

Methodology

The preparation of this Paper involved the examination of a significant number of relevant documents, a survey of all Banksia Hill employees, exit interviews, and meetings and workshops with both groups and individuals deemed significant to the Inquiry. Further information on the process follows.

Employee Survey

To provide an opportunity for Banksia Hill staff to confidentially provide their views on the riot and their working life, an online employee survey was emailed to all Banksia Hill staff members. The survey covered a number of areas including their perception of personal safety and the factors that contribute to safety, the quality of the preparation for the amalgamation, the contributing factors to the riot, the level of detainee access to services after the riot, and their actions on the night of the riot.

Due to a lack of computer access for staff members stationed at Hakea Prison, hard copy versions of the survey were left with locked boxes in Units 11 and 12. Staff were provided one and a half weeks to complete the survey, either online or via the hard-copy version.

There were a total of 110 respondents to the survey. Due to length of time the survey was available, it is likely that some employees were not able to complete it due to being on worker's compensation leave or annual leave. However, the response rate was over 50 per cent for those staff who were not on leave during the survey distribution period.

Prison Officer Survey

In April 2013, a survey was also emailed to prison officers who had worked in the juvenile estate, post-riot. The survey covered a number of areas including their relationship with YCOs, their relationship with detainees, and their awareness of the philosophy and conduct required when managing detainees.

There were a total of 25 respondents to the survey. The precise number of prison officers working in the juvenile estate was unclear, however, it is estimated that the response rate was somewhere between 25 and 50 per cent.

Exit Interviews

The Department is meant to provide employees with the opportunity to conduct an exit interview and complete an employee exit survey. Data gathered from the exit survey is designed to improve management practices in areas such as staff retention, recruitment, workforce planning and working conditions.

The Department was not able to provide any employee exit survey results. It was said that they could not identify the business area from where the employee exit surveys would have originated. Records of any interviews conducted were also not available.

A list of individuals who had separated from Youth Custodial Services from the start of 2012 until the riot was requested from the Department. Attempts were made to contact ex-Banksia Hill employees who had resigned in order to gain their perspective on what it was like working at Banksia Hill and the factors that contributed to their resignation. Sadly, many of the individuals had changed address since they left the Department and many of those that we attempted to contact did not return our calls despite repeated attempts. Some individuals were also too traumatised to speak about their experiences. Overall, three exit interviews were conducted out of a total of 16 individuals that we sought to contact.

Meetings and Workshops

Workshops were held with a number of distinct staffing groups in order to discuss their views on the riot and their working life. Seven workshops were held, each lasting between one and two hours, and included the following staffing groups:

- Senior Officers;
- Youth Custodial Officers at Banksia Hill;
- Youth Custodial Officers at Hakea;
- Aboriginal Welfare Officers;
- Administration;
- Education/Case Planning; and
- Psychological Services

A number of meetings were held with specific stakeholders to discuss a variety of areas including the riot, staffing issues, and the amalgamation.