were low in

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<sup>51</sup> The psychologist is also able to recommend that prisoners undertake offending behaviour programs.

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fat and suitable for prisoners with Hepatitis C.<sup>52</sup>

- 4.19 We have heard constant requests from prisoners across the State for skim milk to be provided in prisons. At Albany, prisoners have access to powdered skim milk. Karnet Prison Farm is to produce skim milk at some point in 2003, after the purchase and fitting of a separator. We understand a contractor has been selected. Meanwhile, the Department could consider supplying powdered skim milk through the general food ordering system.

#### Health promotion

- 4.20 There are no specific health promotion programs delivered at Albany Prison other than the 'Keeping Safe' program. There is evidently a need for the prison to implement health promotion strategies that address the cardiovascular and Hepatitis C-related issues facing a large proportion of the prison's population.

#### Prisoner with Hepatitis C

- 4.21 The Department does not collate figures on the prevalence of Hepatitis C in WA prisons.<sup>53</sup> However, it is known that the prevalence of Hepatitis C in prisons is far higher than its prevalence in the broader Western Australian community.<sup>54</sup> Medical status reports for Albany Prison indicate that of those who have been voluntarily screened as many as 35 per cent have Hepatitis C.
- 4.22 People in the community with Hepatitis C have ready access to anti-viral treatments to assist them with managing their health. The Inspectorate was concerned that prisoners were not receiving the same quality of health care as available in the community.<sup>55 56</sup> Based on the current evidence Hepatitis C prevalence levels in prisons will increase and prisoners' health will deteriorate the longer prisoners spend in prison without treatment.
- 4.23 The Department needs to give serious consideration to reviewing its harm minimisation strategies in relation to Hepatitis C and all blood-borne diseases by providing more comprehensive harm minimisation programs. More effort could be put into encouraging prisoners to undergo six-monthly blood-screening so that effective monitoring of prisoners' health can take place. Research indicates that about 75 per cent of Hepatitis C infection is transmitted through the use of non-sterile needles. Syringes are readily if illegally available in prisons. Prisoners need access to easy means of sterilising syringes and tattoo equipment to stem the spread of blood-borne viruses. Bleach is

<sup>52</sup> See from paragraph 4.21 below for further discussion concerning prisoners with Hepatitis C.

<sup>53</sup> A study of 454 prisoners was undertaken in 2002 by Judyth Watson of the Hepatitis Council WA ('Hepatitis C: A Study of Prevalence in WA Prisons').

<sup>54</sup> Estimated by the Hepatitis Council WA at 1 per cent of the WA population.

<sup>55</sup> The 2003 Drugs Roundtable, an initiative of the State Attorney General, resulted in a commitment by the Department of Justice to develop a Justice Drug Plan to consider and implement innovative strategies to reduce harm associated with drug use.

<sup>56</sup> The Department advised that Section 100 of the Pharmaceuticals Benefit Scheme governs all treatment for hepatitis C. Treatment is provided by the three main WA teaching hospitals through the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing. All prisoners assessed as meeting specified criteria are offered access to the available medical treatments. The provision of these services at Albany Regional Prison is similar to that available in metropolitan prisons and consistent with that available in the community.

generally considered to be the best means of achieving this in a prison environment. Greater emphasis should be given in prisoner orientation and health education materials on ways of minimising the likelihood of contracting these diseases, including warnings about risk activities and advice. In a similar way this sort of information could be provided to warn prisoners about the dangers of unprotected sexual activity. All of these issues are common to prisons in Western Australia and not confined to the standards and practices at Albany Regional Prison.

*Recommendation 3*

*The Department should review the role, function and basic services provided through the health clinic.*

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND PRISONER EMPLOYMENT

Education

4.24 The Education Centre at Albany Prison provides general education and traineeship services. The centre is staffed by a Senior Education Officer (SEO), a full-time traineeship co-ordinator, a part-time Aboriginal Education Officer and a part-time tutor. Staff from the TAFE College also attend at the prison to deliver education and traineeship modules. Staff at Albany Education Centre and TAFE staff at the College emphasised the positive working relationship that they share.<sup>57</sup>

4.25 Albany Prison provides good access to education services and can demonstrate good course completion rates. At the time of the Inspection 11 prisoners were enrolled in full-time education courses and 38 prisoners were enrolled part time. In the prisoners' survey 89 per cent of respondents reported that they had good access to education services in the prison. In the six general education courses offered to prisoners by TAFE in 2001, the following completion rates were achieved:<sup>58</sup>

Literacy / ESL <sup>59</sup>	32%
Computing	60%
Management	50%
Horticulture	83%
Engineering	74%
Community Services	67%

<sup>57</sup> See paragraph 4.29 for discussion of the impact of lowering prisoner numbers on the capacity of TAFE to maintain the delivery of education and traineeships in the prison.

<sup>58</sup> Note that these figures are compiled annually, so the 2002 figures are not yet available. However, all the same modules were delivered. At Pardelup traineeships had been available in the past for aquaculture, shed hand and chain saw qualifications.

<sup>59</sup> English as a second language.

### Prisoner traineeships

- 4.26 TAFE accredited traineeships can be completed in cleaning, metal work, horticulture, cabinet work and cooking.<sup>60</sup> At the time of the Inspection 29 prisoners were enrolled in traineeships. TAFE staff provide the assessment and in-class components of the traineeships. The prison's industrial officers provide the on-the-job components of the traineeships by recording working hours, ensuring quality of work and by providing skills development advice to prisoners.
- 4.27 Prison and the TAFE College staff reported that their partnership had been successful at assisting a high proportion of traineeship enrolled prisoners to complete traineeship modules. TAFE staff praised the prison's workshops and the range of work that was available to prisoners. They assessed it as an ideal traineeship environment, as a work place with good facilities and also as a place that simulated real workplace conditions and practices.

### The future of delivery of education and training services at Albany

- 4.28 Education staff and prison managers expressed several areas of concern related to the reduction in prisoner numbers. First, we were advised that the significant numbers of prisoners who were moved to Acacia in 2001 and 2002 were taken straight out of courses and traineeships and moved to Acacia Prison without their education records going with them. TAFE staff said that the Department of Justice never consulted with them about how these moves would impact on prisoners who were studying or even whether the courses being interrupted were transferable to another centre.
- 4.29 Second, decreasing prisoner numbers, particularly following the closure of Pardelup Prison Farm, are affecting the capacity of the TAFE College to sustain the amount of support it can provide to the prison in delivering education services. The college is currently authorised to deliver up to 39,000 hours per year of tuition, at a conservative value of approximately \$400,000 a year. In the year 2000, 41,187 hours were delivered and in 2001 33,481 hours were delivered. Following the large number of transfers to Acacia Prison and a consequential sharp decrease in prisoner population (from highs of over 200 to about 110), the number of hours delivered had dropped to 15,982 by August 2002. It is likely that TAFE's commitment to resourcing prisoner education at Albany Prison will soon be re-assessed. The worry for the prison is that this may mean a scaling back of TAFE support to such an extent that education and training opportunities in the prison deteriorate.
- 4.30 A looming issue which will directly affect the prison's training profile involves the Corcoran Report-inspired proposal to close the prison's vocational skills workshop. Prison and TAFE staff commented that the workshop was an excellent training environment, with staff that have a good understanding of industry training practices and techniques. It is believed that access to traineeships will suffer as a

<sup>60</sup> There are two types of traineeships: a basic traineeship that is of one year's duration, and an industrial traineeship that is of three years' duration. Prisoners who wish to complete an industrial traineeship are only enrolled one year at a time over the three years necessary to complete it. Prisoners who do not have the required length of sentence to complete a traineeship are encouraged to enrol in individual modules that are transferable inside and outside the prison system.

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result of this closure, as industrial officers and education centre staff will not be able to supplement this loss of amenity.

### *Recommendation 4*

*The Education Services Branch of the Department should engage in negotiations with the Department of Education and training to minimise the operational impact of any workshop closures.*

### Employment opportunities in the prison

4.31 There were 13 work locations inside the prison at Albany (see Table 1). There are also a limited number of work opportunities outside the prison perimeter in the prison garden.<sup>61</sup>

4.32 At the time of the Inspection the prison had no work contracts with businesses from the local community, though this was partly due to several work contracts coming to an end in the previous few months. We were advised that decreasing prisoner labour force had made it difficult for the prison in the short term to guarantee that work would be completed. Another reason given was the prison's sensitivity to views expressed by local industry about the comparative advantage the prison has in terms of reduced labour costs. However, we were informed by the President of the Chamber of Commerce, which is the peak body for these purposes, that the local management had never discussed this with the Chamber.<sup>62</sup> Indeed, the President expressed confidence that areas could be identified that could satisfy the work and training needs of the prison and at the same time be in keeping with local industry concerns.

Table 1. Work locations x number employed

Upholstery Workshop	11	Gardens	0
Textiles Workshop	9	Cleaners	11
Metal Workshop	4	Unit Workers	10
Carpentry Workshop	10	Library/Recreation	5
Laundry	4	Miscellaneous	1
Kitchen	13	Reception	5
Canteen	1	Not Working <sup>63</sup>	1

4.33 Despite these concerns, which can be readily rectified, the prison has been trying to improve its industry profile. The prison's metal shop has maintained external business renovating horse floats through individual customers arranging for the floats to be delivered to the prison on an ad hoc basis. At the time of the Inspection the prison was putting effort into a trial of a fish processing service in the prison.

<sup>61</sup> These are for minimum-security prisoners. Of course, many of these are also eligible to attend the prison's work camps.

<sup>62</sup> Subsequent to the Inspection the Department advised that it had designated an officer to liaise with the Chamber in order to promote the potential of the prison's industries.

<sup>63</sup> Five of these prisoners were on remand.

***Recommendation 5***

*The Department should take the opportunity to engage with the local Chamber of Commerce and other community groups to identify and develop appropriate commercial contracts and prisoner employment opportunities.*

**Work and gratuities**

4.34 In the prisoner survey a high proportion of prisoners reported that they had the opportunity to do meaningful work, and that they believed that this work gave them better chances of gaining employment following their release.<sup>64</sup> Prisoners were also very positive about how they were treated by prison staff at their workplaces. This type of sentiment was also reflected in the concern several prisoners expressed for the industrial officers who were to be redeployed.

4.35 A small number of prisoners said that they were unhappy that they were unable to complete trade certificates whilst in prison. We understand that trade certificates can only be gained through the completion of an apprenticeship, and these are not offered in any WA prisons. In order to be awarded trade certificates prisoners must wait for release and then compete with applicants in the community. It seems reasonable at one level that prisoners should not be, in effect, advantaged over people seeking apprenticeships in the wider community. However, the situation for longer-term prisoners and their prospects for employment upon release may make the option of conducting some form of apprenticeship in prisons more viable.

4.36 Several prisoners expressed concern about the payment of gratuities for work in the prison. They expressed the belief that receiving level one pay was out of their reach because workers at Pardelup and Walpole have the majority of level one positions allocated within the prison. We were advised that gratuity levels are distributed at Albany in the same way as other prisons in the system and that gratuity payments for prisoners at the work camps are not distributed from the same pool of funds used for the general prison population at Albany. In this regard the prison needs to better explain the gratuity system to prisoners so that these anxieties are removed. However, the underlying issue here is that prisoners are increasingly unable to meet their basic purchasing needs on the current gratuity levels.

**OFFENDER BEHAVIOUR PROGRAMS**

4.37 Albany Prison provides several offender behaviour programs, including the Violent Offender Treatment Program (VOTP), which runs annually, the Managing Anger and Substance Use (MASU), the Cognitive Skills Program and a Relapse Prevention Program which all operate on a quarterly basis. There are no specific programs for Indigenous prisoners.

**The Violent Offender Treatment Program**

4.38 The VOTP is a locally developed (Western Australian) program that is delivered by a psychologist or social worker and a uniformed staff member. The key objective of the program is to reduce further

<sup>64</sup> In the survey 91 per cent of prisoners said they believed that they had good access to work in the prison.

violent offending by participants by supporting them to value and develop pro-social behaviour, attitudes and beliefs. An additional objective of the program is to assist in the management of prisoners with high levels of aggression. All of the prisoners on the program are accommodated in the same unit, which allows staff to more readily assess the impact of the program on prisoners and it also allows the participants to readily access their peers for support. As an incentive for prisoners to successfully complete the program they are placed on level 2 gratuities and on the completion of the program successful participants are elevated to a higher level of accommodation.

- 4.39 One note of concern about the program relates to the adequacy of training for the uniformed officers who are jointly responsible for co-ordinating the program. The officer in this role receives three days training before commencing in this role. It is unrealistic to expect that a uniformed officer with three days training can hope to provide the skills and confidence necessary to support the co-facilitator.

#### MASU

- 4.40 This medium-intensity, locally (Western Australian) developed program is targeted at men with anger and substance use issues. The aims of the program are to assist participants to reduce substance use and improve anger management strategies. Prisoners in the program told Inspection staff that they found it worthwhile and relevant to assisting them to prepare for release.

#### Cognitive Skills – Reasoning and Rehabilitation

- 4.41 The objectives of this program are ‘To replace well-established maladaptive thinking patterns with cognitive skills that can promote pro-social behavioural choices’. The target group is generic and its practitioners view it as a good pre-entry program for more intensive programs as well as of benefit in assisting prisoners to better manage their time in prison. The program is unique in that normally only one uniformed officer facilitates the course.<sup>65</sup>
- 4.42 The problems that we perceive in relation to this program have been detailed in this Office’s Report relating to Bandyup Women’s Prison.<sup>66</sup> The same issues highlighted in that Report concerning the lack of support and guidance that uniformed staff receive in delivering programs have relevance at Albany Prison.<sup>67</sup> Running the program demands a significant commitment from officers. The requirement that officers facilitating the program do so during their normal 12-hour shift allows them minimal time to prepare material and flies in the face of good practice in relation to program delivery.
- 4.43 Like their counterparts at other prisons, the staff running the program at Albany have no formal professional supervision, no quality control or evaluation of the work they do or assessment of the

<sup>65</sup> Other programs run by the Department are facilitated by either two psychologists/social workers or by a psychologist/social worker and a uniformed officer.

<sup>66</sup> See Report No. 12, *Report of an Announced Inspection in Bandyup Women’s Prison* (Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services, April 2003), paragraphs 5.76–5.82.

<sup>67</sup> See the forthcoming *Discussion Paper on Cognitive Skills in WA Prisons* (Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services).

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outcomes for prisoners. It makes poor sense for the Department to insist that trained professional staff from the programs branch receive supervision and support but that their comparatively untrained, uniformed colleagues receive very little.

4.44 These types of issues as well as staff transfers and resignations have led to a shortage of officers who are accredited to run the program. Staff that do remain in these positions have become increasingly disenchanted with how the program is managed by the Department.

### Other program issues

4.45 The Inspector has indicated in previous reports that programs should be provided early in a prisoner's sentence. It seems incongruous then that sex offender prisoners should be transferred out of Albany late in their sentence to prisons such as Casuarina in order to participate in a sex offender program. Albany Prison has a well managed and stable prison environment which is well suited as a programs environment for sex offenders. It has been successful at integrating difficult prisoners into its environment. It is not inconceivable that the prison could look at expanding its program scope beyond what is currently provided, particularly to include sex offenders, though this would require an appropriate investment in staff selection, development and training to support such a structure.

4.46 Another issue of concern relates to program facilitators receiving two sessions of on-site supervision annually from the Department's program management. This number is in marked contrast to what program facilitators receive in metropolitan prisons. At these prisons facilitators get supervision approximately every three weeks.

### Recommendation 6

*A comprehensive review of the coordination and support for offender programs should be undertaken by the Operational Support Directorate.*

## PRISONER SUPPORT SERVICES

4.47 Prisoners often seek assistance about their situation in prison, their family circumstances or arrangements for release. Systems of support play a vital role in providing prisoners with the sort of information and advice that can help them adjust and function in the prison environment and in the process minimise the likelihood of loneliness, alienation and self-harm in the prison. The good quality of interaction and communication between prisoners and officers at Albany Prison provides the basic foundation for prisoner support services there.<sup>68</sup> The fact that prisoners said they generally felt comfortable communicating with prison officers about their concerns or in raising grievances confirms this. Prisoners are not required to submit written forms to make applications and requests for services, or for their issues to be addressed.<sup>69</sup> This is indicative of an environment where informality has developed because there is a degree of respect and trust between officers and

<sup>68</sup> See paragraph 3.1 for discussion of prisoner and officer interaction.

<sup>69</sup> A good example is the way prisoners can verbally request to see nursing staff. See paragraph 4.11 for more details.

prisoners. Moreover, in an operational sense, the style of interaction at the prison is not informal at all. It is a style that is encouraged by the Superintendent and prison managers. This was evident to Inspection staff on several occasions when seeing the Superintendent, managers and staff talking to prisoners. Communication in the prison is generally polite, open and constructive and consequently prisoners are consistently provided with role models of good interaction and communication.

4.48 This framework of good interaction and communication is supplemented by the services of a Prisoner Support Officer (PSO), and staff from the Aboriginal Visitors Scheme (AVS). The PSO and AVS staff said that they thought highly of the way the prison operated and they reported that they had good working relationships with the local management and officers. They said that they received support in their work and that matters they raised in the prison were dealt with professionally and efficiently.

#### The Prisoner Support Officer and the Peer Support Group

4.49 The PSO coordinates the prison's Peer Support Group (PSG), which consisted at the time of the inspection of eight prisoners drawn from several different groups of prisoners at Albany: younger and older prisoners, Aboriginal and foreign national prisoners, and prisoners from different ends of the prison's hierarchy system. The group had clear aims about providing support to prisoners, monitoring the prison population for prisoners at risk and in assisting in facilitating communication between prisoners, staff and prison management. Members of the group understood their obligations in respect of maintaining relationships with both prisoners and prison management. To this extent group members were mindful of how it is possible for such groups to be exploited by prisoners and prison staff. Members of the group said that officers and management at Albany Prison were the best that they had encountered in the prison system and that this was reflected in the generally positive environment in the prison.

#### Aboriginal Visitors Scheme

4.50 Two staff from the AVS visit the prison three days a week and meet with individuals and groups of Aboriginal prisoners. It was clear that both AVS officers were highly respected among prisoners. This was evident from the prisoner survey material, from general comments made by prisoners and the significant number of prisoners we saw meeting with the two women on their visit days. Both women had high praise for the management and staff at the prison saying that they felt supported in their role and that matters they raised were always dealt with efficiently.<sup>70</sup>

4.51 They also raised the two issues of funeral applications and access to traditional food, which are raised by Aboriginal prisoners and the AVS in prisons across the State. They said that Albany prison officers were helpful to prisoners making funeral applications and that they regularly assisted prisoners to rewrite and resubmit applications. The women said that Aboriginal prisoners viewed the Department's handling of funeral applications as unfair and discriminatory. The aggregated affect of

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<sup>70</sup> They also told a story about an Aboriginal prisoner who was from the north of the State who had received a special welcome from staff, because the prisoner was missing his family, during the prison's Christmas party. They said that the prisoner had been moved by the efforts the staff had made, knowing that he was so far away from his home and family at Christmas.

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application refusals caused distress among prisoners. Prisoners viewed the Department's handling of funeral attendance applications as displaying a lack of respect for Aboriginal family relationships and a lack of understanding of the significance funeral attendances have for family contact and obligations.<sup>71</sup>

4.52 Concern was also expressed that the prison had not prioritised prisoner access to traditional food (e.g. kangaroo and damper). The visitors said that prisoners had access to such food in NAIDOC Week and on special family visiting days but that this did not satisfy the cultural significance such food has for Aboriginal prisoners. This is an area of service that has been progressed significantly in some prisons, most notably at Wooroloo Prison Farm, where sources of traditional food have been secured and are regularly provided to prisoners. Albany Prison should be similarly responsive.

### Community welfare services

4.53 Albany's Men's Resource Centre has a contract with the Department of Justice to supply support services, which includes advice and counselling for prisoners during the last six months of the sentence and the first three months following release. Similar services are provided to Aboriginal prisoners by the Family Futures community organisation. We were advised by these organisations that they had good access to prisoners and that the prison supported them in their work.

### Religious visitors

4.54 Ministers from the Uniting, Catholic and Anglican churches and the Salvation Army attend Albany Prison on a weekly basis. Other denominations attend on prisoner request.

## VISITS AND FAMILY CONTACT

4.55 The visiting arrangements at Albany Prison are generous, both in terms of the number of visit sessions prisoners are allowed and also in terms of the flexibility officers demonstrate in accommodating prisoner and visitor needs. Prison visits are available seven days a week for up to three hours daily. Sentenced prisoners are allowed a minimum of three visits a week and these can take place during morning or afternoon visiting sessions.<sup>72</sup>

4.56 The prison's visits centre has a central meeting area with adjoining non-contact visit room and formal interview rooms. There is also an outdoor area which is available for the use by prisoners on the highest level of the prison's hierarchy system. Tea and coffee facilities are provided, as are a selection of toys for children.



*The visits centre has a relaxed atmosphere*

<sup>71</sup> See Report No. 14, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison* (Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services, 2003), from paragraph 6.56, for information and discussion about the Department's funeral application policy and its impact on Aboriginal prisoners.

<sup>72</sup> Remand prisoners are allowed visits every day of the week, including public holidays.

4.57 Most of the prisoners who had used the visits facilities at the prison said that the arrangements were good and provided a relaxed atmosphere for their families to visit them. The prison has traditionally taken a flexible approach to accommodating prisoner and family needs in its visits policies. Visits can generally go over time if there is sufficient seating available. The prison also accepts visitors, subject to normal security procedures, who have not made a prior booking. Staff advised us that this flexibility was allowed in recognition of the large distances visitors often travelled to get to the prison. One prisoner described staff as being very supportive and accommodating towards family issues, describing how he was allowed visits every day with his wife on his arrival. He said that the officer's actions had assisted him to maintain contact with his family until he had settled into the prison.

4.58 In addition to visiting arrangements Albany also arranges four family days, a family-orientated Christmas party and a gathering in NAIDOC week. These arrangements far exceed the amount of family contact days provided at most other prisons in the State.<sup>73</sup>

#### Video conference family contact

4.59 A video link was introduced to Albany Prison in January 2001. Prisoners are able to have contact with family members who travel to other prisons with the video link technology. There is a \$4 charge for an outgoing link and no charge for an incoming link from another prison. Since its inception Albany has accommodated 62 video conference visits. The usability of the system would be greatly enhanced if families were able to make use of these facilities in regional town centres<sup>74</sup> rather than only at prisons as they do now. In the Kimberley Region prisoner families are able to use the North-West Mental Health Medical Service video link facilities to make contact with prisoners across the State. This type of arrangement in Broome provides a good example of how access to these services could be enhanced with some intra- and inter-agency cooperation.

#### Arunta telephone system

4.60 About 70 per cent of prisoners at Albany receive no visits at all. Because of this the prison telephone system plays a critical role in contact between most prisoners and their families and friends. With the majority of prisoners at Albany receiving between \$15.05 and \$36.46 in gratuity payments it is difficult for many to maintain regular contact by phone, e.g. we were advised by prisoners that the average cost of a call to Perth was about \$7 for 10 minutes. It is hoped that the Department's new telephone system will offer some cost relief to prisoners.<sup>75</sup> If it does not the Department could look at offering subsidies to the bulk of prisoners at Albany who rely so heavily on making long distance calls for their prime source of family contact.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Broome Regional Prison offers a similar number of family contact days.

<sup>74</sup> For example, at Community Justice Service offices.

<sup>75</sup> The new rates are markedly better.

<sup>76</sup> Indeed, the Department's Policy Directive number 36 at 11.3.6 implies that prisoners who are geographically isolated from their families should be subsidised on compassionate grounds.

## PRISONER ACCOMMODATION AND SERVICES

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### CANTEEN

4.61 Most prisoners at Albany (87%) who answered the survey rated the canteen services as good or very good. Prisoners are offered a very wide range of produce and there were none of the grievances we encounter at most prisons about poor access to particular types of foods. Prisoners reported that they had adequate access to the canteen and that town spends were easy to organise and arrived in good time.

### RECREATION

4.62 Prisoners in Unit One yards have a range of exercise equipment to use. Prisoners in Unit Three have two enclosed recreation areas attached to the unit where prisoners have access to weights equipment and a basketball hoop. They can generally use this equipment between 3.30 p.m. and lock-up time at 7.00 p.m. All prisoners can access the prison's oval between 3.30 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.. While the facilities were not particularly outstanding, prisoners have easy and uninterrupted access to what is available.

# Chapter 5

## WALPOLE AND PARDELUP WORK CAMPS

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### A STORY OF INNOVATION AND CHANGE

- 5.1 There are six work camps operating from four prisons in Western Australia.<sup>77</sup> Even though the camps can be significant distances from the base prison they continue to operate under the same regimes, rules and regulations as the base prison.<sup>78</sup> All camps are located in or near rural and remote communities.
- 5.2 In this Chapter we discuss the purpose of work camps in the context of the overall prison system. We describe the locations, infrastructure, prisoner and prison officer profiles and prisoner services available at the Walpole and Pardelup work camps. We discuss how Albany Prison selects prisoners to attend these camps and how local communities are involved in selecting work projects in their area. It needs to be stressed that at the time of the Inspection the prison was struggling to place sufficient numbers of minimum-security prisoners at these work camps because of the general decline in the prisoner population at Albany Prison.

### THE PURPOSE OF WORK CAMPS

- 5.3 Work camps have two principal purposes. First, they are intended to provide prisoners with meaningful work experience in a comparatively normalised environment in preparation for imminent release. Second the camps provide a focal point for prisoners to be organised to provide reparation to the community.
- 5.4 Prisoners at both camps are at the peak of the prison's hierarchy system and receive level 1 gratuity payments. They have better living conditions and more constructive activity opportunities than their peers inside prison. They are exposed to a more normalised and relaxed environment and have the opportunity to mix with locals in the course of their work. For these benefits prisoners are expected to demonstrate high standards of self-discipline and behaviour. They must work hard and do their best to integrate well into the team of prisoners at the camp. Complying with these demands gives prisoners the opportunity to prepare for re-entry into the community in the following ways:
- They can develop teamwork and other new work skills to enhance their employability;
  - They have the opportunity to adjust to comparatively relaxed living arrangements;
  - They experience how contributing to the community in this way is the best way to ensure they do not reoffend.

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<sup>77</sup> Walpole and Pardelup operate from Albany Regional Prison. Kellerberin Work Camp operates from Woorooloo Prison Farm. Millstream Work Camp operates from Roebourne Regional Prison and Bungarun and Wyndham Work Camps operate from Broome Regional Prison. The Warramia camp at Badgingarra has been mothballed.

<sup>78</sup> Prisoners are not continuously monitored, as they would be in the prison environment. However, they are subject to random spot checks by the camp officer. Prisoners are advised and provided with a work camp set of rules with which they must abide. Prisoner also sign a contract which establishes their understanding of what is expected from them at the camp.

## WALPOLE AND PARDELUP WORK CAMPS

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### MANAGING REPARATION IN THE COMMUNITY

#### Organisational leadership

- 5.5 The Superintendent of the base prison has full responsibility for all operations of work camps attached to the prison. In the case of Walpole and Pardelup a senior officer stationed at Pardelup has direct line supervision responsibilities for both work camps. Officers at the Walpole camp work four-day shift rotations and at Pardelup, eight-day shift rotations.

#### Selecting prisoners for the camps

- 5.6 In order to be eligible to live at a work camp prisoners must have minimum-security classification, be eligible for Section 94 programs, have a high work performance history in the prison and have a record of good behaviour. They must have completed any behavioural program requirements and education courses.<sup>79</sup> They should not have outstanding legal matters, have medical clearance to work and have been drug-free for at least three months.<sup>80</sup> Before transferring to a camp prisoners must sign a work camp and drug testing agreement which outline codes of expected behaviour and the consequences of contravention.

#### Selection of work projects

- 5.7 The process for selecting work projects is the same for both the Walpole and Pardelup work camps. The camps have Community Advisory Committees (CAC) which accept applications from community members. These committees are charged with prioritising work and ensuring that local individual interests are not unfairly advantaged and local commercial interests are not disadvantaged by prisoner work. The committee's assessments are then submitted to the officer in charge of the particular work camp who makes the final decision on which projects will be undertaken.

### WALPOLE WORK CAMP

- 5.8 Walpole Work Camp was opened in January 1998 as the first work camp in Western Australia. The facility is located a short distance by car from the centre of the Walpole townsite on 1.9 acres of land owned by the Department. In 2002 the camp operated on a budget of \$252,000. The work camp has the capacity to accommodate 12 prisoners and one staff member. At the time of the Inspection there were four prisoners at the work camp, two of whom were foreign nationals.
- 5.9 During the Inspection we became aware that the way different officers supervise the camp could cause difficulties for both officers and prisoners. Staff at the camp advised us that differing emphasis on the level of security and control regimes at the camp led to disagreements between staff. Prisoners told us that that this translated into them being invited by officers to take sides about how the camp operates. This kind of situation can develop as a consequence of the close contact and

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<sup>79</sup> We were advised that there are plans to introduce TAFE modules at Pardelup Work Camp to supplement skills learned by prisoners working on the farm. We will assess the progress on these matters in future liaison visits and inspections of the work camps.

<sup>80</sup> They must not have tested positive in any random or targeted drug test in that period.

interaction in such a small and interdependent environment. However, it has the potential, as is the case at Walpole, to corrode the cohesiveness of the environment. The prison's management need to constantly monitor that appropriate boundaries exist between prisoners and staff at the work camps. There needs to be a clear framework that spells out how prisoners are to be managed at work camps. Prisoners need to know what is expected of them and to be managed with a degree of consistency between different officers.

### Work projects

- 5.10 The CAC for the Walpole Work Camp has reached a sophisticated level of development. Several sectors of the community are represented on the CAC and this body demonstrates a keen support for the role of the work camp in the community. They have an understanding of the benefits to the community and rehabilitative benefits to prisoners that flow from the camp. This development process has been assisted in no small measure by the fact that there have been minimal (if any) instances of anti-social behaviour by prisoners either in the community or at the camp.
- 5.11 The range of work projects carried out in the Walpole area since the inception of the camp has been highly commendable. It has included the refurbishment of the town's jetty, the establishment of a walk track through bush area around the town and maintenance on the nearby Bibbulmun Track. This work has been conducted under an arrangement the Department has with the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM), who also supply the tools for these tasks to be completed.<sup>81</sup> Prisoners have also been involved in carrying out many small tasks for elderly people in the township. It is clear to all concerned that work undertaken by prisoners has contributed to community development that otherwise would not have happened without the camp's existence. The commercial value of prisoner labour has been considerable. For example, the refurbishments to the town jetty have been costed at \$115,000, whereas the project received a capital grant of only \$27,000.

### Accommodation

- 5.12 The camp consists of two portable living units which contain individual bedrooms and communal cooking, lounge and ablution facilities. The accommodation is of a reasonably good standard. All prisoners have individual rooms with adequate heat and ventilation where necessary. The officer at the camp is accommodated in a small caravan parked at the site<sup>82</sup>. This may have been adequate accommodation in the early stages of the camp but it fails as a long-term solution to providing appropriate living conditions for officers stationed there. The Department is, we are told, considering several options to remedy this situation.

### Access to health services

- 5.13 The Walpole Work Camp is isolated both geographically and operationally from health services

<sup>81</sup> Prisoners raised concerns about the condition and availability of sufficient appropriate tools supplied for these various tasks.

<sup>82</sup> Subsequent to the Inspection the Department has replaced the caravan with a three-bedroom, fully furnished house.

## WALPOLE AND PARDELUP WORK CAMPS

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provided from Albany Prison. Health staff from the prison normally visit the camp to monitor the health of prisoners at three-monthly intervals. The camp itself has a first aid box containing basic medical supplies and day-to-day medical services are available to prisoners from the Silver Chain Health Centre located in the Walpole townsite.<sup>83</sup> A registered nurse is responsible for managing the clinic and attends to any prisoners that come with minor health complaints. Prisoners have access to a doctor at this location once a week.

- 5.14 Until some weeks prior to the Inspection prisoners were able to obtain prescribed medication from the Silver Chain Health Centre. This practice was discontinued as a result of budgetary constraints. Medicines are now purchased from a pharmacy in the town. We understand that this practice is soon to cease because of the cost of obtaining supplies from this source is higher than providing Department-sourced medication. When this new system comes into operation prisoners will have to wait for supplies to arrive via the weekly Pardelup prescribed medicine delivery (discussed below).
- 5.15 Prisoners who are on prescribed medicines receive them in dosette boxes that have been prepared by health staff from Albany Prison. The Albany Prison clinic manager delivers the dosette boxes to Pardelup Work Camp weekly. This delivery includes an extra dosette box of medicine for each prisoner to provide a back-up supply of medication in cases of emergency. One set of medication is then delivered to Walpole and the back-up set is kept at Pardelup Work Camp. This system is highly irregular and potentially dangerous. It is not appropriate for prison officers to be responsible for rotating the distribution of prisoner medication in this way. This is particularly important because the doctor at the prison can sometimes change a prisoner's medication and trained health staff should administer changes to medication. The current medication distribution system also has too many people involved in the process, which can in itself heighten the possibility of error and/or spillage. This system is in need of immediate review.

### Visits and family contact

- 5.16 The relative isolation of Walpole Work Camp and the absence of any form of public transport<sup>84</sup> to the camp makes it difficult for prisoner's families to contemplate visiting. As things stand prisoners at Walpole must make the trip to Pardelup for visits. These visits are conducted every Saturday and generally coincide with officer shift change-overs for the camp. Even so, these inconveniences were not a priority for prisoners at the camp. They view the benefits they receive from being at the camp as ample compensation. It is relevant to note that prisoners at both camps are issued with \$10 credit to their phone accounts each week.

### Recreation

- 5.17 Prisoners at the camp are able to participate in local community social and sporting activities.

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<sup>83</sup> This service is funded by the Commonwealth and provides child health services and health promotion to the local community.

<sup>84</sup> For this reason some prisoners with family ties outside of the region choose not to go to the work camps.

## WALPOLE AND PARDELUP WORK CAMPS

### PARDELUP

5.18 The Pardelup Work Camp commenced operation in January 2002. It had previously been a fully commissioned prison farm with as many as 80 prisoners accommodated there. The falling prisoner population prompted its reclassification as a work camp and the redeployment of excess staff to Albany Prison. In 2002 Pardelup Work Camp operated on a budget of \$404,500, with capacity to accommodate 20 prisoners. There were only 12 prisoners at the camp at the time of the Inspection.

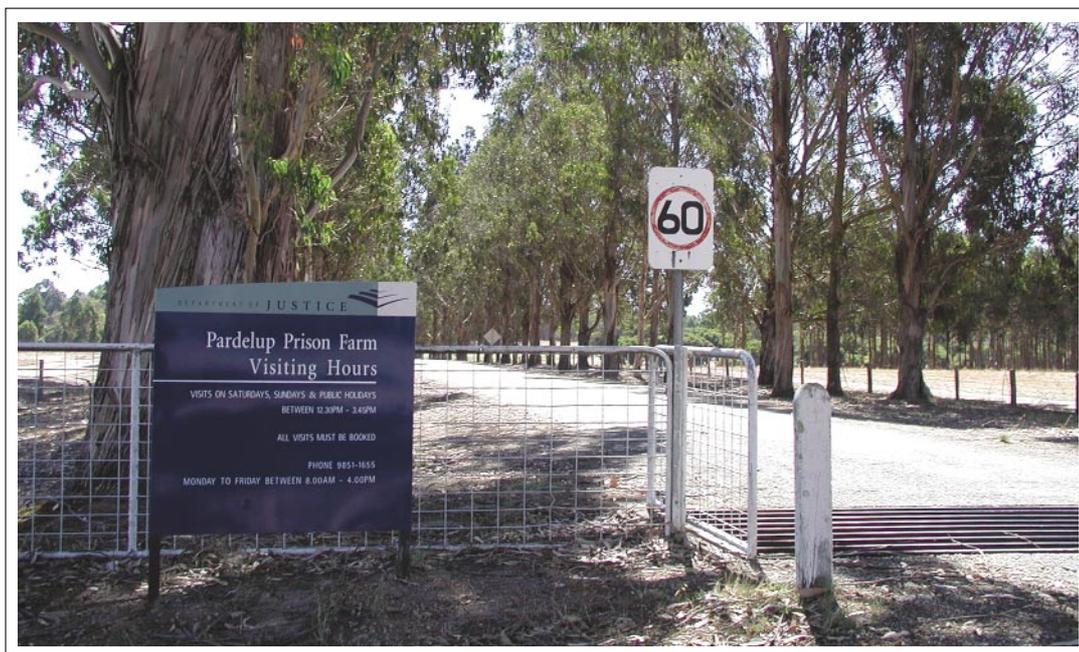
#### Work in the community

5.19 Ten of the 12 prisoners at the camp on the day we inspected it were involved in projects around the local Shire and in the town of Mt Barker. The Department had recently held a local community meeting in Mt Barker and the Mt Barker Community Advisory Committee had been formed. Its links with its local community are less well developed than at Walpole, although some projects had commenced, generally involving clean-up, painting and landscaping work around the town.

#### Farm operations

5.20 At the time of the Inspection only two prisoners were involved in working on the farm, which has approximately 2,500 sheep and 450 head of cattle. The farm produce of wool and meat has been valued by the Department at approximately \$420,000 annually.

5.21 Because of the lack of available information from the Department concerning the performance and possibilities for the future of the farm at Pardelup, the Inspector commissioned a report from the Department of Agriculture to address these issues.<sup>85</sup> The salient points of that Report are as follows:



*The Pardelup work camp*

<sup>85</sup> A summary of the Department of Agriculture Report is included at Appendix 3.

## WALPOLE AND PARDELUP WORK CAMPS

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- The personnel arrangements for operating the farm (two prisoners and two industrial officers) are fragile. While the present numbers are just adequate for a mixed farm of 2,500 sheep and 400 beef, the farming activities could collapse if one of those personnel were unavailable;
- The farm current value contribution to the Departmental food chain is considerably greater than the \$420,500 estimated by the Department;
- The best use of the farm arguably lies beyond its role in the prison system's food chain;
- The changed configuration and use of the farm has eroded its value as a training location; and
- There is potential for partnership activities to be explored at the site between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Justice. This could be in the form of scientific activities operating in conjunction with farming and correctional activities.

5.22 As things currently operate at the camp there appears to be some confusion about whether it should focus on being a prison farm or whether it should focus on the traditional role of work camps and on prisoners working in the community.<sup>86</sup>

### Recommendation 7

*That the Department accept and adopt the recommendations from the expert Farm Report by the Department of Agriculture as part of a comprehensive farm management plan.*

### Access to health services

5.23 The Albany Prison clinic manager visits the Pardelup Work Camp once a week to see prisoners who have requested appointments and to change over prisoner medication dosette boxes.<sup>87</sup> At present an informal arrangement exists which allows prisoners to see a doctor at a medical clinic at Mt Barker should the need arise. If the prisoner is prescribed medication in these circumstances it can be purchased at the Mt Barker pharmacy where the prison has an account. This arrangement, according to officers and prisoners, is efficient and works well.

5.24 We were advised that this arrangement was soon to change because of the reputedly higher costs involved in using these local resources. In future prisoners will be returned to Albany Prison to see a doctor at the prison and to obtain medicines. This new system will impose an eight to ten-day absence from the work camp as prisoners wait for the following week's transport back to the camp. This is considered a penalty by prisoners who may choose to ignore their medical needs and conditions and remain at the camp. It will also impose organisational difficulties for work camp staff to reorganise work commitments. This change raises the obvious question about whether lower costs

<sup>86</sup> See Report No. 17, *Announced Inspection of Woorloo Prison Farm* (Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services, August 2003).

<sup>87</sup> One prisoner with diabetes had been educated by the Albany clinic staff to be responsible for managing and monitoring his diabetes. He was taught to use a glucometer so that he could measure his own blood sugar level, adjust his insulin accordingly and keep check of his diet. It is important that prisoners are taught how to manage their health conditions rather than miss out on the opportunity of being in a work camp.

should be the only measure used when considering the efficacy of services.

- 5.25 Our view is that the existing health service arrangements between Pardelup and Mt Barker should be continued and indeed strengthened by formalising what have been quite ad hoc arrangements. Also, the existing facilities at the site could be equipped to a standard that allowed the clinic manager to conduct formal clinics.<sup>88</sup>

#### Visits and family contact

- 5.26 Visits at the Pardelup Work Camp take place on Saturdays for up to a six-hour period.

#### SUMMARY

- 5.27 The Walpole Work Camp justifiably provides a good model for the development of new work camps in Western Australia. It more than meets the purposes the Department originally set for such camps. The Department has handled community consultation and involvement in the development of the work camps very well. These communities have benefited from some exceptionally good work projects and prisoners have no doubt benefited in terms of their general living conditions, work experience and skills picked up in their time at the camp.
- 5.28 The Pardelup Work Camp has a long way to go to reach the sophistication of the Walpole Work Camp. The camp's present operation as a type of hybrid work camp with traditional work camp activities, in addition to the operation of the prison farm, needs to be clarified and developed. The camp needs a clear purpose upon which to plan its future. The first steps in community consultation have commenced and there is every good reason to believe that the prison and the Department will have similar success in establishing good partnerships with communities and agencies in the area.
- 5.29 It seems inconceivable that these two correctional facilities that provide such positive environments for prisoners, deliver good correctional outcomes and which provide such high standards of reparative work in local communities should be in positions where their viability is in question. During the Inspection both camps were being under-utilised, which is directly related to the number of minimum-security prisoners accommodated at Albany Prison. We appreciate that the Department has been examining how it can best support Albany Prison to ensure the sustainability of these two valuable correctional assets. Encouraging prisoners from across the State to spend the end period of their sentences at either of these work camps is one way that the Department is working to ensure their future.

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<sup>88</sup> A good model for the delivery of health services to work camps has been developed by the Broome Regional Prison Health clinic for the Bungarun and Wyndham work camps. At both these sites a local (Derby and Wyndham) registered nurse is employed by the department to carry out a clinic at the work camps once a week for four hours. The nurse is responsible for filling dosette boxes, new admissions and any other prisoner health issues. The doctor at the Wyndham Hospital does the new admission medical examinations. A similar arrangement exists in Derby. According to staff this model works more effectively and prisoners do not have to travel back to Broome Prison to see a doctor. The Broome Prison clinic provides support and supplies as necessary.

5.30 The positive impact that work camps have on prisoners and communities could best be furthered by building onto what has up to now been the Department's piloting or concept approach to their development. This could occur in two ways; at both a philosophical and operational level. First, the purpose and role of work camps needs to be incorporated into the mainstream of the Department's correctional policy and vision for the future. Second, considerable thought, planning and investment is required to develop and extend work camps across the prison system.

*Recommendation 8*

*That the Department develop a strategic costed framework for the ongoing development and evaluation of their work camp program.*

# Chapter 6

## CHALLENGES FOR ALBANY REGIONAL PRISON AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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### CAPITALISING ON GOOD PRACTICE

- 6.1 Albany Prison is a 'healthy' prison. The prison is successful at providing a secure environment where prisoners and staff feel safe, where prisoners and staff are treated with respect and where prisoners are supported to prepare for release with good rehabilitation and support services. The prison's success is principally due to the quality of its staff and good local leadership. The professional attitudes of all staff positively influence their interaction with prisoners. The quality of this interaction is evident in the generally good balance that has been achieved between the prison's security and prisoner wellbeing responsibilities. Prisoner management systems at Albany benefit from the cohesiveness that good interaction brings to all levels of the prisons operation. The prison also benefits from significant community involvement in rehabilitating and supporting prisoners both at the work camps attached to the prison as well as a result of community organisations' involvement inside the prison. All of these factors add up to create a positive prison environment where many of the standards discussed in Chapter 2 are evident.
- 6.2 This is not to say that there are areas of service delivery in the prison that do not require significant attention. The prison's accommodation in Unit One is in urgent need of refurbishment and the prison's method of allocating accommodation through its hierarchical system needs to be looked at to support Aboriginal prisoners to move on to better accommodation in the prison. Also, in relation to the prison work camps, there is work to do to clarify the roles of the staff at the camps and at a policy level to incorporate and emphasise the role and purpose of work camps into the mainstream of correctional policy in this State.
- 6.3 In this Chapter, against the backdrop of a prison that we believe provides a good model for correctional practice in Western Australia, we discuss how Albany Prison has responded to the reality of diminished prisoner numbers and how the Department has managed the scaling back of prison services in the region. We discuss how uncertainty about the prison's future and the lack of support from the Department to deal with diminished prisoner numbers could undermine Albany Prison's achievements. We conclude by offering some suggestions about the types of prisoners that Albany is well capable of accommodating.

### Running down Albany, Walpole and Pardelup

- 6.4 In a context where the prison population has been falling and the number of prisoners in the publicly managed side of the prison system has reduced by about 1,100 in just over a year, there have been considerable stresses placed on the management of prisoners. This has meant in one case (Riverbank) the closure of a prison altogether. In the case of the Albany/Pardelup/Walpole chain of institutions it has meant the closure of an accommodation unit in the prison, the downgrading of Pardelup to a work camp and a reduction of the population cap of prisoners at Albany from 186 to 126. These changes have had profound staffing effects, with a loss of about 50 jobs across the prison chain and a consequential loss to the community in this part of the Great Southern of about \$3 million per annum. It has also reduced the number of re-settlement prisoner places by about 50 and

has, in general terms, changed the face of imprisonment in this part of the State.

- 6.5 Questions need to be asked about how this has been done and what have been its effects. In the course of the Inspection we constantly encountered officers who were convinced that the Department had an agenda to close Albany down altogether. Community leaders, politicians, councillors and local welfare organisations shared this fear. This Office believes that these fears are misplaced and that the Department is not thinking in these terms. However, when such fears are so widespread in such a comparatively small community, it is easy to understand how a prison environment could deteriorate as the effects of uncertainty take hold in the prison.
- 6.6 We were concerned that despite our extensive enquiries the Department could not produce documentation that explained the processes or criteria being used to select custodial or industrial officers for redeployment. Similarly, no criteria were evident as to how decisions would be made about who should remain employed at Albany and those whose positions are no longer justified. It is to the credit of the management and staff at Albany that they have been able to maintain their standards in this atmosphere.

#### FUTURE POTENTIAL

- 6.7 Albany Prison's comparative remoteness appears to be both a blessing and a curse. It has meant that it has been allowed to develop as a prison in a way that reflects the style of the community in the region it is located. However, at a time of rapid change in the overall system, the prison seems to be out of the loop as a prison to place particular types of prisoners. The prison has established expertise in accommodating prisoners who have posed management difficulties in other prisons. It remains to be seen if the proposed changes to security arrangements at the prison mean that such prisoners will no longer be sent to Albany. The prison has the necessary infrastructure and environment or could be readily adapted to accommodate protection prisoners, women prisoners and prisoners who express minimal visiting requirements.
- 6.8 This Office's Report Number 15 on Vulnerable and Predatory Prisoners in Western Australia: A Review of Policy and Practice found that protection prisoners were a forgotten sub-group within the prison system. Large numbers had accumulated in the three main metropolitan prisons, Acacia, Hakea and Casuarina. For a variety of reasons each of these prisons is struggling to deal with predatory behaviour. Albany Prison has had an exemplary record of taking difficult to manage prisoners from the metropolitan area and managing them successfully.
- 6.9 It is a conclusion of this Inspection that the prison can once more come to the aid of these prisoners by taking a moderately sized group of protection prisoners to be managed back into mainstream rather than segregation conditions. Some compensatory arrangements for contact with families, such as additional phone calls, paid letters, video link-ups and occasional temporary transfers for face-to-face visits would need to be considered. The Department embarked upon such a venture (of additional privileges) in order to temporarily transfer women prisoners to a regional prison whilst

major capital works were undertaken in the State's main women's prison. Such a scheme would provide respite for the main male metropolitan prisons whilst providing protection prisoners with better access to essential services than they are currently receiving.

- 6.10 Albany Prison could also cater for more prisoners from outside of the State than it currently does. Typically this would involve identification of these sub-groups and the development of appropriate regimes at Albany Prison. In any case Albany Prison should commence planning to fully cater for all offender categories from its regional catchment. In this regard women prisoners are a notable exclusion at this time. As a consequence of Departmental policy women prisoners are either held in police lock-ups or unnecessarily transferred to the Bandyup Women's Prison in Perth. Albany has in the past and should in the future develop strategies to accommodate women in the region. The needs of these women are no different to those for whom the Department has acknowledged their status and catered for at Broome, Roebourne, Greenough and in the Eastern Goldfields. In this regard Albany is an anomaly.

*Recommendation 9*

*That the Department re-profile the population of Albany Prison to secure its viability and to benefit from its good standard of operational culture.*

- 6.11 The fact that other prisons in the system are experiencing similar difficulties in adjusting to lowering prisoner numbers means that those prisons are less inclined to let go of prisoners that might benefit from staying at Albany. But this is where the Department needs to have developed and articulated plans for the future of Albany Prison. This prison earns respect for the way it operates and it deserves nothing less than sustained support in order to ensure it is able to contribute its expertise and standards of service to the system as a whole.

*Recommendation 10*

*The Department needs to identify and articulate the good practices unique and inherent to Albany Prison and to develop a methodology for replicating these practices at other less successful prisons.*

# Appendix 1

## THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Professor Richard Harding	Inspector
Peter Upton-Davis	Senior Inspections Officer
Jocelyn Jones	Senior Research Officer
Andy Fitzgerald	Inspections Officer
Natalie Gibson	Inspections Officer
Kerri Bishop	Inspections Office (seconded from the Department of Justice)
Dr Peter Barrett	Expert Consultant Health Department of Western Australia
Steve Porritt	Expert Consultant Western Australia Department of Agriculture

## Appendix 2

### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. There should be positive initiatives from the prison to facilitate Aboriginal prisoners progressively moving through the various levels of incentive accommodation on the basis that it is an expectation. This should be done in a way that does not create disharmony by displacing non-Aboriginal prisoners who have satisfied the selection criteria.

#### *Response and Proposed Action*

*Subsequent to the Inspection an Affirmative Action Plan was implemented at the prison to facilitate the progression of Aboriginal prisoners to higher accommodation levels. The prison is also introducing an equal opportunity monitoring and evaluation system. Together with the Affirmative Action Plan this will better equip the prison to meet this objective.*

2. That the prison's reception and orientation processes are reviewed to ensure that a comprehensive service is delivered to all prisoners coming into Albany Regional Prison.

#### *Response and Proposed Action*

*Peer Support prisoners now attend the reception area for each intake of new prisoners to assist in the reception and orientation process. Subsequent to the Inspection a review was conducted of the reception area. Since the review staff involvement and awareness has been enhanced and the documentation process improved.*

3. The Department should review the role, function and basic services provided through the health clinic.

#### *Response and Proposed Action*

*Health Services is reviewing the delivery of health services in all prisons with the aim of providing a comprehensive range of health services at a standard comparable with that available to the general community commensurate with a duty of care and safe custody.*

4. The Education Services Branch of the Department should engage in negotiations with the Department of Education and training to minimise the operational impact of any workshop closures.

#### *Response and Proposed Action*

*The Education and Vocational Training Unit, Albany Prison staff and the staff from Great Southern College of TAFE have commenced negotiations to strategise solutions to addressing the issues of a reduced muster and the impact it was having on meeting agreed training schedules. The negotiations commenced at the time of the Inspection and have been ongoing, in three-month intervals. A planned approach to training now exists that takes into consideration a set of compulsory requirement units for all minimum-security offenders at Albany prior for selection for a work camp and planned delivery of vocational skills training at Pardelup for offenders from both Walpole and Pardelup. This increased delivery will absorb the impact of having fewer offenders at Albany.*

5. The Department should take the opportunity to engage with the local Chamber of Commerce and

## DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS

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other community groups to identify and develop appropriate commercial contracts and prisoner employment opportunities.

### *Response and Proposed Action*

*An Industrial Officer has been designated the community business contact person. This officer will meet frequently with members of the Albany business community including the Chamber of Commerce, with a view to promoting the potential of Albany Regional Prison industries.*

6. A comprehensive review of the coordination and support for Offender Programs should be undertaken by the Operational Support Directorate.

### *Response and Proposed Action*

*Offender programs are currently being reviewed including the Cognitive Skills Program. The VOTP program is not being reviewed at this time. The Clinical Supervisor at Bunbury will recommence regular monthly supervision of programs staff at Albany Regional Prison and regular weekly contact by phone.*

7. That the Department accept and adopt the recommendations from the expert farm report by the Department of Agriculture as part of a comprehensive farm management plan.

### *Response and Proposed Action*

*The Department accepts and has implemented many of the recommendations from the expert farm report by the Department of Agriculture. The recommendations in respect to the exclusivity of beef and the introduction of viticulture have been considered but will not be implemented at this time. A cost benefit analysis of the Blue Gum plantation will be conducted after harvest and the decision will then be made as to the future use of the area. Silage bails will be trialed this financial year.*

8. That the Department develop a strategic, costed framework for the ongoing development and evaluation of their work camp program.

### *Response and Proposed Action*

*Agreed. Some of this work has already commenced. A full evaluation of the work camp program, as part of a longitudinal study of data collected over four to five years, is due to commence in 2004–05.*

9. That the Department re-profile the population of Albany Prison to secure its viability and to benefit from its good standard of operational culture.

### *Response and Proposed Action*

*The Department will review the population profile at Albany Regional Prison.*

10. The Department needs to identify and articulate the good practices unique and inherent at Albany Prison and to develop a methodology for replicating these practices at other less successful prisons.

## Appendix 3

### DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE REPORT ON PARDELUP FARM OPERATIONS

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#### *Response and Proposed Action*

*The Department is undertaking an Operational Efficiency Review of prison officer functions and activities at sample prisons. The Department is also planning to review the role and function responsibilities of each prison in the near future.*

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE REPORT ON PARDELUP FARM OPERATIONS

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By Department of Agriculture Officers:

*Ron McTaggart, Senior Development Officer, Albany*

*Derek Ryall, Manager, Mt. Barker Research Support Unit*

*Colin McDonald, Senior Research Officer, Albany*

### INTRODUCTION

This report is based on a two-hour visit to Pardelup by the above three officers of the Department of Agriculture on Thursday, August 22, 2002. Two of the officers had also had looked over Pardelup Farm in previous years.

Thanks are extended to Farm Manager, Graeme Henderson, who kindly met with the three officers and showed them over the property.

### Discussion covered:

- the role of the farm,
- the property details – size, layout, etc.,
- the beef enterprise,
- the sheep enterprise,
- pasture improvement,
- herd and flock improvement,
- hay making,
- the potential for cropping,
- the bluegum plantations,
- the potential for horticulture and viticulture

### The future of the farm activities was viewed from three perspectives:

1. Current role of the farm to produce beef for the prison system
2. Potential for intensive agricultural enterprises to use as a base for prisoner training and rehabilitation
3. Potential for the farm to be used for agricultural research for agricultural industry and prisoner training benefits.

### THE PROPERTY DETAILS

Pardelup Farm totals 2,400 ha in area, being 750 ha of pasture, 160 of bluegum plantations, and 1,490 ha of mixed woodland including Marri, Karri, Yate and Casuarina. The topography is fairly flat with some undulations. Most of the paddocks have excellent medium to heavy textured, grey-brown soil.

The property is in the 700mm rainfall belt, with wet winters and springs and relatively dry summers and autumns. Some paddocks have well-drained soil while others may be prone to transient water-logging.

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE REPORT ON PARDELUP FARM OPERATIONS

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The farm is in a reliable rainfall area and is at the divide of the Hay River and Denmark Catchments. Much of the uncleared land is in the Denmark Catchment and due to the need for drinkable water in the Denmark River, it is unlikely that this land could be cleared.

The land on the North side of the Muir Highway is sandier soil and very flat. Apart from a small piece of land next to Pardelup lagoon, previously used for summer vegetable crop, there is no opportunity for winter crops on this section.

The land around the compound and farm building has been used for cropping in the past but it is estimated that no more than 100 ha would be available for cropping, due to the probability of yields being limited in a wet winter. The best use of the cleared portion of the property is as a grazing farm that includes some blue gum plantations.

Recent soil tests indicate adequate phosphorus levels while potassium is lower than ideal. The plan to apply only potassium and possibly nitrogen is therefore logical. Adequate soil pH suggests that liming is not necessary at this stage.

A pasture renovating machine and a spray mister have been recently purchased as part of an ongoing plan to gradually upgrade the pasture quality. The use of the spray mister for control of red-legged earth-mites is a wise decision indicating up-to-date knowhow. The pasture renovator to improve the pastures is a valuable acquisition.

The farm is excellently subdivided with high quality fences, an efficient laneway system and good yards for cattle and sheep. There are also several large and well-maintained sheds.

Water supply is pumped from the Pardelup lagoon and reticulated to the paddocks and buildings. Experience showed that the pumping system was pushed to the limit when there were more than 80 prisoners resident last year. However at current prisoner levels of 20 or less, the water pumping system is considered to be adequate.

### CURRENT AND POTENTIAL ROLES/FUNCTIONS OF THE PARDELUP FARM

This report recognises that the farm enterprises selected for Pardelup will depend heavily on the farm's primary role within the prison system. Several options are described below.

Currently it appears that the primary function of the farm is cattle production to supply beef to the state prison system. The property also has a work camp for 20 (currently 12) prisoners. However, only two work on the farm, the remainder working out in the community.

If, however, Pardelup were to be considered as a major training or rehabilitation centre in the future, then more intensive industries would be recommended as they provide broader areas of training.

### THE BEEF ENTERPRISE

Beef production for the justice system is the main aim of the Pardelup Farm. Please see Appendix 1 for details on the gross margin and revenue of the enterprise.

The projected sales from a herd of 500 breeding cattle are 467 animals made up of steer and heifer

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vealers. The value of the animals as delivered to Karnet for processing is estimated to be about \$261,000. This includes costs of freight at half commercial rates and no fees, levies or commissions that would be attracted if they were sold commercially.

The meat products used within the Justice system would treble the value of animals and take the total value to approximately \$780,000 per annum.

While sheep and cattle are somewhat complementary, the opportunity exists to discontinue the sheep breeding activity at Pardelup with its associated costs and work load and add to the size of the cattle-breeding herd.

It was noted from the 2002 business plan that, while the target breeding number was stated to be 450, the actual numbers mated were ~300 cows and 87 heifers (385). There is opportunity to increase the number of breeding cows to the target figure and if the sheep were discontinued, to carry over the lightweight steer calves at Pardelup until the next year.

The lightweight calves are most likely to be Angus-cross calves from the heifer group and those with lower weaning weights from the cow herds (poor mothers or late calvers). The Department of Agriculture has a copy of a response to the Pardelup Farm Manager written in 1997 when the Ministry was asking for more beef from Pardelup. The response was that more beef could be produced if the sheep numbers were reduced.

In the current position where there is no call for sheep activities for training, the following is recommended:

### Recommendation 1

That the breeding herd be increased to 500 and the sheep flock be discontinued. This changeover to take place over 3 years to allow for the high returns expected for lambs over this time – without the need to purchase replacement ewes or rams. The culling of old and empty ewes will reduce the current 2,500 ewes to 800-1,000 by the end of the period and, at the same time, cattle numbers will be slowly building up from the existing herd – again without buying in stock.

### Recommendation 2

That Angus and Murray Grey bulls be used over the youngest group of cows and heifers to generate polled breeding cows that will have less potential problems with pinkeye and cancer eyes. The herd will be a Hereford x Murray Grey or Hereford x Angus. A terminal sire like Charolais or Simmental will add weight to the weaners. This should give heavier calves to be finished 'off the cow' or grain-finished at Woolooroo.

### Recommendation 3

That the manager and staff continue to record production, birth dates and weaning weights of calves to improve the output of the herd – by pregnancy testing and by culling 'empties' and

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE REPORT ON PARDELUP FARM OPERATIONS

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‘poor performers’.

### Recommendation 4

A review of staffing needs would be appropriate in the future. Reducing the sheep numbers and finally replacing them with cattle will reduce the staff and prisoners needed for an efficient operation. The use of contract services for super spreading and hay baling would further reduce labour requirements.

### Recommendation 5

Annual fertiliser budget to be sufficient to maintain existing level of soil fertility (potential productivity). The inspection group was pleased to note that the farm had been soil tested and that the manager was juggling his fertiliser budget to fix deficiencies in potassium identified by test. It is also noteworthy that lime had been used recently on the farm to combat soil acidification processes. The productivity of the farm will be maintained by budgeting for continuing annual expenditure on fertilisers.

### Recommendation 6

Paddocks regularly cut for hay to have extra nutrients applied and insect control at closing-up. An annual program of conserving spring surplus of meadow hay is followed. The condition of the stock and the quantity of pasture reflected the productivity of the farm and the excellent start to winter 2002. The use of Timerite for insect control and the sod seeder to introduce improved pasture species is commended. The current use of contractors for fertiliser spreading and hay baling reduces the need for expensive equipment in the capital budget.

### Recommendation 7

Consideration be given to extra fodder conservation in good seasons (2002 in particular) in the form of high density rectangular silage bales. These bales (~450kg) can form the basis of a long-term fodder reserve for a tough autumn. Local contractors are available.

## THE SHEEP ENTERPRISE

Pardelup’s sheep flock is not used to supply meat into the prison system. It does produce an estimated \$156,000 per annum in revenue from the commercial sales of wool and lambs. The ewe flock is not self-replacing and the gross margin. Of recent years, new stock has been purchased in November to replace cull ewes. Changing to a self-replacing flock of crossbred ewes is currently being considered and is recommended if a sheep enterprise is retained. See Appendix 2 for details.

A flock of 2,500 mixed-age Merino ewes is run on Pardelup. These are mated with Poll Dorset rams in December for a May lambing. A lambing percentage of 100% was achieved this year. The lambs are usually sold as prime lambs in October at a dressed weight of 21–22 kg.

The pasture renovation benefits of the tight grazing with sheep could be nearly equalled by tight grazing with replacement heifers.

## BLUEGUM PLANTATIONS

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The bluegum plantations on the property consist of 50 ha of CALM estate and 110 ha of Pardelup's own trees. The 50 ha of CALM estate is due to be harvested in January 2003 and the 110 ha of Pardelup trees also appear to be harvestable. It will be worth seeing the yields of chip wood from the CALM site. It is understood that this will be run for a further 10 years as a coppice plot under the contract arrangement.

Pardelup's own bluegums are in a variety of positions in the landscape – from revegetation of creek-lines to blocks of trees, to rows in alleys unfenced in grazing paddocks. Depending on management decisions the trees will be chipped or allowed to mature as saw logs.

If a whole section was to be harvested soon as chips and returned to pasture then more grazing land would be available for beef production. However, it will require a budget of >\$ 230/ha to remove stumps and re-pasture the land. This decision will need to be well considered, even though the harvest proceeds may be available as funds.

### OTHER POSSIBLE ENTERPRISES

Given that the main role of the Pardelup Farm is to supply beef to the state prison system, the establishment of new enterprises is perhaps only of speculative interest.

The current practice of not cropping at Pardelup is supported. The area is suited to grazing and the high rainfall, giving wet paddocks in winter, makes cropping risky and the control of weeds and diseases difficult. Even the cropping of oaten hay is not really necessary – pasture hay should be sufficient.

Irrigated vegetables could be produced in a small paddock alongside the Pardelup lagoon. This paddock was used for this purpose some years ago.

A small disused piggery building is also present on the property.

### Viticulture

A site suitable for viticulture was identified in a visit in 2001. However, a thorough soil survey was recommended and it was noted that the construction of an irrigation dam is likely to be needed to sustain a vineyard.

Aspects of that report are outlined below.

The soil appears to be gravelly clay loams of reasonable depth for viticulture. Vines require well-drained soil, so waterlogging may be a problem in lower lying paddocks. However, some elevated paddocks appear to be suitable.

The plentiful remnant vegetation and bluegum plantations would pose a risk of kangaroo and rabbit problems particularly during vine establishment. Bird damage to grapes would also be a continual threat. Nevertheless, sites that are reasonably well removed from the bush could be made available. Netting of vines is also a possibility, and should to be included in any budgeting.

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The nearest vineyard, Forrest Hill, is running successfully a few kilometres away on what appears to be a similar site.

The water supply to the prison buildings and livestock is barely adequate in terms of quantity. A viticulture project is likely to require provision of a large dam with associated catchment works. The electricity supply is limited to the main building area of the prison. This would be relevant if an electric pump were to be used for irrigation.

A particular paddock (paddock 18) of some 15 to 20 ha was noted as being possibly suitable for viticulture. This paddock appears to have good drainage, appropriate soil type; it is away from any bush and it is close to power and buildings.

It was acknowledged that a vineyard could be important to the prisoners for acquisition of viticulture skills. Training, including TAFE assessment, could be possible.

It should be noted that it is likely to take at least four years before the vineyard becomes productive.

General recommendations from the visit for improving current production

- Phase out of sheep production
- Increase the cattle numbers
- Implement a cross breeding regime into the cattle enterprise
- Continue with pasture improvement
- Make (contract) pasture hay and silage, rather than oaten hay
- Develop a plan/strategy for land-use post bluegums, including budgeting

### POSSIBILITIES FOR RESEARCH WORK

The inspection group has also examined the potential for the farm to be used for agricultural research by the Department of Agriculture or other authorised agencies. The observations and suggestions below are made from the point of view of current land uses on both the Pardelup Farm and Mount Barker Research Station.

- The 110 hectares of bluegums owned by Pardelup has the potential to be used as a resource for experimentation into pasture regeneration following the tree harvesting. Various methods of removing the tree stumps, ground levelling and seeding could be looked at. The property is centrally located within the biggest bluegum belt in WA, 2001/2002 being the first year that significant harvesting has occurred.
- A limited area of 1.5 hectares could be used for pure seed bulk up over summer using the waters from Pardelup lagoon. The area would provide a limited fast track of new varieties. A large capacity pump and a quantity of irrigation pipes are available on site.