

**Keeping Them In
and
Keeping Them Out**

Keeping Them In and Keeping Them Out:

**Education and Training Programs Available to
Prisoners and Ex-prisoners in Australia**

by

Boronia Halstead

Research Officer

and

Anne Edwards

Doctoral Student

assisted by

David Biles

Deputy Director

and

Liz Raffaele

Executive Assistant

Report Prepared for the
Department of Employment, Education and Training

**Australian Institute of Criminology
Canberra
December 1992**

Executive Summary

Background:

This study was funded by the Department of Employment, Education and Training, in response to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, which recommended that a national study of pre-release and post release support schemes be undertaken, to ascertain the features of best practice of these. This research was conducted over a two month period at the end of 1992.

Aims:

- * To develop a profile of existing education and training programs within adult correctional institutions around Australia, and in the post-release period;
- * To develop a summary of features of best practice for the delivery of education and training in correctional institutions;
- * To examine the features of existing post-release support programs for releasees.

Structure and Content:

The delivery of education and training in the prison context is discussed in the context of the expected impact of access to education and training on recidivism rates. (Chapter 1)

The methodology of the current study is described, which consisted of the circulation of a questionnaire to all Australian prisons, seeking information about the types of courses offered, the number of participants and the suppliers of courses. Discussions were held with prison educators, course administrators and support agencies. (Chapter 2)

A state by state summary of existing program organisation and delivery is provided, highlighting differing approaches to the delivery of programs and the wide range of courses available. A synopsis of action which could be undertaken by the Commonwealth is included, particularly regarding DEET and the TAFE system with reference to the current ineligibility of prisoners to existing DEET labour market programs, since they are unable to be active job seekers. (Chapter 3)

Relevant background information from the *Australian Prison Census* and *Australian Prison Trends* about the statistical profile of the prison population is included, describing variations from state to state, with particular attention to Aboriginality, gender, standard of education and average length of sentence. The high level of need in the Northern Territory is highlighted since this State has the highest percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners, as well as the highest number of prisoners with low levels of literacy and numeracy. (Chapter 4)

The results of the survey are presented. The survey data are analysed in conjunction with data available from elsewhere, such as the *Australian Prison Census* and *Australian Prison Trends*. These results may be briefly summarised as:

- * over 850 courses were offered in prisons during the survey month, with an average participation of 9.2 prisoners per course;
- * overall participation rates tend to be highest in Victoria, followed by Queensland;
- * the provision of literacy and numeracy courses is well below the level of need, particularly in the Northern Territory where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders make up over 70 per cent of the prisoner population;
- * vocational courses dominate the range of courses available;
- * the level of participation in Aboriginal programs is low in states with high Aboriginal prisoner populations; for the total surveyed population the average participation rate is 31 per cent of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoner population surveyed;
- * most courses are provided in working hours;
- * education and training participation rates are particularly low in the Northern Territory;
- * vocational courses available to women prisoners conformed to gender stereotypes, and had lower levels of accreditation;
- * Aboriginal women prisoners appear to have very limited access to Aboriginal programs;
- * shortage of funds results in a limited range of courses available; inadequate accommodation for program delivery; inadequate staffing and resourcing of programs; and, inadequate assessment of prisoner needs.

The Corrections system presents difficulties for program delivery, which include:

- * a constantly moving student population as prisoners are reclassified, or released on parole;
- * conflict between prison security regimes and adult education principles;
- * lack of program continuity from prison to prison, and from prison to the outside world;
- * intrusion of prison disciplinary policies into the classroom;
- * competition between time required for prison work and prisoner participation in education and training. (Chapter 5)

Information describing available programs for newly released prisoners from state to state was gathered, including accommodation, financial support, access to community services, gaining employment and family support. Individual agencies strive to provide a practical and friendly service, however, programs are usually loosely coordinated, and very poorly resourced. The immediate three-month period after release has the highest rate of recidivism, so service delivery over this period is critical for effective reduction of rates of recidivism. (Chapter 6)

The general discussion of the issues covers institutional barriers to participation in education and training; the impact of custodial regimes; funding; the TAFE system

and the prison environment; prisoner educator's needs; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners' needs. (Chapter 7)

The conclusions of the Report are accompanied by a summary of the features of best practice, which include to:

- * remove institutional barriers to participation in education and training, such as over-emphasis on work programs to the detriment of education and training; provision of courses at times when prisoners are free to attend; adequate prisoner rates of pay for participation in education and training; and, reasonable emphasis on security so that unnecessary obstruction of prisoner participation does not occur;
- * provide effective assessment of all prisoners' education and training needs;
- * provide adequate levels of funding for programs so that suitable staffing of courses, provision of equipment and accommodation of activities can occur;
- * ensure mainstream accreditation of courses;
- * develop peer tutelage programs wherever possible;
- * provide suitable support and in-service training for educators within the prison system.
- * minimise the impact of movements through the prison system on the progress of prisoner education and training;
- * develop functional pathways for education and training from the prison environment through to mainstream programs;
- * provide adequate support and encouragement for released students wishing to continue their training, including adequate income support, accommodation and community support.
- * provide effective access to labour market programs prior to prisoner release. (Chapter 8)

It is clear from the information gathered that there are many dedicated people involved in the delivery and organisation of programs. However, in many cases their efforts are hindered by a lack of coordination of programs, and the difficulties of operating within the prison environment. The findings of this Report can be incorporated into the development of a national strategy coordinating the allocation of resources and the delivery of prisoner education and training programs, in both the pre-release and post-release periods.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
Table of Contents	iv
 Chapter 1. Introduction	 1
The value of education	1
The ultimate dilemma	3
 Chapter 2. Methodology of Current Study	 4
Aims:	4
Pre-release section	4
Post-release section	7
General remarks	7
 Chapter 3. Organisation and Delivery of Education and Training	 8
New South Wales	8
Victoria	10
Queensland	12
Western Australia	13
South Australia	14
Tasmania	15
Northern Territory	16
The Role of the Commonwealth	17
 Chapter 4. Background: Australian Prisoners - Who Are They?	 19
The Context of the Study	19
 Chapter 5. Results of the Survey	 26
Courses Provided	26
General Questions - Program Delivery	37
 Chapter 6. Programs for Newly Released Adults	 47
Introduction	47
Results: A State by State Description	48
Conclusion: Where to Next?	55
List of Post Release Agencies	56

Chapter 7. Discussion	58
Principles of Adult Education	58
Prisoner Access to Education and Training	58
Funding	64
The TAFE system and the prison environment	65
The Special Needs of Prison Educators	66
Issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Prisoners	66
Market relevance	68
Personal development/behaviour modification programs	69
Prison to prison integration and coordination of programs	70
Continuity and coordination between pre and post-release environments	70
Chapter 8. Conclusions	71
General features of best practice	71
Assessment of prisoners	71
Removal of informational barriers	72
Removal of institutional barriers	72
Staffing	72
Recognition of the value of peer tutelage, especially to Aboriginal students	72
Movements through the prison system minimise disruption to prisoner access to and continuity of education and training	73
Accreditation	73
Competency-based accreditation	74
Bibliography	75

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Australian Institute of Criminology was funded by the Department of Employment, Education and Training to undertake a national study of existing pre-release and post-release education and training schemes conducted by corrective services authorities and other agencies around Australia. This study arises out of recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. The specific recommendation of the Royal Commission is No. 110, which reads:

That in view of the wide variety of pre-release and post-release support schemes conducted by Corrective Services authorities and other agencies and organisations in various parts of the country it is the view of the Commission that a national study designed to ascertain the best features of existing schemes with a view to ensuring their widespread application is highly desirable. In such a study it is most important that consultation take place with relevant Aboriginal organisations.

A questionnaire was sent to all prisons around Australia, seeking information about education and training programs. This was accompanied by person-to-person discussions with practitioners, and program coordinators and post-release support agencies. Consultation with relevant Aboriginal organisations and service providers was also undertaken. Relevant literature on the provision of programs in Australia was also utilised.

The project was undertaken within a very tight timetable. Initially just two months were allocated in which to conduct the survey and complete the report. An additional few weeks was required due to delays in the return of completed questionnaires. This study can therefore only be considered a preliminary study, since a comprehensive investigation of pre-release and post-release education and training would require considerably more time to undertake.

The value of education

While research has not conclusively been able to demonstrate a definite positive link between prisoner education and training and reduced levels of recidivism, it is worth noting that certain groups of prisoners seem to be associated with lower rates of recidivism. These groups include 'those with jobs on release, qualifications, work release and post-release support' (Broadhurst 1992, p. 24). These factors are often interrelated, and it is likely that some combination is most likely to have an impact on recidivism.

The impact of prisoner education and training upon recidivism cannot be discussed without consideration of the specific characteristics of a given education and training program. Labour market relevant, offence relevant, culturally relevant courses which are carefully designed to suit the prison environment with linkages into the community are more likely to have an impact on recidivism than time filling, ad hoc programs.

In fact, education and training programs within prisons are usually conducted under extremely adverse circumstances. The inmate student population is highly mobile, with no guarantee of holding a student for a full term, let alone an academic year. A diverse range of abilities from illiterate to university graduate is often found in one class. Teacher/pupil ratios are usually well above those in other adult education facilities, especially where students have learning difficulties or low levels of literacy.

Classrooms are often poorly equipped, and not designed to function as classrooms. One educator even described his/her classroom as a 'dungeon'. A single facility often has to function as a multi-purpose classroom, as demonstrated in the quote below:

The only classroom is in the visits section, which has to be used for all educational programs, Prisoner Review Committee, Interviews, Meetings, Church, as well as visits. Our computers are locked away in there, so we can't use them when any other non-educational activities are going on in the classroom. Although we have the equipment to run pottery classes, it can't be used because we don't have a wet area, and there is nowhere to store things. We are restricted to activities which don't make a mess, and we have to pack everything up after each class (NSW Prison Educator).

Facilities for students to study or complete assignments out of class may not exist, and there may be an upper limit of 5 on the number of books available to the student for private study. Access to cassette players or blank cassettes to support correspondence or language courses may be denied, or severely restricted. One prisoner, describing the facilities available for education said:

Noise is probably the greatest singular cause of distraction. In one Victorian country prison, the education centre was adjacent to the workshop, in which at least four power-saws operated from 8.am to 4.pm.

At night, until around midnight, the old buildings would reverberate with the sounds of 100 television sets, stereos and radios, punctuated only by the occasional high-pitched laugh or scream (Dower 1992, Appendix A.)

Educators are rarely trained for the special requirements of teaching within a correctional institution, which includes assisting those with a long record of failure in educational institutions, with low self-esteem, and often learning difficulties. Some prisons are located in very isolated areas, where access to qualified teaching staff is very difficult.

When the impact of education and training on rates of recidivism is under discussion, the fact that it is being delivered valiantly in the face of these adversities must be acknowledged, and expectations adjusted accordingly. The impact of a reasonably funded and resourced education and training program on rates of recidivism in Australia is yet to be tested, as the survey described herein will show.

In cost-benefit terms, it should be remembered that, given the high cost of incarcerating offenders, even a small impact upon recidivism as a result of outlay on education and training would make such investment well worthwhile. For example, the total allocation in the Northern Territory for prisoner education programs for calendar 1991 was \$224,000. If the per capita cost of incarcerating prisoners is \$50,000 per annum, and 6 out of the average 400 adult clients in NT prisons were prevented from reoffending, directly or indirectly, through the provision of effective education/retraining programs, then the initial outlay would be more than recouped.

The utility of education and training as a management tool is sometimes more readily acknowledged than the intrinsic value of education to all people. At the very least, education and training offers:

... relief from the frustrations and tedium of prison experience. A prison population that is learning and achieving is more likely to be co-operative and stable. The conflict, trauma and low self-esteem that has lead (sic) in many cases to premature death in prison might well be alleviated as a result (p. 340 Vol. 3, Report RCLADC).

Surveys of prison populations have repeatedly demonstrated that poverty, low levels of literacy and numeracy, poor records of achievement in education and high levels of substance abuse are characteristics of the offender population. Increasingly, adult education policy is acknowledging that these identifying features more than qualify incarcerated persons for special consideration as part of the movement towards greater access and equity for disadvantaged sections of the community.

It is certain that the provision of education and training opportunities for prisoners can go some way towards trying to ensure that prisoners do not leave prison even less integrated with society than when they came in. Education and training can assist in the amelioration of the multitude of negative effects arising out of imprisonment, many of which themselves give rise to high recidivism rates.

Recognition of the right of prisoners to education and training is enshrined in the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, the Australian version of which Australian correctional ministers endorsed in 1989. The two guidelines from the Australian standards which have direct relevance are:

5.57 All prisoners should have access to productive work, education, recreation and leisure programs and facilities which provide them with the opportunity to utilise their time in prison in a constructive and beneficial manner.

5.58 The Manager of the institution has a responsibility to encourage prisoners to participate in such programs.

The ultimate dilemma

Any discussion of prisoner education and training must be undertaken acknowledging the fact that there is an inherent contradiction between facilitating responsible citizenship through the provision of education and training, and existence in an environment where every action is supervised and organised: which takes away the opportunity to think and act for oneself and solve problems in a real world environment (Semmens 1992, p. 2).

Chapter 2

Methodology of Current Study

Aims:

- To develop a profile of existing education and training programs within adult correctional institutions around Australia;
- To develop a summary of features of best practice for the delivery of education and training in correctional institutions;
- To examine the features of existing post-release support programs for releasees, and to determine the features of best practice for the operation of these programs.

Pre-release section

A draft questionnaire was developed and circulated to the contacts designated in each state for feedback. Comments received were incorporated into the final version of the questionnaire.

A questionnaire was then sent to all adult correctional institutions in all jurisdictions of Australia, with the exception of the Australian Capital Territory. The questionnaire was divided in two sections. The first section sought information about:

- * courses presented at each institution;
- * the presenter of each course;
- * the number of participants in the course;
- * the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants;
- * how many hours the course was conducted during August 1992;
- * whether the course was offered during working hours or not; and
- * whether the course was accredited or not.

The month of August was chosen as the time-frame for investigation. Courses were broadly grouped as prevocational, vocational, art and craft, personal development, Aboriginal programs and Secondary/Tertiary studies.

Of course, it must be understood that those programs in operation at other times in the year apart from August would not be identified in this survey instrument. Unfortunately, in some prisons, including those in Tasmania, programs were winding down during this month. Where possible, respondents were given the option of choosing another more representative month.

The second part of the questionnaire contained 14 general open-ended questions. Survey participants were invited to provide any policy documentation which would assist in developing an overall picture of education and training in their institution.

In addition to the survey questionnaire, extensive telephone interviews of key individuals were undertaken. These people included prison officers, prison educators, academics, corrections public servants, Aboriginal support staff and education

officers. The responses of these individuals are included in the discussion section of the report. Visits to Victorian corrections staff involved in the coordination of prison education and training were also made.

The state by state response rate to the survey questionnaire is set out in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: State by State Response Rate.

	Total# Prisons	Responding Prisons	Prisoners in Responding Prisons	Total# Prisoners
NSW	28	16	3926	6049
VIC	15	11	1407	2222
QLD	11	9	1495	2177
WA	15	11	1681	1906
SA	9	5	796	1134
TAS	5	4	254	259
NT	3	3	423	456
AUS	82	59	9882	14203

Source: Australian Prisoners 1991, Walker, J

Table 2: List Of Prisons From Whom A Completed Questionnaire Was Received.

NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	NT
MALES:	MALES:	MALES:	MALES:	MALES:	MALES:	MALES:
Long Bay	Pentridge	Brisbane	Albany*	Yatala Labour*	Risdon*	Darwin*
Malabar	Metropolitan	Townsville*	Broome*	James Nash	Launceston	Gunn Point
Parramatta*	Ararat*	Rockhampton*	Bunbury	Northfield*	Hayes P Farm*	Alice Springs
Maitland	Beechworth*	Wacol*	Canning Vale*	Cadell*	Ron Barwick*	
Bathurst*	Bendigo*	Woodford	CWCampbell	Port Augusta		
Goulburn	Loddon*	Palen Creek*	East Perth	Port Lincoln		
Berrima*	Dhurringile*	Numinbah*	Fremantle*	Adelaide R		
Grafton	Geelong	Borallon*	Greenough*	Mobilong*		
Cooma*	Barwon*	Moreton*	Karnet*	Mount		
Broken Hill	Morwell River*	Lotus Glen	Pardelup	Gambier*		
Emu Plains*	Sale*	S.David Long*	Roeburne			
Glen Innes*	Won Wron*		Wooroloo*			
Oberon*	Melb Remand*		Wyndham*			
Mannus			Kalgoorlie*			
Kirkconnell						
Silverwater*						
Cessnock*						
Tomago						
Parklea*						
Windsor*						
St.Heliers*						
Campbelltown						
Lithgow						
Special purpose						
Matraville*						
Tamworth*						
FEMALES:	FEMALES:	FEMALES:	FEMALES:	FEMALES:	FEMALES:	FEMALES:
Grafton	Pentridge	Brisbane*	Bandyup*	Yatala Labour*	Risdon*	Darwin*
Mulawa*	Metropolitan	S.David Long	Broome	James Nash		
Merinda	Tarngower*		Greenough*	Northfield*		
Norma Parker*	Barwon*		Roebourne*	Port Augusta		
Special Purpose	Fairlea^		Wyndham*	Mount Gambier		
Broken Hill			Kalgoorlie*			

Source: Australian Prisoners 1991, Walker, J

* Denotes prisons taking part in the survey.

^ Denotes prisons who completed the survey, but whose return was too late to be included in the analysis.

One difficulty encountered in the survey was the fact that some responses focussed only on education and training courses, omitting details relating to personal development courses. These courses are often not provided by education staff. They may be offered by prison welfare officers, counsellors, or, in the case of drug and alcohol programs, by outside agencies. Unfortunately, time constraints did not allow for follow-up of this matter (many of the responses were returned well after the date by which they were requested).

Data was also obtained from the National Prison Census 1991 (Walker 1992) and Australian Prison Trends No. 191, April 1992.

Post-release section

The services investigated in this section of the research project were only those that offered programs specifically to post-releases. Each service was asked questions regarding the style of programs provided, and roughly the number of clients involved. If an annual report or newsletter was available a copy was requested. The service was also asked if they were aware of other post-release services operating in their region. Correctional departments in each state were also contacted to indicate their involvement in post-release services. A particular effort was made to identify services provided by and for Aboriginal people.

It is noted here that there are a host of general community services to which both post-release agencies and state correctional agencies refer ex-prisoners (such as the Salvation Army, Alcoholics Anonymous and St. Vincent de Paul). Those newly released may also access these services themselves without explicit referral.

General remarks

The scope of this study was severely restricted by the short time frame proposed by the client. Initially it was stipulated that the study be conducted through to completion in nine weeks. Due to lengthy delays in the return of questionnaires, an additional month was required to complete the study. Unfortunately, as can be seen from the list of responses, some of the largest prisons failed to complete questionnaires. For these prisons, completion would have been the most arduous, due to the complexity of prison structures, and work pressures on staff. This can, therefore, only be considered a provisional study, since effective assessment of education and training programs nation-wide would at least require visits to some correctional centres in each state, and the allocation of sufficient time for all respondents to complete questionnaires.

Chapter 3

Organisation and Delivery of Education and Training

This chapter provides an introductory review of the organisational basis for the provision of education and training in each jurisdiction, together with some general observations derived from discussions with service providers.

New South Wales

NSW Corrective Services buys in the services of TAFE teachers, at the rate of \$80 to \$100 dollars an hour. The high cost of TAFE teachers in New South Wales compared with other states, severely restricts the range of courses on offer. While accessing the TAFE system in principle provides pathways through and out of the corrective system, there is a trade-off between providing high cost TAFE courses, and hiring appropriately qualified in-house teachers, at less than half the hourly TAFE cost, thus providing a wider range of courses. The Vocational Training Accreditation Board will assist in ensuring that in-house courses provide externally recognised accreditation. Prison education centres within NSW prisons operate independently of the training and industry program. Some lecturers are employed in both however (NBEET 1992, p. 2).

The NSW Prisoner Education Curriculum document is designed to facilitate consistency of standards and program continuity across gaols. Curricula for reading, writing, numeracy, pre-vocational skills and arts and crafts are covered. Course information is provided in a number of attractively presented booklets, which offer encouragement and advice to prisoner students.

Distance education access to a range of courses is also available. These courses are provided by NSW TAFE Open College, Queensland Distance Education College, Western Australia Extension Service, and the Adult Migrant Education Service and universities.

Routine assessment of all prisoners' education and training status and needs is not undertaken. Assessment of prisoners whose low levels of literacy, or some other particular need has been identified by prison staff takes place. Prisoners who express an interest in being involved in the education/training program are also assessed. The fact that some prisoners with particular needs or interests may be overlooked in the present needs assessment system is acknowledged, and plans are afoot to enable the routine assessment of all prisoners.

Video-assisted instruction programs are utilised in some gaols, such as The Literacy Through Video Program. An on-line educational channel has been established in the Remand Prison to enable screening of videos on literacy and life skills. A Vocational Mathematics Program, resources for NESB programs, an Unemployment Numeracy Project for Young Offenders to be undertaken in the Reception Prison, and literacy programs for developmentally delayed prisoners have also been developed. Sixty-one English Language Learning Laboratories have been introduced into gaols, for NESB, ESB and Aboriginal prisoners. It is hoped that future provision of satellite dishes to isolated jails will assist in improved program delivery in these centres.

Through improvements to the NSW Prisoner Education Management Information System, it is planned that prisoners' record numbers will be linked with identifiers on education records, so that computerised tracking of prisoners' education/training status and needs is possible from institution to institution. Case managers will be able to coordinate vocational pathways for each prisoner more effectively.

Some prisoners are enrolled in the New South Wales TAFE Literacy Volunteer Program, and they in turn tutor other prisoners in reading, writing and maths, as an adjunct to existing in-gaol basic education classes. Volunteer tutors receive accreditation for their training. While concern was expressed in other states about the potential for peer educators to exploit possible leverage over their students, careful selection and monitoring of participants has avoided this problem.

One surprising outcome has been that 'macho' prisoner tutors have been successful at breaking down the stereotype in the prison culture that education is only for 'softies'. Embarrassment about participating in literacy courses can thus be ameliorated. Peer educators also assist in other courses, including HIV education, and provide support for distance education students.

Drug and alcohol programs in NSW prisons were funded by the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NCADA). They included Quit For Life Smoking Cessation, Drug Education, About Addictions, Life Management and Fitness and Health. Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous volunteers also assist in the provision of services.

Some education officers expressed frustration with the intrusion of prison disciplinary proceedings against a particular prisoner into the education/training environment, such as proceedings arising out of a positive urine test result. The prisoner may not be presenting with behaviour problems in the education/training environment at all. Effectively, these policies can deny access to education opportunities to those who may have greatest need: those who may have been truants or school resisters in the past. Some disciplinary infringements, for example positive urine tests, result in the reclassification of prisoners out of the prison to a higher level of security, thus disrupting education/training initiatives.

These disciplinary issues also arise when a prisoner seeks approval to attend a particular course. Five signatures are required by a range of prison officers for approval. Non-educational disciplinary breaches, if taken into account in this process, can thus disrupt access to education, since access is often regarded as more of a privilege than a right.

Delivery of programs is sometimes hampered by the fact that each correctional facility houses many smaller gaols. For example, at Goulburn, within the prison complex are 16 different jails, with prohibitions on prisoners mixing with inmates in other wings. Providing programs to such a fragmented population, and arranging for inmates to attend classes can create additional difficulties for educators. Whether this situation applies in other states is not known at the time of writing.

Concern was expressed by some educators that some sections of the New South Wales prison population were not given adequate access to training and education opportunities. These included those in protection, in segregation wings, and those in therapeutic sections of the prison, as well as those in the young offenders program.

Work takes priority over education. Prisoners who participate in education and training programs receive a lower rate of pay compared to those involved in industry. Although there has been a commitment to increase the number of prisoners involved in full-time study, full-time students only receive \$9 per week, compared with around \$25 per week available for full-time employment in industry. Educators report that

many highly motivated full-time students have dropped out of completion of the Higher School Certificate because they were financially unable to afford to continue full-time. Some of these full-time students were achieving at a very high level, and were reluctant to discontinue courses.

NSW cell property policy has created some difficulties for above minimum security level prisoners involved in education and training. This policy is currently at the discretion of each prison Governor. In some prisons, it is not permissible to have more than 5 books in a cell at any one time. Possession of cassette players is sometimes not allowed, nor possession of blank cassettes, hindering distance education students, and language students. When prisoners move from prison to prison, such inconsistencies in prison regulations can impair smooth continuity of access to education.

At the time of writing, New South Wales Corrective Services have successfully applied to ATSIC for funding to employ four full-time staff to develop and coordinate culturally sensitive personal development programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners in NSW, including drug and alcohol programs and anger management.

Victoria

Victoria is the only state in Australia in which the right of prisoners to education and training is enshrined in legislation. All prisoners are entitled to a minimum 1/2 day of education and training per week, under the *Corrections Act 1986*.

The model of education and training in Victoria is based on principles of effective coordination of training with the labour market. This is achieved through representation of all agencies on the Corrections Industry Training Board. The relevant parties are:

- * the Office of Corrections;
- * the State Training Board;
- * the Victorian Prison Industries Commission;
- * the Adult, Community and Further Education Board;
- * the Employment Division of the Ministry of Employment and Post-Secondary Education; and
- * the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET).

The Corrections Industry Training Board (CITB) develops policy, and identifies priorities for education and training in the corrections system in its annual Corrections Industry Training Plan. This Plan provides advice to the State Training Board on these priorities. A complete description of the operational network of the Victorian model may be obtained from the *Corrections Industry Training Plan*.

Priorities are developed after 'careful examination of labour market trends, demands for training generally and the level of participation by disadvantaged groups in training for each industry' (Penaluna 1992, p. 4). For example, in 1992, the first priority of the Plan was designated as hospitality industry training, in recognition of the fact 'that prisoners were working in 15 kitchens across the State, seven days a week, for months on end and were not receiving any formal training in association with this work' (Penaluna 1992, p. 4). Advantage was taken of the opportunity to provide skills which have a labour market demand, and which could also improve kitchen service within the gaol.

Specific offender groups are also allocated a higher priority, according to the plan. In 1992, women, Aboriginal prisoners, Non-English Speaking Background and intellectually disabled prisoners, and young adult offenders were accorded priority.

Vocational pathways from and across the prison system are developed for those areas which are identified as priorities in the Plan. Accreditation for courses completed is also a strength of the Victorian model. Identified in the Plan is the need for urgent attention to the area of Adult Basic Education in minimum security facilities.

The Victorian model provides for integration of policy and funding at the prison level, with the Office of Corrections, the Prison Industries Commission, TAFE, and State and Commonwealth Government. The Plan also identifies Office of Corrections staff training as an area of need. The strength of the model lies in the coordinated identification of priorities, linkages with mainstream funding agencies, and the coordinated allocation of resources according to clearly identified priorities. The roles of the various agencies in the provision of education and training are underpinned in the Acts of Parliament relating to the functions of each agency, thus providing legislative authority for the allocation of resources for the delivery of programs.

Coordination between the Office of Corrections Classification Committee and the Network Manager for Corrections Education, Broadmeadows College of TAFE in conjunction with eight other designated TAFE colleges ensures that training continuity is taken into account in reclassification of prisoners from one security level to another, or transfers from one prison to another. This continuity supports the pathways model.

It is clear from the results of the survey undertaken herein that there are still some problems with the Victorian system. However, there is provision for systematic identification of problem areas and prioritisation of special needs, along with a structure with the potential for effective communication and resolution of difficulties.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders make up less than 4 per cent of the prison population in Victoria. They are thinly spread throughout the prison population, so the coordination of special programs for ATSI prisoners is particularly difficult. This problem is more pronounced for ATSI women prisoners, who are spread even more thinly throughout the prison population. Koori prisoners will often not have the emotional and cultural support of other Kooris while in prison as would be the case in other states in which Aboriginal prisoners make up a larger proportion of the population. Of course this is not an argument for increasing the concentration of ATSI prisoners. If all ATSI prisoners were to be housed together in the Victorian system, many prisoners would not have access to the support of their local community and any local training/employment options which might be available. Ensuring that local Aboriginal communities and agencies have ready access to prisons would enable links between prisoners and their communities to be maintained.

Many Koori prisoners choose to complete their whole sentence in gaol, rather than be released on parole. It was stated that this was because parole conditions are more difficult for Kooris to observe in the context of typical Koori lifestyles, so it is often considered by individual prisoners to be less risky to complete the sentence than run the risk of violating parole conditions. This means that education and training programs which are based on the assumption that prisoners will be released on parole will not be accessible to many Koori releasees.

Queensland

The provision of education and training in correctional facilities in Queensland is decentralised, with each centre responsible for the operation and management of prisoner programs. Correctional institutions buy in the services of TAFE teachers to run education and training courses. Course accreditation is achieved effectively therefore. The TAFE fee for teachers is considerably less than fees applying in NSW, with a rate of \$40. per hour for day-time classes, and \$60 per hour in the evenings (compared with \$80-\$100 per hour in NSW). Prisoners can also access courses through distance education through TAFE in other states and the Western Australian School of Distance Education. Alcohol and drug programs are presented by Drugarm and Narcotics Anonymous.

In the NBEET report on Employment, Education and Training Opportunities for Prisoners and Ex-prisoners, it was suggested that vocational training programs for prisoners in above low security levels lagged behind developments in some other States (NBEET 1992, p. 3). However, some programs for those in low levels of security were described as innovative.

Limited change has taken place since the highly critical Byrne Report which reviewed prisoner education in Queensland in 1990. The report contained 70 recommendations, relating to gross deficiencies in the standard of accommodation and lighting for education and training, movement of prisoners without consultation with education staff, consideration of education/training achievements as a criteria for classification and parole of prisoners and effective assessment of prisoner education/training needs among other things.

Decentralisation of program delivery results in very little continuity of courses across the prison system. Allocation of resources is not well coordinated, with staffing and facilities apparently based on oiling the squeaky wheels. Coordination of training and education with labour market priorities does not appear to be directed by any policy or research. There is very little provision for networking or liaison between program providers from facility to facility, so successful initiatives or strategies are not highlighted, or adapted for use elsewhere. Although a position for a central coordinator of programs was advertised, no appointment was made.

The absence of a central office coordinating role leaves individual program officers without support when they are experiencing difficulties with their role, or when operational priorities impact adversely on program delivery, such as movements of prisoners without consultation, restrictions on use of equipment and so on. In other states, this central support role for program officers is highly valued in often highly stressful situations.

Some successful programs operate out of particular facilities, as a result of localised initiatives. In general, the newer Centres appear to provide a higher standard of programs, since they have better facilities, and sometimes more innovative staff. However the wide disparity between facilities in each Centre impacts upon continuity of access for prisoners transferring from institution to institution. For example, the newer Sir David Longland Correctional Centre accommodates prisoners in individual cells, in which electricity is controllable in each cell so that study at night is feasible. In Wacol, cell lighting is very poor and controlled by a central switch, hindering late night study.

A pilot Aboriginal/Islander Education Program, funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Training was begun in 1991, focussing on the provision of education and training to Aboriginal prisoners in prisons in South East Queensland. An Aboriginal and Islander Policy and Liaison Officer was appointed to

coordinate the program. The program was reviewed in July 1992 by Thomas et al. A 'Connections Program' was initially developed by the Queensland University of Technology Research Unit as part of the program. The Connections Program contained a core 'Aboriginal Life Skills' course. According to the Thomas report, individual corrections centres have each adapted the basis course to suit local needs. The resulting variation in the course may make it difficult for transferred prisoners to maintain continuity from institution to institution. The Thomas report contained 16 recommendations for the future of the program, among which were: that education be given equal priority with work; that Aboriginal and Islander prisoners have access to counsellors of Aboriginal and Islander descent; that a centralised resource co-ordination unit be established to perform executive functions such as the monitoring of prisoner education programs across the State etc; and that funding have better long-term coordination.

The need to extend the program to Central and North Queensland where Aboriginal and Islander prisoners form a larger percentage of the prison population was highlighted in the report.

Western Australia

Developmental training within the Western Australian corrections system is provided by the Prisoner Programs Branch which has the following teams:

- * Education Team
- * Special Needs Team
- * Substance Use Resource Team
- * Alternatives to Violence Team
- * Sex Offenders Treatment Team

Education and training is provided by teachers employed by the Western Australian Corrective Services Department on contract. A range of vocational skills courses are available, which include computing, welding, cabinet making, windmill maintenance and clothing manufacture.

TAFE recognised courses are presented by Prison Officer Instructors. Prisons also access the TAFE system where courses are not able to be provided within the prison; generally students do the course as external students assisted by prison based teachers. In some cases, prisoners in remote area prisons, currently Broome and Kalgoorlie, are allowed to attend courses outside the prison on local TAFE campuses. This approval is only given where equivalent courses are not available in the prison and where the prisoner is rated as minimum security. The Department intends to develop a more comprehensive vocational training package in 1993 which will tie in with the recommendations of recent committees such as the Carmichael and Mayer Reports.

Development programs, including education and training, are included in the case management and sentence planning system which was introduced in April 1991. Prisoners serving more than 4 months are allocated a case manager who prepares a sentence plan, included in which is education and training.

All prisoners with a sentence of six months or more are routinely assessed on or near admission for literacy and numeracy ability 'using a brief, non-threatening functional literacy test which provides a literacy rating' (Dept. Corrective Services 1991, p. 33). They are then encouraged to participate in courses which would be relevant to their particular needs. Where the Sentence Plan identifies specific training or developmental needs, the prisoner is referred to the appropriate team.

The Special Needs Team has as its main focus, the management of vulnerable and disturbed prisoners and provides advice to prison management on management of these prisoners. This team has a crisis-oriented approach.

The Substance Use Resource Unit conducts workshops for prisoners and prison staff on issues relating to substance abuse including solvent, glue and petrol sniffing. The team also coordinates the Alcohol Education Program for Aboriginal offenders and Prison Drug Education Programs run by agencies such as Cyrenian House. This team has an educative focus, however, some clinical work is also undertaken.

The Alternatives to Violence Team provides for the assessment of prisoners convicted of violent offences where concerns exist in relation to future risk. The program also provides direct services in the areas of anger management and relapse prevention.

The Sex Offenders Treatment Program provides for the assessment and treatment of offenders convicted of sexual offences. Three programs are run: an intensive 12 month program in Karnet Prison and a 27 week program in the community.

Aboriginal prisoners have access to courses specifically designed for Aboriginal students through the TAFE system, in some facilities. Through DEET funding, an Aboriginal Programs Coordinator has been appointed in the Department. Bunbury Regional Prison has conducted a Nyungar language course for Aboriginal students. An Alcohol Education Program for Aboriginal Offenders is also conducted at intervals in remote prisons not currently serviced by the Substance Use Resource Unit.

Casuarina Prison conducts a special Introductory Studies course which targets literacy and numeracy needs along with an introduction to vocational, personal and creative development. Interest in adapting this course to the Northern Territory situation has been expressed by officers in NT prisons.

The per capita expenditure on education and training programs for prisoners in 1991/92, including administrative costs, was \$1,291. However, excluding the Special Needs Team, whose focus is more crisis intervention and management support, the per capita expenditure reduces to \$947. This figure does not, however, include the cost of Prison Officer Instructors' teaching time. The number of prisoners per instructor or Prisoner Programs Officer employed (eg. teacher, psychologist, social worker) is approximately 10.45.

South Australia

The Department of Correctional Services is in the process of taking over from the Department of Employment, Technical and Further Education (DETAFE) as the main provider of educational services to South Australian prisons. The Department of Correctional Services has developed a policy statement of the essential curriculum requirements for the provision of education and training. Vocational training programs are conducted in conjunction with prison industries. A Driver Training Education Program has been conducted in a number of prisons.

A Coordinator of Aboriginal Prisoner Education in prisons is employed by DETAFE, and Aboriginal prisoners access specific Aboriginal programs provided by DETAFE. These include an Introduction to Vocational Education Certificate, Aboriginal Community Management Administration and Arid Lands Horticulture. Identified Aboriginal places are allocated in other courses. This is to ensure that Aboriginal prisoners will be more likely to be supported by a number of ATSI prisoners in a

class, since it was found that there was a high drop-out rate when ATSI prisoners did not have the support of their countrymen.

A pre-release package has been prepared for use in prisons from which prisoners are released. It is currently being utilised at Northfield, Cadell, Port Lincoln and Mt Gambier prisons. The program includes information about relationships, money management, employment, community services and taking care of oneself. Extra staff have not been employed to deliver the program, so actual implementation is dependent upon availability of staff, usually prison social workers, as well as commitment to the program.

There is increasing pressure on prison industries to generate more income in South Australia. This, in turn, places great pressure on the delivery of education. Staff appointments may be made on the basis of industrial priorities rather than educational priorities.

There is a strong emphasis on accreditation of education and training programs. The priorities have been described as adult literacy and numeracy, technical and vocational training, and fine arts programs. A pilot cognitive skilling program was conducted recently at Yatala, using students from a local university. Participants were 19-20 year olds. The program consisted of communication skills, listening to other points of view, decision-making, problem solving, planning for the future and developing personal objectives.

While prisoner mobility is an ongoing problem in the delivery of education programs in prisons, there is a cooperative relationship between the Prisoner Assessment Committee and education coordinators to try to ensure that movements are conducted with minimum impact on prisoner training and education, when timing and destinations are considered.

While random urine testing is conducted in South Australian prisons, this has not had a significant impact on participation in education and training programs, since prisoners are not moved from a prison for infringements.

Tasmania

Adult Correctional Corrections in Tasmania buys in the services of TAFE teachers at an hourly rate of \$25.97 per hour. All courses are conducted during the day time. The Adult Education Division of the Department of Employment, Industrial Relations and Training provides basic education and hobby courses. Peer tutors are also trained by Adult Education. They assist in the provision of basic mathematics courses and computing. Students also participate in distance education courses, such as motor maintenance theory, diesel engines, welding, farm mechanics and Higher School Certificate subjects.

Prison industries in the Maximum Security Prison include the laundry, woodwork shop, metalwork shop, bakery, tailor shop and paint shop. A business consultant has been appointed to review the direction of prison industries and develop a business plan.

Personal development courses are available to prisoners, although none were in progress during the month chosen for the survey. Courses in First Aid, anger management, Who's in Charge of Your Life are offered, and accompanied by a certificate of participation.

A two-week pre-release program is accessed by a small number of inmates from the Ron Barwick Medium Security Prison. The program includes money management, accommodation options, legal rights and responsibilities, health, employment search and other life skills. Women from the Women's Prison also participate in this program.

Northern Territory

In the Northern Territory, the delivery of education and training in prisons is coordinated jointly by the Northern Territory Open College (NTOC) and the Northern Territory Department of Correctional Services. Policy is developed through the Inter-departmental Committee on Prisoner/Detainee Education (IDC), which is comprised of five representatives from the Department of Education and three from the Department of Correctional Services. NTOC is the provider of the educational service, and NTDOCS is the client. Whether the current arrangement between NTOC and NTDOCS will be maintained in the future is open to speculation, as there is some support for funding NTDOCS to buy in TAFE services, or teachers from elsewhere.

Courses are provided according to the following priorities:

1. Basic literacy/numeracy (to secondary level) through class or individualised instruction.
2. The provision of a literacy program through NTOC Certificate Level courses which can be continued upon release.
3. Instruction in those trade and prepositional courses
 - * for which there is justifiable demand [and]
 - * potential employment outcomes
 - * which lead to an award of an NTOC Certificate
 - * which can be accommodated within the resources and constraints of each correctional facility.

(Policy Statement 2-3, as cited in Knight 1991, p. 6).

'Limited assistance' is provided to students wishing to undertake external studies.

The NTOC does not provide personal development courses, such as anger management and stress management to prisoners. Knight, in her thesis, draws attention to the absence of any established drug and alcohol program in Northern Territory prisons, which is a serious oversight, in view of the fact that most of the offences of detainees are related to alcohol consumption. However, it is debatable whether allocation of resources for drug and alcohol programs would be most effective inside or outside the prison environment.

A well-known Aboriginal artist conducts art and craft activities for Aboriginal prisoners. This course does not fit neatly into the course guidelines, and required some negotiation to conduct. However, no other Aboriginal staff are employed in the delivery of education/training to prisoners, in spite of the fact that over 70 per cent of the prison population is Aboriginal. Suitable staff could be recruited from Aboriginal graduates from Batchelor College. However, it was stated that trainees preferred to work in their own communities, and that initially they would require support in the

prison environment and additional staff were not available to provide such support. If these arguments are accepted as valid, little change in the number of Aboriginal staff employed can be expected.

The Role of the Commonwealth

In the recently released Report on Employment, Education and Training Opportunities published by the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (Commissioned Report No. 17), the role of the Commonwealth in this context was examined. In summary, the Report recommended:

- * **The Commonwealth must recognise 'the principle that imprisonment is deprivation of liberty, not denial of training programs available to anyone else in the community' (p. 10).**

Currently, Commonwealth labour market programs are available only to disadvantaged job-seekers, and since prisoners are unable to be active job-seekers they are ineligible. However, the Report argues that the majority of prisoners were disadvantaged jobseekers prior to imprisonment, with a far higher rate of unemployment as a group than the rate in the wider community. With extremely low levels of education, and often criminal records, they are particularly disadvantaged in the labour market, so it is likely that they would qualify as long-term unemployed.

Other recommendations included:

- * Eligibility criteria for access to JOBTRAIN need to be changed so that provisions which directly or indirectly discriminate against prisoners are removed;
- * Prisoners should have access to DEET programs while in prison, such as the Special Intervention Program (vocational assessment) at the commencement of sentence;
- * Eligibility criteria for AUSTUDY be altered so that prisoners can have access to this funding;
- * 'If and when eligibility for Commonwealth labour market programs is extended to prisoners the option of participation would be the right of all prisoners' so that those who need additional support, due to 'personality disorders and a perception that they are unemployable' would not be denied access (p. 12);
- * There should be an immediate and structured connection between prison training and DEET post-release programs;
- * Prisoners should have access to programs such as Special Intervention and JOBTRAIN prior to release;
- * CES registration of prisoners should take place prior to release;
- * CES staff 'generally need to be more skilled in their handling of ex-prisoners - the attitudes, values and level of motivation of some prisoners tends to worry some CES staff and the consequent level of service does not encourage job-seeking behaviour' (p. 9);

- * Establish 'a system for national consistency in the recognition of accredited courses, training programs, training providers and competencies held by individual - and that certification be available to all prisoners' (p. 7);
- * Three groups of prisoners - women, Aborigines and youth need special attention for the provision of labour market programs;
- * Job-Clubs need to be established in pre-release gaols, and also special Job-Clubs in the community, to assist with overcoming the period of self-consciousness immediately after release.

The Report argues that the costs of prisoner access to these programs will be offset significantly by reductions in recidivism, and accordingly lower costs of incarceration. The argument that prisoner labour market programs are a state/territory responsibility is rejected, since prisoners currently do have rights of access when they leave the prison environment. But then, it is too late, since the immediate post-release period is the time of highest risk of reoffending (Semmens 1986). After meeting the high costs of incarceration, the states have limited scope in which to undertake labour market training initiatives, without the support of the Commonwealth (NBEET 1992, p. 19).

In most states, the primary focus of TAFE courses is upon vocational training. Only recently in Victoria, successful negotiations have been undertaken for the introduction of prevocational courses into the TAFE system. The Northern Territory Open College also provides prevocational courses. However, in other states, these courses are conducted by prison educators. If prevocational programs are only available within the prison, there is no provision for prisoners to continue this education after release. This means that the original investment of time and resources will not be able to be consolidated, and the impact of this outlay upon recidivism will be diminished.

Chapter 4

Background:

Australian Prisoners - Who Are They?

The Context of the Study

The following information provides a general statistical profile of the correctional population in Australia, using information from Australian Prison Trends No. 191 April 1992 and the National Prison Census 1991. More recent figures were not available at the time of writing. The tables show the total number of persons in custody for the month of April 1992 state by state (Table 3), and the number and percentage of prisoners by jurisdiction and Aboriginality (Table 4) at 30.6.91. It can be seen that the Northern Territory has by far the highest percentage (71 per cent) of Aboriginal prisoners in the prison population. Western Australia has the next highest (33 per cent). Victoria and Tasmania have the lowest percentages, both with 4 per cent.

Table 3: Total Number of Persons in Custody in the Month of April 1992 by Gender and Jurisdiction

	Male	Female	Total
NSW	5729	320	6049
VIC	2106	116	2222
QLD	2096	81	2177
WA	1812	94	1906
SA	1077	57	1134
TAS	252	7	259
NT	449	7	456
ACT	93	9	102
AUS	13614	691	14305

Source: *Australian Prison Trends*, No.191, April 1992

Table 4: Numbers and Percentages of Prisoners by Jurisdiction and Aboriginality 30-6-91

	Total	ATSI n=	% of Total	Non-ATSI	Unknown
New South Wales	7103	664	9	6069	370
Victoria	2310	91	4	2219	-
Queensland	2094	346	17	1617	131
Western Australia	1726	577	33	1149	-
South Australia	1042	150	14	878	14
Tasmania	265	10	4	238	17
Northern Territory	465	328	71	137	-
ACT	16	-	-	16	-

Source: Walker, J., *Australian Prisoners* 1991, p.22.

Figure 1: Percentage of Prisoners by Jurisdiction and Aboriginality



Source: Walker, J., *Australian Prisoners* 1991, p.22.

Figures for the per capita expenditure on education and training on a state by state basis were also sought. They are set out in Table 5A, accompanied by any caveats which should be noted when interpreting these figures. Differences in the method of calculation of these figures arose for each state. In some states, there is administrative separation between the provision of personal development courses and other education. Similarly, clearly separating the training component out from industrial supervisory roles is difficult in some states.

Table 5A
Estimated Per Capita Expenditure on Prisoner Education
and Training

NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	NT
(\$)	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)
1.156	1.445	433	947 - 1,291	536	500	550
(112 - 732*)						

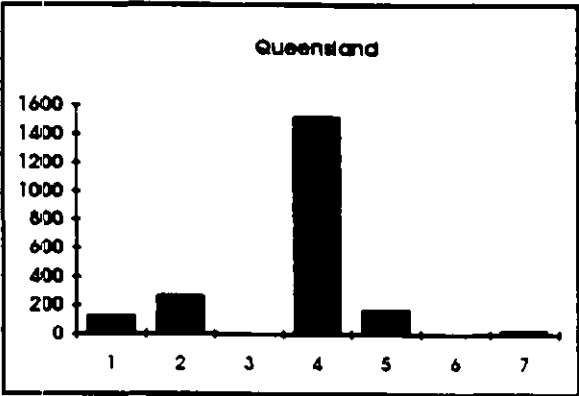
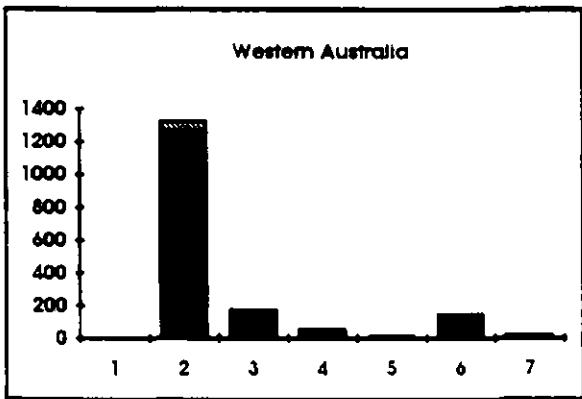
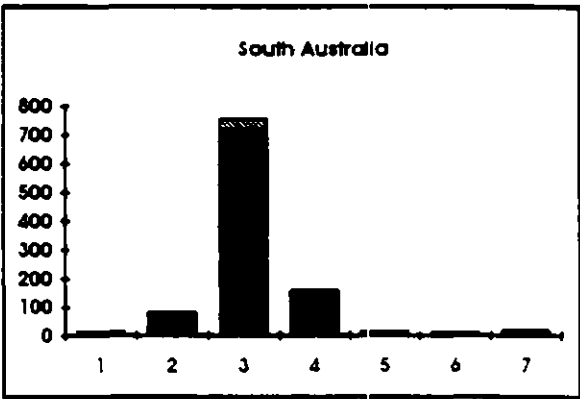
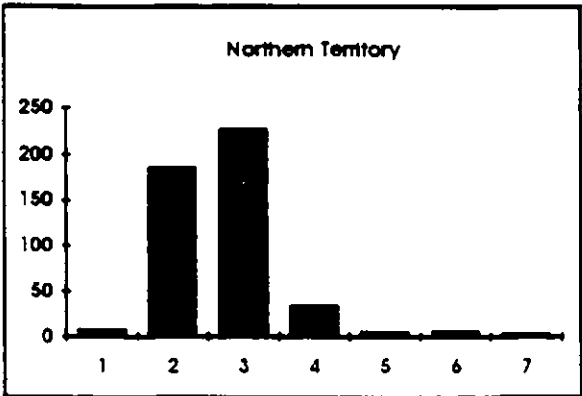
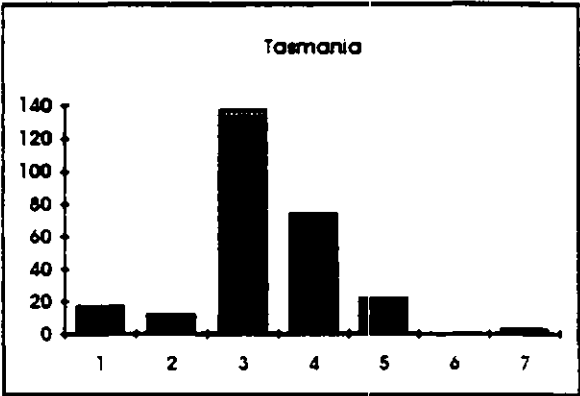
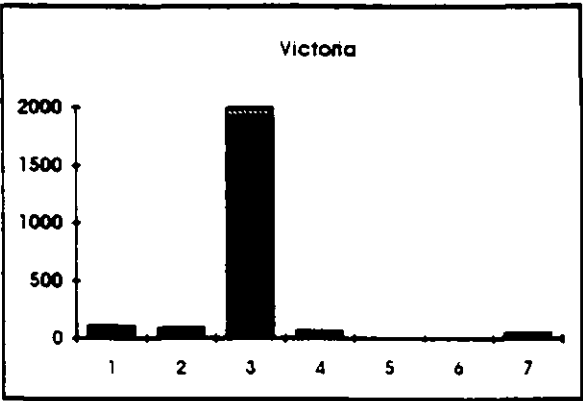
N.B. These figures do not include personal development programs (with the possible exception of Queensland).

* A wide variation for expenditure exists in Queensland, the lowest two prisons being Townsville and Rockhampton. The highest figure was for Lotus Glen (figures for Borallon were not available).

Figure 2: Percentage of Prisoners by Jurisdiction, Sex & Known Highest Level of Education as at 30/6/91

Figures for New South Wales are unavailable

- 1 Unknown
- 2 Primary, No Formal Schooling
- 3 Part Secondary
- 4 Complete Secondary
- 5 Other Post-Secondary
- 6 Technical, Trade
- 7 Tertiary

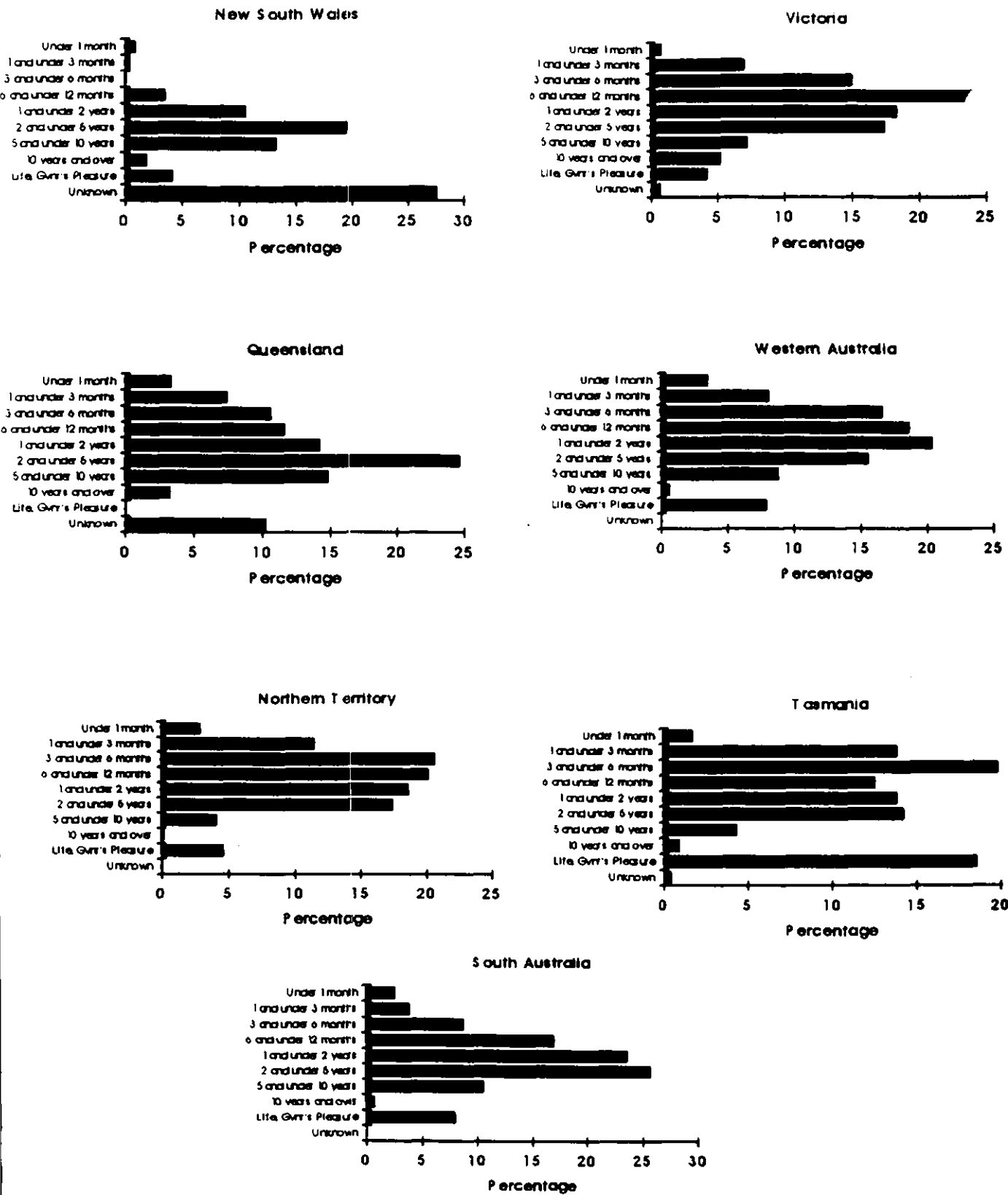


Source: Walker, J., 1992, *Australian Prisoners 1991*, p.34.

Figure 2 shows the average highest levels of educational achievement on entry into prison. Examining Table 4 with Figure 2, it can be seen that those states with the highest levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in custody have the lowest average levels of educational achievement in the prison population, reflecting the low levels of educational achievement in the Aboriginal population as a whole in those states. Low levels of educational achievement could be assumed to correspond with high levels of educational need.

Considering Table 4 along with Table 5A, it should be possible to make some broad generalisations about the relationship between per capita expenditure on education and training, and the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the prison population. The Northern Territory has the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in custody, and the lowest level of average educational achievement in the prison population, yet it has one of the lowest levels of per capita expenditure on education and training. There is a wide variation in expenditure from prison to prison in Queensland, with Rockhampton and Townsville having the lowest figures for their State. Both these prisons have among the highest percentages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners in Queensland.

Figure 3: Percentage of Sentenced Prisoners by Jurisdiction and Actual Time Expected to Serve in Prison*

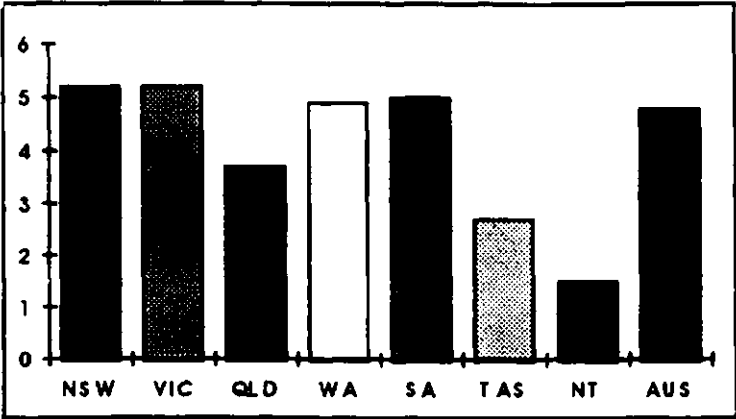


* ie. Time between most recent reception and earliest possible release date.
Source: Walker, J., 1992 *Australian Prisoners 1991*, p. 57.

In view of the fact that some states are proposing to have or already have a policy of assessing education and training needs of prisoners who will serve a certain sentence length, data from the National Prison Census showing expected time to be spent in prison by jurisdiction has been included. This table can be used to assess the numbers of prisoners who would not be assessed under policies of this type.

The number of women prisoners in the corrections system is very low, as can be seen from Figure 4. Figure 5 shows the levels of educational attainment for women prisoners on entry into the corrections system. Comparing males with females, generally speaking female prisoners appear to have higher levels of educational achievement than male prisoners.

Figure 4: Percentage of Prison Population who are Female by Jurisdiction



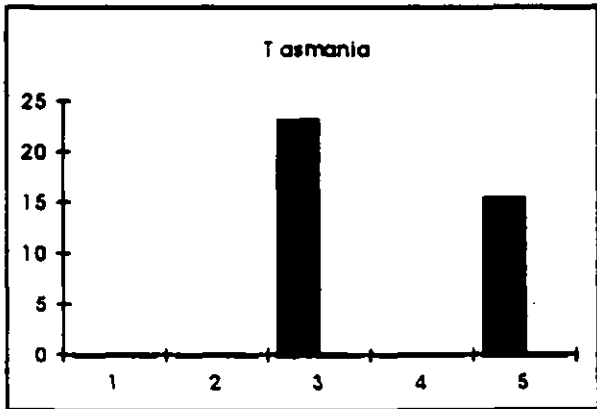
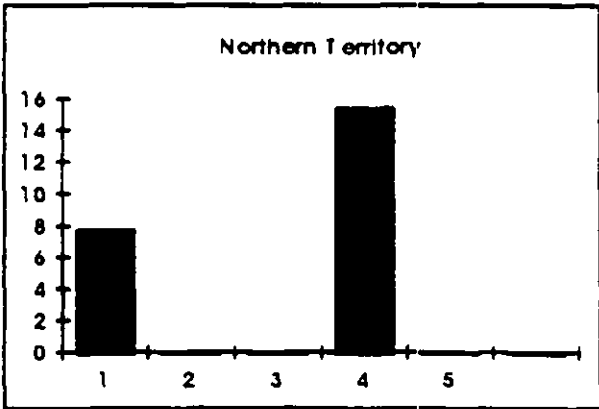
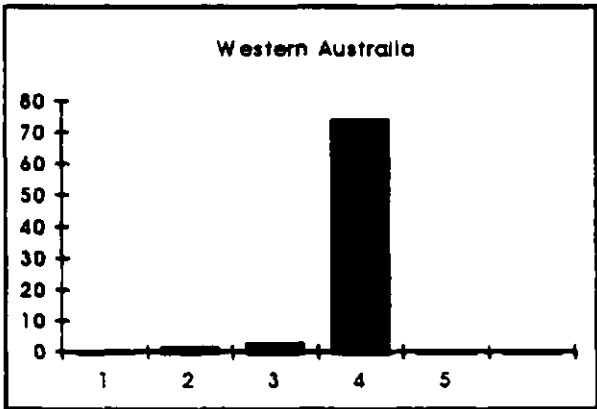
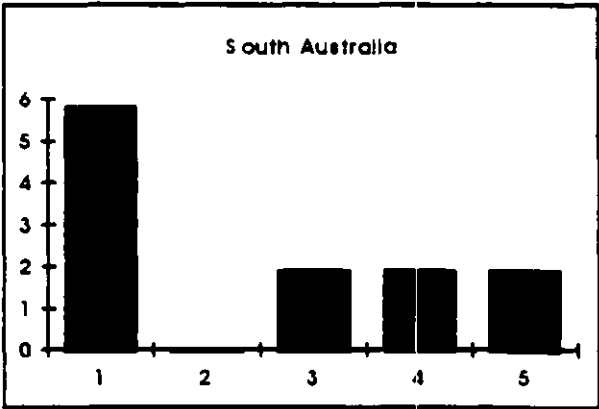
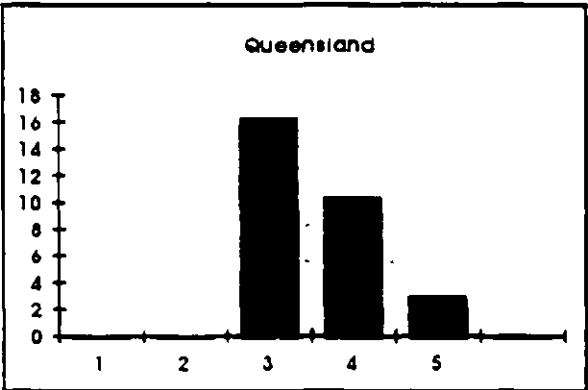
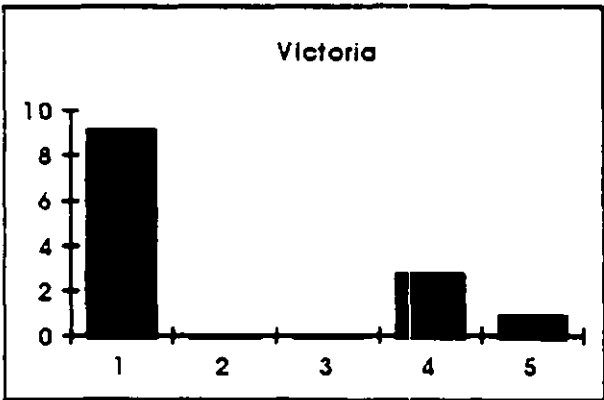
Source: Walker, J., 1992, *Australian Prisoners 1991*, p.22

Figure 5: Number of Female Prisoners by Jurisdiction and Known Highest Level of Education

1	Tertiary
2	Technical, trade
3	Other Post-Secondary
4	Primary, No Formal Schooling
5	Unknown

Figures for New South Wales are unavailable.

Percentages by level of education.



Source: Walker, J., 1992, *Australian Prisoners 1991*, p. 34

Chapter 5

Results of the Survey

Courses Provided

Included in the survey was a form in which each institution was asked to provide details of courses offered during the month of August 1992. The fields on the form were as follows:

Fields on the survey form

Course or Class	Provided by	No. of Prisoners Involved	Proportion who are Aboriginal or TSI	Total Hours Class / Course during Aug 1992	Working Hours or Not	Certificate / Award Yes / No
-----------------	-------------	---------------------------	--------------------------------------	--	----------------------	------------------------------

The survey showed that a total of 852 courses were offered in August. These covered a range of 110 different subjects. Courses were classified into six categories which were: prevocational; vocational; art and craft; Aboriginal programs; and secondary and tertiary.

The numbers of participants in courses have sometimes been converted to percentages of the total prison population. However, the data do not indicate whether the students have long or short-term involvement in the program for which they were counted. Extrapolating the involvement of the total prison population over the course of a year in particular types of programs must take account of this difficulty.

Table 5: Number of Prisoners Involved in Literacy and Numeracy Courses as a Percentage of the Prison Population Surveyed by Jurisdiction August 1992

	Prisoners in Literacy Courses		Prison Population Surveyed	Prisoners in Numeracy Courses	
	n	%*		n	%*
NSW	175	4.4	3926	134	3.4
VIC	113	8.0	1407	41	2.9
QLD	82	5.5	1495	34	2.3
WA	246	14.6	1681	156	9.3
SA	39	4.9	796	28	3.5
TAS	0	0	254	0	0
NT	18	4.0	423	18	4.0
AUS	673	6.8	9888	295	2.9

* Percentage of surveyed prison population

From the survey data, Western Australia had the highest percentage of the prison population involved in basic literacy education (14.6 per cent) during the month of

August 1992. Victoria had the second highest score with 8 per cent of the prison population surveyed involved in literacy education during August. Other states all had less than the national average of 6.8 per cent, with the Northern Territory scoring the lowest at 4 per cent.

Western Australia also had the highest proportion involved in basic numeracy programs (9.3 per cent). The Northern Territory showed a rate of involvement in basic numeracy programs slightly higher than other states, at 4 per cent, compared with around 3 per cent for all other states, except for Tasmania.

It is assumed that the need for basic literacy and numeracy skills in the prison population can be determined from the available data on highest level of education on entry into prison. Referring to the most recent data showing highest level of prisoner education by jurisdiction (Walker 1992; p. 34 Figure 2 in this document), it can be seen that in 1991, 76.8 per cent of the prison population in Western Australia were known to have a highest level of education of primary or below. This is almost double the level for the next highest state, which was the Northern Territory, with 39.8 per cent of the prison population with a highest level of education of primary or below. Western Australia has a rate for the highest level of education of primary or below of six times that of Queensland (12.7 per cent).

From these results, Western Australia appears to be responding most effectively to perceived needs for basic literacy and numeracy education in the prison population, although it is clear that, with participation rates of only 14.6 per cent for literacy and 9.3 per cent for numeracy programs, most of the 77 per cent of prisoners with a great need for access to basic literacy and numeracy education are not receiving it.

In the Northern Territory, 39.8 per cent of the prison population had a highest level of education of primary or below. A further 48 per cent had only partly completed secondary education. Given the discrepancy between this high level of need and participation rates of 4 per cent for each of basic literacy and basic numeracy, the Northern Territory does not seem to be responding effectively to perceived basic literacy and numeracy needs in the prison population.

The high turnover of prisoners must be taken into account. It is not clear from the data whether, for example, the 13 per cent of prisoners receiving access in Western Australia reflects a constant group of students with continuous involvement from month to month, or a constantly changing group. It can be assumed that continuity of student participation will be most effective in tackling low levels of literacy and numeracy. If there is rapid turnover of students, programs are likely to be less effective. Long term involvement in a sequential program is most likely to improve literacy and numeracy. It is also important to note that in Western Australia only prisoners with a sentence length of six months or more (71.8 per cent of the 1991 total WA prison population) are assessed for literacy and numeracy ability. The Northern Territory seems to be considering restricting eligibility to education and training to prisoners with sentences of 6 months or longer. This would render one third of the NT prison population ineligible.

It is clear that very, very few of those prisoners with a great need for basic literacy and numeracy skills are participating in prison programs which might assist them. The vast discrepancy between needs and participation rates in the Northern Territory is noted with particular alarm. Over 70 per cent of these NT prisoners are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Table 6: Course Type by Jurisdiction; Numbers and Percentages August 1992

	Pre-Vocational		Vocational		Art and Craft		Personal Development		Aboriginal Programs		Secondary and Tertiary	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
NSW	38	18.4	82	39.6	36	17.4	31	15.0	14	6.3	7	3.4
VIC	28	13.1	104	48.6	20	9.3	33	15.4	10	4.7	19	8.9
QLD	22	11.3	55	28.2	28	14.4	62	31.8	14	7.2	14	7.2
WA	33	22.3	41	27.7	25	16.9	20	13.5	6	4.1	23	15.4
SA	8	17.4	23	50.0	8	17.4	1	2.2	4	8.7	2	4.2
TAS	1	3.7	12	44.4	2	7.4	3	11.1	0	0	9	33.3
NT	4	40.0	2	20.0	0	0	0	0	2	20.0	2	20.0

Interpretation of the figures in Table 6 should take into account the fact that, when completing the questionnaire, some prisons omitted to include information about personal development programs available to prisoners during the month of August. Time constraints did not allow for follow-up of these omissions. It is known however that no personal development programs were provided to prisoners during August in the Northern Territory and that, during other months, provision of such programs was minimal.

Prevocational (basic literacy/numeracy etc.). It can be seen from Table 6 that the state with the highest percentage of prevocational courses relative to other course types was the Northern Territory, with 44.4 per cent of courses within this category. The number of courses was quite low, with four prevocational courses available. Western Australia had the next highest percentage for this category, with 22.3 per cent of courses falling within the prevocational type. The percentage ranking of other states for the provision of prevocational courses was as follows, in decreasing order: New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria, Queensland, and, Tasmania. In the Northern Territory, pre-vocational courses predominate, although the actual number of programs was only 4 (no courses of any type were operating at Gunn Point Prison Farm during August so this figure is not typical). The low figure for Tasmania may be considered against the relatively high figure in the category of secondary and tertiary courses.

Vocational. It can be seen that vocational education and training predominates the range of courses offered in most jurisdictions, apart from the Northern Territory and Queensland. In Queensland, personal development programs predominate. The relative proportion of vocational education and training to other types of courses is highest in South Australia and Victoria, in which 50 per cent and 48.6 per cent of courses respectively were classified as vocational.

Arts and Crafts. As might be expected, South Australia and New South Wales have the highest percentage of arts and crafts courses compared to other states, both with 17.4 per cent of programs in this classification. Both states have made fine arts a feature of program delivery, and New South Wales has produced an inspirational curriculum document to highlight vocational arts studies in that state. Western Australia also has a relatively high percentage of courses in this category, followed by Queensland, Victoria, and Tasmania. The Northern Territory does provide an arts and crafts program for Aboriginal prisoners which was in operation during August, but this has been coded as an Aboriginal program.

Personal Development. As previously stated, comparison of the figure for personal development courses may be unreliable. Queensland appeared to be the state with the highest percentage of courses within the personal development category (31.8 per cent). Enquiries confirmed that Queensland does place an emphasis on personal development programs, particularly for prisons in the South East. This is an outcome of Queensland corrections policy that prisoners should address their offending behaviour while in the corrections environment. The apparent diminishing order of percentages for the other states was Victoria; New South Wales; Western Australia; Tasmania and South Australia.

Aboriginal Programs. The state with the highest percentage of programs in the category of Aboriginal programs was the Northern Territory, in which one arts and crafts program was the only specific Aboriginal program, containing just six participants. Considering the fact that the Northern Territory has by far the highest percentage of Aboriginal prisoners in the total prison population (70 per cent), this result is particularly unsatisfactory. To some extent, this might be offset by the fact that the Northern Territory Open College, which delivers almost all prisoner programs has a very high percentage of Aboriginal students. It is possible that NTOC mainstream courses may be more adapted to Aboriginal students than mainstream courses offered elsewhere.

Secondary/Tertiary. Tasmania is the state with the highest percentage of courses in the secondary/tertiary category. The Northern Territory had the second highest percentage of courses in the secondary and tertiary category. However, once again, the actual number of courses is very low, with only two courses available during August. The order of the remaining states for the percentage of courses in this category was as follows: Western Australia, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, New South Wales.

The percentage of secondary/tertiary courses could be interpreted in conjunction with prevocational courses. In a limited sense, secondary and tertiary courses could be regarded as 'prevocational', although the particular interpretation of prevocational taken here has been confined to basic literacy and numeracy, ESL and programs specifically stipulated as 'prevocational'. It could certainly be argued, however, that some secondary courses could be classified into either category.

**Table 7; Type of Course by Total Inmates Involved;
Numbers and Percentages, All Jurisdictions August 1992**

	Pre Vocational		Vocational		Art and Craft		Personal Development		Aboriginal Programs		Secondary and Tertiary	
	n	%*	n	%*	n	%*	n	%*	n	%*	n	%*
NSW	675	17.2	935	23.8	469	11.9	413	10.5	193	4.9	50	1.2
VIC	228	16.2	994	70.6	127	9.0	205	14.6	45	3.2	57	4.0
QLD	171	11.4	399	26.7	198	13.2	1018	68.1	108	7.2	130	8.7
WA	487	29.0	249	14.8	227	13.5	174	10.3	65	3.9	61	3.6
SA	93	11.7	134	16.8	64	8.0	3	0.4	24	3.0	5	0.6
TAS	20	7.9	41	16.1	14	5.5	27	10.6	0	0	20	7.9
NT	36	10.9	24	7.3	0	0	0	0	12	3.6	18	5.5

* Percentage of surveyed prison population.

The highest percentages of prisoner participation were in the vocational course category in most states, with the exception of Queensland and Western Australia. In

Queensland, personal development programs scored the highest percentage, with pre-vocational courses having the highest percentage of participation in Western Australia. Western Australia had the highest level of participation in pre-vocational courses compared with other states. Victoria had by far the highest level of participation in vocational courses, with 70.6 per cent compared with 26.7 per cent for the next highest score in Queensland. Western Australia had the highest score in the arts and crafts category compared with other states at 13.5 per cent, followed closely by Queensland at 13.2 per cent. Interpretation of the score of zero in the Northern Territory should take into account the fact that an Aboriginal Arts and Crafts program was offered in one prison during August, and it was coded under Aboriginal programs. Queensland had the highest score for participation in personal development programs, which was at least six times the level of any other state. No participation in personal development programs took place in the Northern Territory.

The level of participation in Aboriginal programs was generally fairly low, with the highest score in Queensland, with a 7.2 per cent level of participation. When considered against the figures for prisoner Aboriginality (see Table 4), the low level of 1.4 per cent in the Northern Territory is extremely low compared with the 70 per cent Aboriginal prison population. Western Australia's level of participation (3.9 per cent) is also low compared with the percentage of the prisoner population who are Aboriginal (33 per cent). Victoria has a very high rate of participation (3.2 per cent) when compared with the low percentage of the prisoner population who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (4 per cent).

An estimate of the overall level of Aboriginal participation in Aboriginal programs Australia-wide can be calculated. The survey identified 50 separate Aboriginal programs conducted during the month of August. Four hundred and seventy seven participants were involved. If it is assumed that all the participants were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and if it is also assumed that the prisons covered were equivalent to the national average in terms of Aboriginal over-representation, (that is, nearly 15 per cent), then the survey findings may be interpreted as showing that approximately 32 per cent of all Aboriginal prisoners were participating in Aboriginal programs during August 1992. This is a higher participation rate than found for any other type of educational training covered by the survey and it suggests that Aboriginal programs are relatively more successful than other programs in attracting participation from their target audience.

Levels of participation across all types of courses were lowest in the Northern Territory, with prevocational courses having the highest level of participation, at 8.5 per cent. The overall figures are also fairly low in Tasmania. When one compares the per capita budget allocation to education and training across the states, the three states with the lowest per capita expenditure are Tasmania, the Northern Territory and South Australia, all of which are around the \$500 mark. South Australia appears to be achieving much more participation for each dollar spent than either of the other two poorly funded states, with the Northern Territory coming a very poor third.

**Table 8: Course Provision in Relation to Working Hours; All Jurisdictions
August 1992**

	Offered in working hours	Offered out of working hours	Offered both in and out of working hours	Missing	Total
NSW	138	43	2	25	208
VIC	121	7	30	57	215
QLD	112	80	-	3	195
WA	142	4	-	5	151
SA	39	7	-	-	46
TAS	20	6	-	1	27
NT	8	2	-	-	10
AUS	580	149	32	91	852

Courses are overwhelmingly provided in working hours in all states, although, in a significant number of prisons in Victoria this information was not provided. The diminishing percentage order of prisons for the provision of courses in working hours is Western Australia (94 per cent); South Australia (84 per cent); Northern Territory (78 per cent); Tasmania (74 per cent); New South Wales (66 per cent); Queensland (57 per cent); and, Victoria (56 per cent). It is surprising to note that New South Wales has one of the lowest rates for the provision of courses in working hours, yet the sessional charge for TAFE teachers in that state is much higher than in any other state, increasing to \$100/hour for after-hours courses.

**Table 9: Working Hours by Prisoners Participating;
Numbers and Percentages August 1992**

	Offered in working hours		Offered out of working hours		Offered both in and out of working hours		Missing Cases	Total*
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
NSW	2139	78.5	527	19.3	33	1.2	25	2699
VIC	921	74.9	87	7.1	164	13.3	57	1172
QLD	1373	68.1	639	31.7	-	-	3	2012
WA	1341	93.9	82	5.7	-	-	5	1423
SA	242	97.2	7	2.8	-	-	-	249
TAS	107	87.7	14	11.5	-	-	1	121
NT	72	77.4	21	22.6	-	-	-	93
AUS	6195		1377		197			7769

* The totals listed here do not include numbers of prisoners participating in courses which were missing from this tabulation.

South Australia had the highest percentage of prisoners participating in working hours (97.2 per cent), followed by Western Australia, Tasmania, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Victoria, and Queensland.

**Table 10: Type of Course by Gender of Prison Numbers and Percentages:
All Jurisdictions, August 1992**

		Prevocational		Vocational		Art and Craft		Personal Development		Aboriginal Programs		Second and Tert
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
NSW	Male	33	17.7	71	38.2	32	17.2	31	16.7	12	6.5	7
	Female	2	33.3	3	50.0	1	16.7	0	0	0	0	0
	Mixed	3	20.0	8	53.3	3	20.0	0	0	1	6.7	0
VIC	Male	25	12.9	92	47.4	15	7.7	33	17.0	10	5.2	19
	Female	1	9.1	7	63.6	3	27.3	0	0	0	0	0
	Mixed	2	22.2	5	55.6	2	22.2	0	0	0	0	0
QLD	Male	17	11.5	40	27.0	22	14.9	48	32.4	9	6.1	12
	Female	3	14.3	6	28.6	3	14.3	3	14.3	4	19.0	2
	Mixed	2	7.7	9	34.6	3	11.5	11	42.3	1	3.8	0
WA	Male	22	19.8	32	28.8	18	16.2	13	11.7	4	3.6	22
	Female	3	42.9	1	14.3	1	14.3	1	14.3	1	14.3	0
	Mixed	8	26.7	8	26.7	6	20.0	6	20.0	1	3.3	1
SA	Male	4	16.7	13	54.2	3	12.5	0	0	3	12.5	1
	Female	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mixed	4	18.2	10	45.5	5	22.7	1	4.5	1	4.5	1
TAS	Male	1	5.0	10	50.0	2	10.0	0	0	0	0	7
	Female	0	0	2	28.6	0	0	3	42.9	0	0	2
	Mixed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NT	Male	2	50.0	1	25.0	0	0	0	0	2	33.3	1
	Female	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mixed	2	33.3	1	16.7	0	0	0	0	2	33.3	1

NB. In most prisons which are classified as 'mixed', women make up a very small percentage of the prison population. There is no womens' prison in either South Australia or the Northern Territory.

It should be noted that data from only one Victorian womens' prison was available to the survey. This did not include Fairlea which provided data well after the cut-off date for the survey, and unfortunately, time constraints did not permit inclusion of the data.

It is assumed that the relative percentage of type of course delivery is a reasonable indicator of education and training priorities in each state.

Prevocational. Table 10 indicates that in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, female prisons placed a priority on prevocational courses equal to or greater than the priority in male prisons surveyed. In Victoria it appears that prevocational education is less a priority in womens' prisons than in men's prisons. Prevocational courses were not available in the womens' prison in Tasmania during August 1992.

Vocational. The priority for vocational education and training in womens' prisons appears from the data to be greater or equal to that in men's prisons in the states of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. However, close inspection of the actual types of courses offered in all womens' prisons reveals that almost all of the courses in the womens' prisons surveyed reflected gender stereotypes of 'suitable' occupations for women. The courses included hairdressing, sewing, catering/kitchen hand, word-processing/computing, and welfare oriented courses. The only exceptions were the participation of three women in each of welding and small machine maintenance courses; eight women in a horticulture course at Tarrengower; and, one woman in a park ranger's certificate course at Risdon.

Arts and Crafts. The figures for the percentage of courses available to women prisoners in the arts and crafts category show that a higher priority was placed on arts and crafts courses for women in Victoria. However, the other states, with the exception of South Australia and Tasmania, show no significant variation between men's and womens' prison. In South Australia and Tasmania no art and craft courses were offered to women during the survey period.

Aboriginal Programs. Queensland and Western Australia were the only states which offered Aboriginal programs to women during the survey period. In these states a higher priority appears to be accorded to the provision of Aboriginal programs than to other types of courses to women compared to men.

Secondary and Tertiary Programs. The priority accorded secondary and tertiary programs for women was equal to or greater than the priority for men in Queensland only. In Tasmania, these courses had a lower priority, and in all other states in the surveyed prisons, no provision was made for these courses for women in the survey period.

**Table 11: Provider of Course by Gender of Prison Numbers and Percentages;
All Jurisdictions, August 1992**

[illegible]

**Table 12: Course Accreditation by Gender of Prison;
Numbers and Percentages, All Jurisdictions August 1992**

		Males		Females		Mixed	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
NSW	Yes	109	67.2	2	33.3	8	57.1
	No	53	32.7	4	66.7	6	42.8
VIC	Yes	111	66.5	2	18.2	6	85.7
	No	56	33.5	9	81.8	1	14.3
QLD	Yes	93	64.6	13	61.9	23	88.5
	No	51	35.4	8	38.1	3	11.5
WA	Yes	83	75.5	4	57.1	15	48.4
	No	27	24.5	3	42.9	16	51.6
SA	Yes	20	86.9	0	0	12	13.0
	No	3	12.5	0	0	10	45.5
TAS	Yes	20	100.0	7	100.0	0	0
	No	0	0	0	0	0	0
NT	Yes	4	100.0	0	0	4	100.0
	No	0	0	0	0	0	0

Tables 11 and 12 together can be used to determine whether there is any significant difference in the level of accreditation for courses offered in men's prisons compared with women's prisons. The issue of accreditation is usually linked with the type of course provider, with access to mainstream programs conferring recognised accreditation.

Participation in TAFE programs in women's prisons was equal to or greater than men's prisons in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. Participation was lower in women's prisons than in men's prisons in Western Australia, South Australia, and Tasmania. More courses were provided internally relative to other modes of provision for women in New South Wales, Western Australia, and Tasmania. More courses were provided to women prisoners through distance and other external education relative to other modes of provision in Queensland and Western Australia.

In all states in Australia in the survey, except for Tasmania, a lower percentage of women participated in certificated courses than men. The discrepancy between the percentages of men's and women's participation in certificated courses was high in Victoria although, if Fairlea's courses were taken into account, the discrepancy would be considerably less. Overall, it appears from the survey data that women prisoners are not receiving the same level of access to accredited courses as men.

Table 13: Percentage of Courses by ATSI Concentration and Jurisdiction, August 1992

	Low (0-10%)	Medium (11-24%)	High (25-100%)
NSW	59	20	21
VIC	79	13	8
QLD	53	12	35
WA	33	9	58
SA	70	2	28
TAS	100	-	-
NT	10	10	80

This three-tiered scale is based on statistics relating to Aboriginality in prisons provided in the National Prison Census, 30 June 1991. From this census, prisons with Aboriginal inmates numbering up to 10% of the total are considered prisons of low Aboriginal concentration, 11-24% of medium, and 25-100% of high concentration.

All figures in this table are expressed as percentages of the total number of courses for each state.

This table indicates whether the percentage of Aboriginal prisoners is related to the percentage of courses offered relative to prisons with low percentages of Aboriginal prisoners. Only a very general interpretation of the figure can be made, since the number of prisons within each category of high, low and medium is not taken into account. However, it can be seen that, in general, in those states with the highest percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the prison population, which are the Northern Territory (71 per cent) and Western Australia (33 per cent), there is no indication that the percentage of courses is lower than for prisons with lower percentages of Aboriginal prisoners. The higher percentages of courses in prisons with low percentages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners in Queensland and South Australia are not out of proportion to the overall percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners.

Table 14: Percentage of Certificated Courses by ATSI Concentration; All Jurisdictions, August 1992

	Certificated	Not certificated
Low (0-10%)	67	33
Medium (11-24%)	70	29
High (25-100%)	65	35

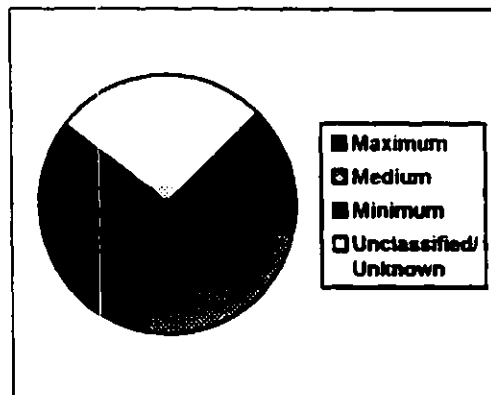
This three-tiered scale is based on statistics relating to Aboriginality in prisons provided in the National Prison Census, 30 June 1991. From this census, prisons with Aboriginal inmates numbering up to 10% of the total are considered prisons of low Aboriginal concentration, 11-24% of medium, and 25-100% of high concentration.

As far as can be ascertained, the data does not show any relationship between the level of course certification and the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in the prison population.

**Table 15: Course Type by Security Level;
Numbers and Percentages, August 1992**

	No. of Prisons	Pre- Vocational		Vocational		Art and Craft		Personal Development		Aboriginal Programs		Secondary / Tertiary		Total
		n=	%	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%	
Max	11	26	17	50	33	21	14	16	11	7	5	30	20	150
Med	7	13	14	50	54	12	13	11	12	4	4	3	3	93
Min	19	30	18	71	43	22	13	23	14	8	5	10	6	164
Max/Med	3	7	15	15	33	4	9	12	27	4	9	3	7	45
Max/Min	1	1	20	2	40	1	20	1	20	-	-	-	-	5
Med/Min	7	29	13	77	35	32	14	47	21	15	7	20	9	220
Max/Med/ Min	11	25	16	46	30	24	15	40	26	10	6	10	6	155
Total	59	131		311		116		150		48		76		

Figure 6. Number of Prisoners by Security Classification, 30.6.91. Australia



Refer to Figure 6 for an indication of the spread of the prison population through levels of security. It is difficult to draw any conclusions about the impact of level of security on access, since prisoners with different levels of security can be housed in different sections of the same prison. Access to courses on the basis of the classification of individual prisoners in a given prison can only be inferred indirectly from the current study. In accordance with the results shown in Table 15, it can be seen that Vocational courses are provided at a higher per prison rate than any other course type, across all levels of security. There does not seem to be any overall identifiable pattern for variation in course type provision across levels of security.

It was presumed that access to some courses for maximum security prisoners may be restricted because their participation requires additional resources, in the form of escorts and supervision. However, the results do not confirm this assumption.

General Questions - Program Delivery

The questions discussed in the following section were presented as open ended questions in the survey, and in some cases the range of answers was very wide indeed. Of course, if prompted, some respondents may well have agreed with a wider range of answers than those which they actually presented in the survey questionnaire. Each question is repeated here along with an analysis of the responses.

1. Approximately what proportion of the total prisoner population was actively engaged in organised education and training programs during the month of August 1992?

See discussion of Table 7, p.29.

2. Which of the above courses are presented in a sequential/modular form?

Answers were categorised as follows:

None:

Five per cent of prisons were in this category, including two of the five South Australian prisons, and one rural New South Wales prison.

Less than 50 per cent:

Twenty nine per cent of prisons were in this category, with NSW having the highest percentage of prisons in this category, followed by South Australia.

50 per cent or more:

Forty two per cent of prisons were in this category, with Queensland having the highest percentage (50%) of prisons in this category, followed by Victoria (33%).

All:

Twenty two per cent of prisons were in this category, with Tasmania having the highest percentage (50%) of prisons in this category, followed by Western Australia (54%).

3. What is the underlying rationale for the current education/training?

Understandably, this question generated a very wide range of responses. Fifty-seven per cent of prisons identified the provision of useful skills for reintegration into the community upon release as an underlying rationale. Prisons in Tasmania, Victoria and Queensland particularly specified this rationale. Forty-seven per cent of the prisons stated that enhancing prisoner employment prospects was an underlying rationale for education/training programs. Forty-five per cent specified self improvement and enhancing self-esteem as a rationale. Survival-level literacy and numeracy skills, and positive awareness on individual values and skills were each specified by 22 per cent of prisons as a rationale. In most cases, prisons identified a number of aims as rationales.

4. What factors limit the range of courses on offer? Eg. size of prison, access to resources, access to teaching staff, lack of interest among prisoners.

Once again, a very wide range of responses were elicited. The loudest chorus centred on lack of resources, with 88 per cent of prisons highlighting this as a central problem. Almost half of this percentage mentioned the lack of equipment and appropriate accommodation as significant limitations on the range of courses available. Another quarter of this percentage cited staffing as a limiting factor. Lack of money was cited as the limiting factor for the remainder of the percentage. Competition with work and lack of prisoner motivation rated 7 per cent each as limiting factors.

Eighty-one per cent of New South Wales prisons identified a lack of resources as limiting the range of courses able to be provided, as did 89 per cent of the Queensland prisons and sixty per cent of the South Australian Prisons. All the Victorian, Tasmanian, Northern Territory and Western Australian prisons cited lack of resources as limiting factors.

5. Is participation in education/training activities guided by sentence management planning or any other assessment of prisoner needs? Please explain.

Fifty per cent of prisons specified that prisoners were assessed for education needs on induction into prison. Three out of the four Tasmanian prisons stated that prisoners were assessed on induction into prison, Hayes Prison Farm being the exception. Around three quarters of New South Wales prisons stated that assessment was undertaken at this time; however, in many cases only some prisoners received assessment, particularly those with remedial needs. Selective assessment may exist in other states, but this is not evident from the data. A little over half the Western Australian prisons assess prisoners on induction. Half of the Victorian prisons stated that prisoners were assessed on induction.

Prisoner self-selection of education and training programs was identified as a major factor in prisoner participation in 40 per cent of the prisons. South Australian, Queensland and New South Wales prisons cited prisoner self-selection (around two thirds for each). It is likely that self-selection is also an element in sentence management planning and needs assessment elsewhere. Two Victorian prisons cited education and training as a prerequisite for prison employment.

Sentence management planning was the focus of planning of education and training in 19 per cent of the prisons in the survey, most notably those in Queensland (70 per cent of QLD prisons surveyed). Of course, sentence management planning and assessment on induction could operate together in some prisons.

Sentence management planning does not guide access to education and training in the Northern Territory, nor is any other means of routine assessment of needs indicated in the survey response, although it was mentioned that some movement in this direction is planned for the future.

6. Are any measures taken to make courses/activities relevant to the special needs of Aboriginal prisoners, eg. traditional cultural activities, employment of Aboriginal teaching staff, access to Aboriginal media, either written or audio visual?

Specific Aboriginal programs are available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners in 45 per cent of the prisons surveyed. South Australian prisons appear to

have responded most strongly in this regard, with four of the five prisons surveyed offering specific Aboriginal programs. This may be due to the commitment and enthusiasm of the Aboriginal prison education liaison officer employed by DETAFE in South Australia. Half of the prisons surveyed in each of New South Wales and Victoria and Western Australia provided specific Aboriginal programs. One third of the prisons in Queensland offered Aboriginal programs. The Northern Territory Open College of TAFE provides an Aboriginal Arts and Crafts course for Aboriginal prisoners in the Northern Territory, although only six prisoners participated during the month of August. The prospectus showed an additional course in Government Organisations in Aboriginal Affairs was also available at some times.

Aboriginal teaching staff were employed in 34 per cent of prisons surveyed. Sixty six per cent of Queensland prisons; 60 per cent of South Australian prisons; 36 per cent of Western Australian prisons; and, 33 per cent of New South Wales prisons stated that Aboriginal teaching staff were employed. Aboriginal teaching staff are apparently not employed in Northern Territory prisons, although more than 70 per cent of the prisoner population is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Support from Aboriginal agencies was available to prisoners in 33 per cent of the prisons surveyed. Five out of the nine prisons which responded in Queensland; three out of the five in South Australia; four out of the sixteen in New South Wales; and, three out of the eleven in Western Australia utilised support from Aboriginal agencies for Aboriginal prisoners. Apparently, Aboriginal agencies are not available to support Aboriginal prisoners in the prison environment in the Northern Territory.

Aboriginal written material, media, videos et cetera was available to Aboriginal prisoners in one third of the prisons surveyed. Five of the eleven Western Australian prisons which responded; four of the ten Victorian prisons; and, six of the sixteen New South Wales prisons provided access to such material. In regions with well developed Aboriginal radio stations, such as the Northern Territory and North Queensland, prisoners presumably have access to local media through the wireless. Two South Australian prisons specifically mentioned the importance of telephone access to Aboriginal communities.

7. What opportunities are available for prisoners to negotiate the content and style of delivery of courses, eg. team learning, customised learning programs, self-generated projects?

Almost 70 per cent of prisons responded that program delivery style and/or content was negotiable within practical limits. It seems that there is likely to be more flexibility with programs which are delivered by prison educators rather than mainstream programs which prisoners may access. Predictably, mainstream programs are outside the control of the prisons in more ways than in-house programs, although basic adult numeracy and literacy programs offered in any context are likely to be paced to individual student's needs.

All the Victorian prisons responded that programs were negotiable within practical limits, with two adding that prisoners were actually encouraged to negotiate programs. All Queensland prisons also stated that programs were negotiable within practical limits, with four prisons actively encouraging prisoners to do so. Similarly, all Western Australian prisons were supportive, and three actively encouraged negotiation of content and style. All but one of the New South Wales prisons enabled negotiation of programs to take place, with seven actively encouraging such negotiation. Four of the five South Australian prisons surveyed were supportive of negotiation, with one actively encouraging prisoners to negotiate. In Tasmania, limited opportunities for prisoners to negotiate content and style exist. Opportunities

for prisoners to negotiate style and content of programs are nonexistent in the Northern Territory.

8. What incentives are provided for prisoners to take advantage of training/educational opportunities, eg. remuneration, extra privileges, consideration for remission?

A small number of prisons in each state could not identify any incentives for prisoners to participate in education and training programs, notably three out of the ten prisons surveyed in Victoria, and one of the five surveyed in South Australia. Tasmanian prisons did not identify any incentives to participation.

Income maintenance. A major incentive to participation in education and training programs was cited to be adequate levels of income maintenance for student prisoners. However, income from participation in education programs is often low by comparison with income paid to prisoners elsewhere in a prison. It is not clear from the data whether relative incomes are taken into account when prisons claim that no income is lost from participation in education and training. Some prisons offer scholarships to prisoners to undertake full-time education (Barwon Prison in Victoria provides 20 full-time scholarships at the rate of \$5 per day). Enrolled students in some prisons are given a special stipend (\$10 per week at Matraville Reception Prison in NSW).

Taking into account potential discrepancies between income paid for education and training and other employment options, the following results were obtained: 21 per cent of the responses to this question cited no loss of pay as a significant incentive to participation, with four of the five South Australian prisons identifying this as an incentive; seven of the eleven Western Australian prisons agreed, as did five of the ten Victorian prisons.

The pay rate for participation in education and training programs in the Northern Territory is 20 cents per day! This compares with a pay rate of 40 cents per day for employment in cooking and the motor workshop. There is clearly little incentive to participate in any constructive form of activity.

Favourable consideration for parole or reclassification was also a common response to the question of incentives. Thirty one per cent of the prisons identified this as an incentive. Eight of the nine Queensland prisons surveyed cited this factor as an incentive to participation. Less than one third of prisons in each other state cited this as a factor, with only one of the five South Australian states considering this to be an important incentive.

Self-satisfaction was also identified as a significant incentive in 20 per cent of the prisons. Other less significant responses included accreditation, exemption from work and access to computers.

9. What disincentives exist for prisoners to participate in training/educational opportunities? eg. loss of pay, loss of free time.

Twenty four per cent of prisons considered that no disincentives to participation in education and training existed.

Loss of free time. Thirty two per cent of the prisons identified loss of free time as a significant disincentive to participation in education and training programs. All Tasmanian prisons identified this as a disincentive. Just over half of the Queensland

prisons surveyed considered this significant. Seven of the sixteen New South Wales prisons nominated loss of free time as a significant disincentive.

Loss of income. Twenty nine per cent of the prisons specified loss of income as a disincentive. In both New South Wales and Victoria, half of the prisons identified this as a disincentive. In addition, some educators cited the potential loss of prized employment positions if non-educational staff are not supportive of the prisoner's involvement in education. The pay rate of 20 cents/day for participation in education and training in the Northern Territory barely constitutes any form of incentive, although it does amount to a potential pay loss of 20 cents per day when compared with pay rates available for other activities (40 cents/day).

Competition with work. Twenty eight per cent of the prisons specified competition with work as a significant disincentive. The strongest rate of response in support of this factor was in Victoria, where half of the prisons identified this as a disincentive. Four of the nine Queensland prisons considered this a problem, as did one quarter of the New South Wales prisons surveyed.

Other disincentives which were cited by a small number of prisons include, in order of significance, the non-supportive prisoner culture; lack of continuity of courses from prison to prison, particularly in Tasmania; cell gear restrictions were identified in New South Wales; non-cooperative prison staff attitudes; and, fees and charges for courses and study materials. Interestingly, the Aboriginal liaison officer at DETAFE in South Australia mentioned that there had been a marked drop-off in levels of Aboriginal participation in courses since the introduction of non-smoking rules within prison class-rooms in South Australia. The particular design of the classrooms does not allow for prisoners to smoke outside the class-room without presenting a security threat, according to correctional staff.

10. Is any provision made for study leave/release for prisoners to attend courses outside the prison? Who is eligible?

Study leave was available to prisoners in 48 per cent of prisons surveyed. Prisoners in all Tasmanian prisons are able to apply for study leave. In Victoria, eight of the ten prisons surveyed made provision for study leave, access to which was dependent upon whether prisoners were in the final part of their sentence, in some cases.

In Queensland, seven of the ten prisons surveyed had provision for study leave for prisoners, access to which was dependent upon security level, and assessment of the likely benefit to the prisoner.

In New South Wales, access is granted to prisoners in eleven of the sixteen prisons surveyed, dependent upon level of security, previous study track record, and, in one prison, whether they would be able to complete more than 50 per cent of the course before the end of their sentence. Clean urine was a prerequisite for access to study leave in New South Wales. One prison reported that prisoners who were on methadone were ineligible for study leave, and that some people leave the methadone program to qualify for work release. It is assumed that similar provisions apply for work and study release.

Study leave is available in around half of the South Australian prisons surveyed. Access was dependent upon security level and whether prisoners were in the final part of their sentence.

Study leave was not available in all but two Western Australian prisons, the exceptions being Broome and the Eastern Goldfields. Ministerial approval is required for minimum security prisoners to attend courses outside the prison, and this is only

granted to groups of ten in isolated prisons, when courses are not available within the prison.

No provision for study leave is made in Northern Territory prisons, although it was stated that this policy is currently under review.

The availability of escorts was highlighted as a limiting factor on access to study leave in a number of prisons, particularly isolated prisons. Allocation of correctional staff and vehicles must be made on a regular basis for study leave to operate effectively.

11. How many prisoners are involved in distance education programs and what particular problems arise for these prisoners?

Access to distance education is available in 90 per cent of the prisons surveyed. All prisons in New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania access distance education programs. Nine of the ten Victorian prisons surveyed; ten of the eleven Western Australian prisons surveyed; seven of the nine prisons surveyed in Queensland; and, two of the three prisons surveyed in the Northern Territory utilised distance education programs.

A wide range of problems were identified in response to this question, including the cost of participation in courses, lack of face to face tutorial participation, and the academic calendar. The most significant problems cited for distance education students in prisons were as follows:

Time delays. Forty three per cent of the prisons surveyed indicated that time delays created problems for prisoners, with regard to the return of materials and set work. These delays sapped the motivation of some prisoners to persist with distance education programs. The ratios of prisons surveyed in each state which identified this as a significant problem were 4/5 in South Australia, 6/9 in Queensland, 5/11 in Western Australia, 7/16 in New South Wales, and 3/10 in Victoria. This was not identified as a significant problem in Tasmania or the Northern Territory.

In some prisons, the time delays are further exacerbated by prison security policies, in which items which are mailed to prisoners must pass through the prisoner property office, which may not acknowledge the urgency of prisoners' needs to receive program materials on time. Prisoners may not even be advised that items are waiting for them until after a considerable delay.

Access to study materials. Thirty four per cent of the prisons surveyed identified access to study materials as a significant problem for distance education students. This problem was raised in all Tasmanian prisons, 2/5 of South Australian prisons, 6/16 prisons in New South Wales, 4/11 Western Australian prisons and 2/10 Victorian prisons.

Lack of staff to support prisoners was specified as a problem for 26 per cent of prisons. This was a problem in all Tasmanian prisons, in 4/9 prisons in Queensland, and, in 5/16 prisons in New South Wales.

Access to computers and modems was also cited as a problem, as well as the issue that some equipment required as part of a course could create security problems. Somewhat pathetically, access to a table to study on was highlighted as a problem in one rural New South Wales prison.

12. Describe the relationship, if any, between pre and post-release courses.

Unfortunately, there seemed to be confusion in some answers to this question, since prisons would claim that there was little continuity between pre- and post-release programs. However, inspection of the list of courses offered showed that many were being conducted by TAFE agencies, and thus had built-in continuity with the post-release period, at least in principle. If this appeared to be the case, some continuity was assumed to exist. Levels of continuity were rated as none; very little; some; or, high.

Fifty-two per cent of prisons indicated that some relationship between pre- and post-release programs existed. In 19 per cent of prisons, the level of continuity was considered to be high; in 52 per cent there was some continuity, whereas in 12 per cent it was low, and in 17 per cent it was nonexistent.

All Tasmanian prisons maintained that some level of continuity existed. In the Northern Territory, a fairly high level of continuity exists, since almost all programs are offered by the Northern Territory Open College. Ten out of the 16 prisons surveyed in New South Wales claimed that some level of continuity existed, with two having a high level of continuity, three having very little continuity, and one with none. Three out of the ten Victorian prisons had high levels of continuity, 4/10 had some level of continuity, 1/10 had very little, and two had none. In Western Australia, 6/11 prisons had some level of continuity, with 2/11 having a high level of continuity, 1/11 with very little, and 2/11 with none. In South Australia, 1/5 had no continuity, 1/5 had little continuity, 1/5 had some continuity, and 2/5 had a high level of continuity.

In Queensland, half of the prisons had little or no continuity between the pre- and post-release periods. Two of the nine had some continuity and two had a high level of continuity. The issue of continuity is difficult to resolve in a decentralised system, such as exists in Queensland. It was also stated that prisoners were usually not enrolled in courses which they could not be expected to finish before the end of their sentence. It seems that distance education services are often utilised in Queensland, which are more difficult to access outside the prison environment. For example, pre-vocational courses are usually provided through distance education.

13. What, in your opinion, are the critical success factors of the education/training program?

This question gave rise to a broad range of responses; 24 different responses in fact. It is very likely that all prisons would have agreed with many of the responses, although they may not have actually nominated them as significant in the survey. It is assumed that the responses nominated have most significance to the particular educator completing the survey form. Only the seven responses which were supported by the most questionnaires will be discussed.

Relevant/Meaningful Programs. Forty five per cent of prisons identified relevant and meaningful programs as a critical success factor in the delivery of programs to prisoner students.

High motivational/personal/teaching skills of teaching staff. Thirty-six per cent of prisons identified the quality of teaching staff as a critical factor. However, when discussing critical success factors with one very experienced educator, she said that she considered this factor goes without saying, so she personally considered it too obvious to include.

Support of senior management. Twenty-eight per cent of prisons nominated the support of senior management as a critical success factor.

Achievable goals/short courses. Twenty four per cent of prisons identified the provision of short courses with achievable short-term goals as a critical success factor.

Recognised accreditation. Seventeen per cent of prisons nominated recognised accreditation as critical.

Selection of course based on personal interest. Seventeen per cent of prisons specified personal selection of courses as critical.

Vocational relevance. Sixteen per cent of prisons specified vocational relevance as a critical success factor.

Other factors included, in order of support, recognition of a wide range of abilities, recognition of different learning styles and cultural backgrounds, close monitoring of prisoner progress accompanied by appropriate intervention, development of pathways with other prisons and outside, and coordination and liaison between relevant parties in the provision of programs.

13. Which courses in your opinion are most useful in terms of readjustment to life outside the prison?

Sixteen different categories of response were generated by this question. Only the responses which received the most support will be discussed. Some prisons preferred not to nominate particular courses (Northern Territory prisons), choosing to describe in general terms the requirements for useful courses. However, this aspect has already been dealt with effectively in question 12. Some stated that identifying particular courses was not possible as the utility of courses varied too greatly from individual to individual.

Vocational skills/work ethic. Fifty-three per cent of prisons proposed that those courses which provided vocational skills and/or inculcated the work ethic were most useful for readjustment to life outside the prison. This was supported by all Tasmanian prisons, 9/10 Victorian prisons, 6/11 Western Australian prisons, 4/9 Queensland prisons and 1/5 South Australian prisons.

Basic Numeracy/Literacy programs. Thirty-four per cent of prisons nominated basic literacy and numeracy courses as most useful on release. This was supported by 7/16 New South Wales prisons, 5/11 West Australian prisons, 3/9 Queensland prisons, 4/10 Victorian prisons and 1/5 South Australian prisons.

Personal development (anger management/communication skills). Thirty-four per cent of prisons identified personal development courses as most useful after release. This was supported by all Tasmanian prisons, 4/9 Queensland prisons, 5/11 Western Australian prisons, 5/16 New South Wales prisons, 1/5 South Australian prisons, and 2/10 Victorian prisons.

Life skills programs (budgeting, form-filling, community service agencies, job seeking). Thirty-one per cent of prisons nominated life skills programs as useful to prisoners after release. All Tasmanian prisons identified these programs as particularly useful. Four of the 11 Western Australian prisons highlighted these programs as useful after release, as did 6/16 New South Wales prisons, 2/5 South Australian prisons.

Drug and alcohol awareness programs. Fifteen per cent of prisons nominated drug and alcohol awareness programs as of most use to the prisoner after release. Five out of the 9 Queensland prisons surveyed supported this, as did 3/11 Western Australian prisons, and 1/16 New South Wales prison.

Other courses nominated included specific pre-release programs, computer skills, ESL, hobby and recreation, Aboriginal and Islander programs and driver education.

Chapter 6

Programs for Newly Released Adults

Introduction

The initial period following release from prison is often a time of great distress for the newly released:

For the first few months I got out, I wanted to go back in, cos I couldn't handle outside I'd had no worries about bills, food, nothing ... and then all of a sudden you're put out in the big wide world without any support or anything like that. I just wanted to go back in the first three months I was out ('Bea' cited in Edwards 1992, p. 48).

Indeed, the first three months of freedom is considered the time of highest risk for re-offending (Semmens 1986). It would seem, therefore, that this period is the time of greatest need for imprisoned adults; need that begins with housing, food and income, and extends to counselling, support and training.

The provision of post-release services for persons not under sentence in Australia is considered by state correctional bodies to be outside their jurisdiction, despite their often fervent desire to be involved in this area. There may be several reasons for this. First, the corrections arena is often not considered a priority for state governments when budget allocations are made; the nature of state politics places the rights and the needs of offenders well down the list of 'deserving causes'. Second, within the area of corrections itself, funding and resources must be seen to be devoted to the task of dealing with sentenced offenders. Once the sentence is served, further expenditure is difficult to justify.

Arguably, this state of affairs is a good thing. To have the same body on the one hand responsible for the administration of punishment and on the other trying to minimise the impact of that punishment, may not be merely unsatisfactory, but inappropriate as well.

Corrections departments across Australia are involved in services for the newly released, primarily in the form of parole. Parole is the final part of the prison sentence served in the community, and involves supervision by community corrections officers. Probation, community service orders, home detention or release to work are other orders which those newly released from prison may complete.

Corrections departments do not provide services for newly released prisoners beyond supervising these orders. Often, however, they provide funding to various non-government organisations that are involved in post-release work. This may be the best way to recognise the need for and the importance of services for the newly released without being directly involved.

Aside from the debate regarding who should be responsible for post-release services, it is undeniably considered important across Australia. Although severely limited in some areas, services are available in each state to aid post-releasees in readjusting to life away from prison.

One of the central concerns of agencies offering post-release programs is that of funding. When funding for such services is made available, it is often granted in blocks of six or 12 months at a time. This means that part of this period is devoted to preparing and presenting submissions, with further material assessing the program or service, in an attempt to gain renewal of funding. There was often a mood of frustration with this situation, with agencies feeling their continual need for self-justification detracts from the business of providing a needed service.

There is a great deal of diversity in the extent and nature of services in each state. One strong feature of this situation is that there exists very little coordination or communication between agencies providing such programs, both within and between jurisdictions.

Results: A State by State Description

New South Wales

Several accommodation services in New South Wales are run specifically for ex-prisoners. Glebe House offers crisis accommodation for twelve referred people and is all-male. It also offers court support, budgeting advice, job application skills and basic living skills for residents. Referrals are made by the court, the police, parole, probation and other community agencies.

Guthrie House, operated by the Women's Emergency Shelter and Training Scheme, is a thirteen bed unit for women with children who are ex-prisoners or from drug/alcohol backgrounds. The unit is involved in referral work for drug rehabilitation, some counselling, court work and general support. The unit has twenty-four hour supervision. The Shelter, comprising a committee of five members (one of these is a staff member), also runs a range of advocacy services, counselling, training (including inter-personal skills) and general support for women discharged from prison or under parole or probation supervision. One important aspect of the service is the resident participation meetings, which are organised in order to facilitate interaction and action, and to exchange problems experienced by staff and residents.

Rainbow Lodge, in operation now for 23 years, is a male only twelve bed accommodation unit for ex-offenders. It is estimated that 20 per cent of residents are referrals from court, and 80 per cent are ex-incarcerated. Residents are permitted to stay for as long as it takes them to re-establish themselves in the community, contingent upon their own effort to do this. Residents are given assistance in looking for work, and are encouraged to be involved in education courses. It was felt that the maximum number of residents allowing the unit to run successfully is nine, and that 12 residents is too many.

The Chicka Dixon Centre is a 12 bed post-release residence run by Kooris for Kooris (it is thought to be the only such residence in Australia). This has been designed as a bridge for Koori people who have left prison, and usually operates at full capacity (there is often a waiting list). Tenants, who are sometimes referred by Corrections officers, are permitted to stay as long as they need, with the longest time of residence being four years. This hostel has been running for 10 years, and has experienced much difficulty in obtaining adequate funding. At present it is being funded by the Aboriginal Hostels group. This hostel was developed following a Canadian Indian model, and the manager of the Centre recommends that this style of hostel be available wherever there is a high concentration of Kooris in prison.

The Civil Rehabilitation Committee in NSW offers accommodation in its group homes scheme (68 residencies for 1991), and received 1,117 referrals to its housing service over the 1991-92 financial year. The agency advocates on behalf of its clients for access to public housing. The other facilities operated by the Committee are employment related. The Women at Work business register aims to address prejudices experienced by women ex-offenders, and to improve self-esteem and job-seeking skills. Women at Work also operates as a referral service to other agencies in the community. The Committee conducts the Workout Skillshare, a vocational training/counselling program for long term unemployed and other disadvantaged groups (including ex-offenders). A literacy program is run in conjunction with this scheme, and Skillshare supports people in training courses. Of the total Skillshare clientele, 18 per cent were ex-offenders.

New South Wales is the home of a distinctive style of post-release programs particularly for Aboriginal people, which aims to cut down the recidivism rate of Aboriginal people. Initiated by the New South Wales Department of Corrective Services in response to Recommendation 110 from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, the programs are run in Dubbo, Bathurst and Armidale by Aboriginal organisations. All participants in these programs are ex-prisoners, many of whom are on bail and often court-referred. The programs act as a referral site to legal services, drug and alcohol rehabilitation and medical services. The project officer works as an advocate in areas such as accommodation, employment and dealing with government departments. The emphasis of the programs is to enrol people in job training schemes or educational courses. If suitable courses are not available at places such as TAFE, Skillshare and CES, a Koori-specific course will be developed. They also provide help with resumes, references and job applications. A total of 80 people took part in these programs in 1991.

It was originally envisaged that each post-release program would be administered by a committee made up of Aboriginal people. To date, however, only Dubbo has succeeded in maintaining this structure. Dubbo post-release program is administered by the Central Regional Aboriginal Lands Council, with representatives from various Aboriginal groups. The Dubbo project officer attributed the success of Dubbo post-release to the high level of personal contact between the committee and the participants in the program. He mentioned that many of those on the committee had family members participating in the program, thus giving the committee a very high commitment to it.

New South Wales Corrective Services runs a supervision program for those released on parole. This involves an intensive three month stage (weekly visits and fortnightly home visits), which is scaled down after this initial period. Corrective Services sees itself as a referral agency to psychiatric, drug/alcohol and other services.

Victoria

Victoria has four services specifically aimed at ex-prisoners as their client group. Three of these services (the Brosnan Centre, Epistle Post-Release and the Victorian Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders, or VACRO) keep in regular contact and see themselves in the context of services provided by each of the others.

The Brosnan Centre is aimed at young post-releasees up to 21 years. It has established an extensive accommodation program (1,358 bed nights for ex-prisoners, 483 bed nights' emergency accommodation, accommodation for four intellectually disabled post-releasees and accommodation for three male Vietnamese post-releasees). There is an emphasis on employment and training, with assistance provided with both employment training programs and job placement opportunities. There are also a number of outdoor adventure programs and programs associated with health issues for young people.

Epistle Post-release also offers short-, medium- and long-term accommodation for ex-prisoners (for the financial year 1990-91, 96 males were housed in the short to medium term option, 13 intellectually disabled ex-prisoners for an average of 13 and one-half weeks, and one intellectually disabled ex-prisoner long-term). Those involved in accommodation with Epistle are also assisted with information and referrals if necessary, and are helped with bond money when residents find accommodation in the community. A comprehensive program has been developed for intellectually disabled ex-prisoners. Such activities as outreach, visits to inmates in custody, referrals, sexuality counselling, living and social skills programs, and other training programs are paid for or provided.

The VACRO group is more broadly concerned with family support, and it maintains a drop-in centre for families of offenders and prisoners. There is a strong focus on employment issues for ex-prisoners, and the Joblink employment program provides employment counselling and placement services. This includes a within-prison seminar series entitled 'Employment and You', which covers areas such as work practices, work skills, job searching, individual action plans and positive ways to disclose a criminal record. Participants in this program then register themselves with Joblink in order to receive assistance with employment after release from prison. In 1991, 42 per cent of clients registered with Joblink found employment, while 12 per cent were placed in education and training courses.

'Flat Out' is an all women accommodation service designed to provide a 'safe and affordable environment' for women ex-offenders and their children. There are three flats/houses provided by this service in which women can live rent-free. There are support workers available to residents to help women regain custody of their children from foster care; to assist them in gaining long-term accommodation; and, to connect them with community agencies.

The Victorian Office of Corrections provides, in conjunction with VACRO, an eight module Community Integration Program for inmates nearing release. This program covers the following areas: proof of personal identification; social security; accommodation; the job market; legal matters; drug/alcohol issues; health and well-being; post-custodial assistance; and, further advice. This program is run in 11 prisons in Victoria - in some it is a compulsory program and in others voluntary.

The future of plans for the Office of Corrections to initiate a comprehensive service for Koori prisoners and offenders under the name The Dooligar Justice Centre is now uncertain. The Centre would have operated with the aim of preventing Kooris re-offending, and would have provided a range of post-release support services for Koori post-releasees.

Victoria is the home of the Second Chance business register, which began four years ago. This is a group which aims to change employers' employment practices, and break down stereotypes of the offender population, in order that the business community considers those with a criminal history as candidates for employment. Although it is impossible to say how many people have been employed through this scheme, Victoria has approximately 400 businesses on its register. Second Chance sends out resumes to employers on request, but considers its work in breaking down widely held myths to be the most important aspect of its activities.

Queensland

The main post-release organisation in Queensland is the Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders (ACRO). This group provides halfway housing for offenders in the last stages of their sentences who are considered ready to be released into the community. Brisbane Halfway House recorded 1,059 resident nights for 1991, while Rose Blank House registered 910. Both houses provide a variety of programs helpful to post-releasees, such as jobseeking skills; budgeting; drug/alcohol counselling; and, family support. There is a further accommodation service, Charley's Place, which offers supported living for up to three months.

ACRO also conducts a Resettlement Program for long-term prisoners in the final twelve months of their sentences. This is a five module scheme which includes jobseeking skills and self-esteem, with a great deal of flexibility to allow inmates to suggest areas for inclusion in the program. Finally, this service is also at the helm of the Wacol Job Club, a three week course which aims to aid ex-offenders in obtaining work.

The Prisoners' Aid Society in Townsville assists people in finding accommodation and jobs. Accommodation is organised directly through the private real estate market using the Emergency Relief Fund. Employment is obtained via word of mouth.

The Queensland Corrective Services Commission (QCSC) provides five residential Community Corrections Centres (two owned and operated by the QCSC and three privately owned but on contract to the QCSC) for prisoners on the release to work program or those on transfer programs. The Centres operate as part of a graduated

release program from prison, to prison farm, to Corrections Centres, then to parole. One of these centres is specifically for Aboriginal offenders. Called Gwandalan, this Centre is administered by the Brisbane Tribal Council and has a 25 bed capacity.

In addition, offenders on parole or probation may be asked by their supervising officer to volunteer their participation in programs, but this is entirely up to the individual officer and works on an ad hoc basis. The parole board may request an offender to attend a program, and the courts often encourage people to attend educational or training courses.

Murri Action is a political group looking at the Recommendations arising from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and the ways in which they have been implemented in Queensland (in particular in Townsville). Murri Action see itself as a group designed to inform people of the implications of the Royal Commission (they run two day workshops in order to do this), and act as a pressure group lobbying for practical applications of the Recommendations in Queensland. They are also involved in visiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) prisoners; they organise and run family gatherings for these inmates; and, they have just begun operating a halfway house for ATSI prisoners on parole and home detention in order to allow them to leave prisons as soon as possible.

Murri Action feels that ATSI people have not been properly informed of the outcomes of the Royal Commission. It also feels that the government is not being faithful to the Recommendations, and hopes that it can facilitate a better and more honest appraisal of the situation for ATSI prisoners in all of Queensland, but particularly in Townsville. It is felt that most of the response to the Recommendations has centred around Brisbane, and that everything north of Brisbane has been, and still is, poorly serviced.

The Second Chance business register is also in operation in Queensland, having begun in April 1992. So far, there are approximately 45 businesses registered.

Western Australia

Outcare, an organisation committed to supporting offenders, ex-offenders and their dependants, offers a range of accommodation and employment services to ex-prisoners in the area. It is the home of the Western Australian Second Chance business register, which was established in March 1992 and has approximately 60 businesses registered. During 1991 there were three pre-release Job Search Training Courses held by Outcare, and two Job Clubs (14 of the 17 participants in the Job Clubs found full-time employment). Of the 322 people registered with the employment and training services section of Outcare in the financial year 1991-92, 92 found full-time employment; three found casual or part-time employment; and, 31 pursued further training or education.

A total of 48 occupants spent 2,567 resident nights in Outcare accommodation during the 1992 financial year. A further 818 newly released prisoners were given assistance (such as material relief, referrals and counselling) by Outcare support services. Outcare operates in the centres of Perth, Fremantle, Casuarina and Canning Vale.

The Western Australian Department of Corrective services has established a unit within the Community Corrections division for Aboriginal people on parole or corrections orders. This unit provides assistance for Aboriginal people sentenced with orders who may be experiencing difficulty adhering to the conditions of their orders.

South Australia

The Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Service (OARS), clearly the largest offender service in Australia, is an organisation aimed at preventing crime through rehabilitation and care for prisoners and their families. With a paid staff of 51 (17 full-time and 34 part-time), OARS offers accommodation for single males on bail, probation, parole, home detention or post-release. Each of the 15 hostels is under the care of a manager, who is responsible for the physical and emotional care of residents in the unit. In two hostels, workshops are conducted in the production and sale of wooden merchandise. There is also a housing cooperative, which is made up of 36 homes for families. Welfare staff are available for these families to provide support and friendship.

OARS has a particular section which provides services for Aboriginal clients. For newly released adults, the Aboriginal Services division provides material relief and counselling, and also has clients involved in a drug and alcohol program.

The Anglican Aboriginal Ministry is currently preparing a submission to develop community housing for Aboriginal post-releasees in Port Augusta and Adelaide. It is envisaged that this will run on a similar basis as Gwandalan in Queensland.

Several community corrections centres in the South Australian Department of Correctional Services have developed particular courses for their clients in response to perceived needs. One such program is the Drug and Alcohol Assessment and Awareness program, run in three district offices. Another is the Ending Offending program, also run in three offices, and aimed at modifying the drinking and offending behaviour of young people aged 17-29 on a probation order, deferred sentence, or diversion scheme. These courses, however, are for those ex-prisoners who are clients of correctional centres. One comment made by those who run these programs is that there is a low number of referrals to them, and they are therefore not run on a regular basis.

The Education Program, run in one community corrections centre in conjunction with the local TAFE, is a course developed to improve literacy, numeracy and self-esteem, as well as to assist clients in gaining employment. Of the 42 participants in this Program, nine were newly released from prison, and only one attendee was Aboriginal. Areas covered by this course are survival skills; social skills; self-esteem; reading; writing; and, numeracy. Another feature is the access to other agencies which is offered by the program.

Tasmania

A drug and alcohol program run by Your Place in Hobart is a four week program which begins in the prison itself. The target group for this program is prisoners soon to be released, and part of the program involves post-release follow-up and counselling. The course aims to reduce harm from alcohol and drugs; reduce recidivism; and, reduce the transmission of the HIV virus. The program, since its inception, has been extremely popular with inmates, and has been unable to keep up with demand.

The Corrective Services division of the Department of Community Services, in its 1991 Annual Report, stated that 'there is now increasing attention given to assisting prisoners in their return to the community' (p. 52). Unless a prisoner is released with a supervision order, however, there are no post-release programs available to those newly released. There is a pre-release program which probation officers are requested to attend; this is encouraged by Corrective Services in order to aid the officers' development of a case management plan for his/her client, which will hopefully link ex-prisoners into existing community programs and agencies.

The situation in Tasmania, where the state correctional body is obviously anxious to be involved with post-release support, and yet on the other hand is unable in real terms to provide such services, illustrates the difficulties that exist for state institutions in this area.

Northern Territory

The Department of Correctional Services in the Northern Territory has three groups of offenders who are released conditionally after either a sentence or a remand period. These are parolees, probationers and home detainees. These groups may be referred individually to general community programs and services. There are no other post-release services offered by the Department of Correctional Services to non-conditionally released offenders.

The Prisoners Aid Society of Darwin aids ex-offenders in paying repatriation fares, in order to help them relocate to their home states. The Society also provides clothing and equipment for those with jobs, and organises and pays for accommodation for ex-offenders through the Salvation Army.

Australian Capital Territory

As there are no adult prisons in the ACT and thus no direct access to the target group, post-release support for ACT residents is more difficult. Instead, if an ACT resident is being released and has no family or accommodation, the prison will call the Prisoners Aid Committee in Canberra (previously the Civil Rehabilitation Committee), who is able to assist with accommodation in crisis situations. Prisoners Aid is also able to obtain emergency funds for newly released prisoners to fill the

period between release and the first unemployment benefit payment (usually two to three weeks).

Conclusion: Where to Next?

It is clear that the main services offered in each jurisdiction, and those that are best understood and funded, are accommodation (most often short- to medium-term stay), employment counselling and material relief. Other areas, such as drug and alcohol education, general welfare services and other training and education issues, are left to the imagination and resources of each agency or are dealt with by general community agencies.

The provision of post-release assistance is a poorly understood, badly coordinated and inadequately funded enterprise in Australia. Individual agencies often have important insights into the needs of the newly released, but are often not supported in ways which equip them with the means to provide effective services.

Services for newly released Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are particularly under-resourced. Those services run by non-Aboriginal groups are generally poorly attended by Aboriginal and Islander people. Those operated purely by Aboriginal personnel feel their success is strongly related to this, but that they are unable to gain adequate support (particularly in terms of funding).

There is a strong need for research and information sharing among post-release services across Australia. In the current situation (where there is little communication between agencies and between jurisdictions), the advantages and disadvantages of various programs and services are unknown. For instance, if the Brosnan Centre in Victoria elected to initiate a program to assist Aboriginal people in their integration back into the community, it may not even be aware of New South Wales' Aboriginal Post-release Program. Such information, including outside evaluation of the program, could be made available nationally through an organised network and information service, potentially a cheap and easily organised venture.

Again, however, it may be a matter of lack of money as to why this has not already occurred. Post-release support is obviously not an activity most would regard as deserving of funding. If post-release support is indeed an area identified by state correctional bodies and by the community at large as important for the effectiveness of the criminal justice system (that success being a reduction of recidivism), a great deal of planning, research and money needs to be invested Australia-wide.

List of Post Release Agencies

New South Wales

Glebe House Ltd
 Guthrie House
 Rainbow Lodge
 Chicka Dixon Centre
 Aboriginal Post-release Programs
 Civil Rehabilitation Committee
 Women's Emergency Shelter
 Department of Corrective Services:
 - parole/probation

Victoria

Brosnan Centre
 Epistle Post-release
 Victorian Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders (VACRO)
 Flat Out
 Second Chance Business Register
 Office of Corrections:
 - parole/probation/community based orders
 - Community Integration Program
 - The Dooligar Justice Centre

Queensland

Prisoner and Family Support Association
 Second Chance Business Register
 Murri Action
 Queensland Corrective Services Commission:
 - parole/probation/home detention

Western Australia

Outcare (Civil Rehabilitation Council)
 Second Chance Business Register
 Department of Corrective Services - Western Australia:
 - parole/probation

South Australia

Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Service (OARS)
 Department of Correctional Services:
 - parole/probation
 - Drug and Alcohol Assessment and Awareness
 - Ending Offending
 - Education Program
 Anglican Aboriginal Ministry

Tasmania

Your Place

Department of Community Services:

- parole/probation

Northern Territory

Prisoners Aid (Darwin)

Department of Correctional Services

- parole/probation/home detention/community service orders

Australian Capital Territory

Prisoners Aid Committee

Chapter 7

Discussion

Principles of Adult Education

Delivery of education and training programs to adult prisoners must take account of well recognised adult education principles. These have been described as requiring that:

- * learners feel a need to learn;
- * the learning environment is comfortable and allows for trust, help, respect, freedom of expression and acceptance of differences;
- * learners perceive the learning goals as their own;
- * learners share responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience which results in their feeling a commitment toward it;
- * learners participate actively in the learning process;
- * learning is related to and uses the experiences of the learners;
- * learners have a sense of progress towards their goals.

(Knowles cited in Knight 1991, p. 43)

A brief consideration of these principles reveals that the qualities which are required for effective adult education and training are often at odds with conventional authoritarian prison regimes. Effective education and training in some senses represents a challenge to traditional custodial practices. This challenge must be acknowledged and acted upon, or education will be regarded as little more than 'a necessary evil' which sits uneasily in the corrections environment.

Prisoner Access to Education and Training

Access to prisoner education/training programs is determined by a range of factors which include:

Access and individual prisoner motivation. Assessment of individual prisoner needs and interests and the capacity to offer a program which reflects such an assessment is central to the motivation of each prisoner to participate in training and education. Thomas et al, in their Evaluation of the Education, Training and Support Program for People of Aboriginal and Islander Descent in Corrective Services Centres in Queensland, found an absence of a sentence management approach to the delivery of programs in many Queensland correction centres (Thomas 1992, p. 10).

Many prisoners enter education programs with antagonistic feelings about learning from their previous experiences of education. They have often been active 'school resisters'.

The 'them and us' attitude of prison life is also likely to be carried into education and training. These factors, combined with low self esteem if prisoners have low literacy and numeracy skills, must be overcome. Recognition of the need to boost prisoner confidence in their ability to learn was cited as a major reason for the success of the Aboriginal and Islander Education pilot program in Queensland.

Acknowledgment that prisoners will be less able to focus on learning if they are preoccupied with anxieties about upcoming court appearances, appeals, family, conflicts within the gaol and so on is also essential. Even for highly motivated prisoners, the disruption brought about by transfers etc. 'can cause periods, often protracted, of uncertainty and anxiety for prisoners and make serious consideration of matters such as education difficult, if not impossible' (Harris 1992, p. 7).

The difficulty of developing supportive group dynamics can also impact upon prisoner motivation. Many prisoners are distrustful of other prisoners, some of whom may be perceived to be a threat to their safety.

Some prisoners refuse to study with others and special arrangements must be made to cater for them. Others, who despite their reluctance join a group, arrange the dynamics of their involvement so that they retain their isolation, attend to their own work and treat the group as if it is not there (Harris 1992, p. 7).

The Thomas report cited prisoner age as a factor in the level of voluntary participation by prisoners, with younger prisoners sometimes less interested than older prisoners. Sometimes younger prisoners were considered potentially disruptive and not encouraged to participate in courses (Thomas 1992, p. 7).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners may not perceive mainstream courses as relevant. Previous experiences of failure in the 'white system' may have discouraged them from any further participation in formal education and training. The fact that programs are offered in an environment which demonstrates further oppression to them is likely to function as an additional deterrent to participation. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers within the criminal justice system sometimes themselves must combat hostility directed towards them as perceived captive agents of an oppressive regime.

Participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners in courses in which there is a majority of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students may be threatening. This was cited as due to a lack of confidence, and low levels of literacy and numeracy (Thomas et al, p. 6). Participation in group discussions and completion of written work requirements may be low as a result.

Access and prisoner mobility from prison to prison. Movement of prisoners through security classification levels is disruptive of education/training programs. The extent to which this is minimised will be dependent upon whether prisoners' training/education needs are taken account of in the timing of movements, and in the determination of destinations. If there is coordination of programs across the prison system the impact of unavoidable prisoner movements can be minimised, since prisoners would ideally be able to take up from where they left off in an appropriately chosen prison. The effectiveness of prison to prison communication of a prisoner's education/training status and future requirements is also critical. This can be facilitated by on-line communication of prisoner education and training status and needs, along with other identifying information for general administrative purposes.

Semmens suggests the appointment of a vocational trainer at a high level in prison management so that status is given to the role of training, and direct input into classification and review decisions is possible (Semmens 1988, 2.6).

Access and length of sentence. Short term prisoners may be less likely to become involved in prisoner education and training opportunities if the length of courses is longer than their sentence. However, these prisoners may be able to benefit from short personal development courses, or bridging courses which could connect them with courses available outside.

Short term prisoners (with a stay of, say, less than six months) may not be assessed for educational/training needs, if a decision is made that resources should be allocated elsewhere.

Corrections institutions are chronically poorly funded. Recent fiscal crises in a number of Australian states have further eroded corrections budgets. Given budgetary restrictions, it has been argued that it is necessary to target resources to those prisoners who are most likely to benefit from access to education and training, also taking into consideration the need to accord priority to those who may be at highest risk of reoffending (Stevenson et al. 1992, 33). There may be some difficulty in reconciling these two priorities with one another, and in assessing eligibility according to each criteria. Many external factors will have a bearing on the former, such as the cultural relevance of the courses offered, the vocational opportunities available to the releasee, opportunities to continue training and so on. Individual motivation is obviously another central issue.

In the allocation of scarce resources, it was considered by Stevenson et al. that providing education to prisoners whose length of stay in prison is only of short duration is likely to be ineffective, as well as being a waste of scarce resources. It was suggested therefore that:

For programs to have a likelihood of success the priority must be to those whose time participation in programs is guaranteed.... Perhaps the kind of prisoner education package envisaged should be available only to those whose sentence will exceed six months, for example (Stevenson et al. 1992, p. 34).

It could be argued however, that short-term prisoners are less institutionalised, and less entrenched into an offending lifestyle, and therefore may benefit most from access to education and training programs, particularly if they are able to continue courses after release.

The development of programs which can be received by smaller or larger numbers of prisoners without large marginal increases in costs, such as on-line video courses may offer a partial solution. The prison environment produces high student mobility and dictates that programs should be offered through short modular courses, with short-term achievable goals. It should be borne in mind that a prisoner with a short sentence is little different from a long sentence prisoner who is frequently moved within the system.

Adapting an efficiency model such as that proposed defeats the purpose of access and equity. Acknowledgment of the differences in education/training needs may be the key, rather than blaming the poorly motivated victim.

Access and competition with work requirements. Budgeting pressures may result in increased emphasis on increasing productivity from prison industry, sometimes at the expense of allocation of time and resources to education and training of detainees. A policy commitment to a minimum level of entitlement by prisoners to education may assist in developing a balance between industry and training needs. In Victoria, under the Director-General's Rule No. 3.3 relating to education and training: Every prisoner has basic entitlement of a minimum of one half day per week for education'. A fixed stipulation about prisoner entitlement to education provides a firm basis from which to argue for the arrangement of prison routines and work regimes to include education, rather than education and training having to be arranged around these other factors.

Unless the status of education and training is clearly specified in relation to other competing priorities, such as security and work, education and training are often only undertaken with 'permission' from these competing interests, usually coming a poor last. One educator spoke of a case in which a prisoner was said to be unable to attend his usual class because he had to cut sandwiches in the kitchen. If the priority of education had been recognised, kitchen supervisors could have made alternative arrangements to have the sandwiches cut. A missed class for a student struggling with basic numeracy or literacy concepts, with limited motivation, could mean that his or her commitment to self-improvement is lost.

Recognition of the value of education/training at all levels in the institution is needed, and should be an integral part of the training of all prison officers, so that the operation of the prison seeks to minimise any adverse effects which security and work may have on access to education and training. An effective balance is achievable without compromising security and work, if the commitment is strong enough.

Some prisons may have fixed requirements for the number of hours of work required of prisoners. In some cases, this means that training and education opportunities must be provided outside working hours. This may result in additional costs in the provision of tutors out of hours, thereby reducing the purchasing power of the education and training dollar. It is also likely to result in lower prisoner motivation, since prisoners may be fatigued after work, or may not wish to allocate their free time to education and training.

If the level of remuneration for education and training is significantly below that which is paid for work, and education and training are offered during work hours, prisoners will incur a financial penalty for participation in education and training programs. This may increase their dependency upon family and friends to obtain money for cigarettes and toiletries etc. If no such means of support is available, education and training options may not be seen as a practical option. In Thomas's study, one fifth of inmates reported that they would be reluctant to lose wages in order to attend courses (Thomas et al. 1992, p. 20). The development of shorter work shifts was suggested as one means of increasing flexibility for prisoners to attend courses while continuing to work.

One option is to integrate skills training with workshop practice and trade theory, to enhance productivity. This training could include literacy and numeracy skills, relating to the work site. Thompson describes a program with which she has been involved in Western Australia (Thompson 1992). Rather than teaching general literacy and numeracy as separate subjects, the approach was to incorporate basic literacy and numeracy into trades skills programs, including carpentry, metal trades, signwriting, painting and decorating and automobile mechanics. The literacy materials used were developed from instructions for the use of equipment, which had been rewritten in a simple form, introducing trade terminology with explanations. Numeracy skills were introduced with a similarly immediate practical application. For students whose literacy

and numeracy skills were not sufficiently developed to cope with the trade support classes, individual bridging programs were available.

One commentator suggested that, in order that prisoners gain immediate recognition for improved education and training, all work positions within the prison be subject to application. Incentive to gain competency would thus be provided, rather than merely participating in courses. 'Promotion' according to improved skill levels could also be incorporated.

Access and level of security. Lower levels of security tend to have lower staff/prisoner ratios than maximum security. This general principle also often applies to the provision of education and training staff, although arguably ideal staff/prisoner ratios for education/training purposes should not show much variation from security level to security level. Unless prisoners have access to mainstream education/training opportunities such as those in the TAFE system, possible discrepancies in staffing and resources will impact upon the continuity of prisoner opportunities through levels of security.

Minimum level security facilities sometimes have a stronger focus on work, and may often operate as work camps or farms. Accordingly, the emphasis on education and training may be lower. In concrete terms, the time and energy available to prisoners may be curtailed.

Prisoner attitudes towards involvement in education and training may vary according to level of security. One educator with experience in both a maximum and a minimum security prison commented that she had found higher levels of motivation among maximum security prisoners than among minimum security prisoners. She attributed this to the fact that prisoners in maximum security often faced longer periods of incarceration, and were more inclined to settle down and try and make the best of their situation by becoming involved in a program. On the other hand, those in minimum security 'had one foot out the door', and were preoccupied with their forthcoming release, rather than settling into a course. It may also be that those in maximum security facilities have more to gain in terms of reclassification to a lower level of security, which they may feel will be facilitated by some demonstration of a commitment to self improvement.

Access and correctional/punitive staff attitudes. As pointed out by Byrne, correctional officers are the lynch-pin of the prison system. Whether they regard prisoner education as 'a waste', a 'necessary evil', or an asset to their role in the provision of positive custody will make a critical difference to outcomes. The role of education in the custodial setting needs to be clearly understood. If administrators do not adjust prison routines so that education fits harmoniously with other prison activities, education may at best come to be regarded as an inconvenience to other activities, particularly with regard to the duties to be performed by correctional officers. One Chief Custodial Correctional Officer was quoted by Byrne:

Without a bond between both programs staff and correctional officers, conflict arises right from the start. We must all work as a team (Byrne 1990, p.12).

Unfortunately, the attitude of prison officers towards prisoner education is not always supportive. In Knight's study of education within Northern Territory prisons, she found that, while prison administrative staff demonstrated positive to very positive attitudes to prisoner education, 46 per cent of prison officers demonstrated a negative to very negative attitude to prisoner education (Knight 1991, p. 108).

Understanding of the value and role of education within correctional institutions, and the destructive impact of unnecessary interruptions and non-attendance upon programs should be included in custodial officer training, as well as access to further education and training for officers themselves. Semmens put forward a recommendation for:

Access to up-dating of qualifications and work experience for industrial supervisors and study leave as a right for prison officers. These changes would improve career prospects, strengthen morale, and develop greater support for prisoner access to vocational training (Semmens 1988).

Without a cooperative spirit between correctional officers and programs staff, educators cannot have effective access to students, as well as students having access to education. The dilemma for educational staff who must develop and maintain working relationships with both correctional staff and prisoners was highlighted by Stevenson et al 1992. It was suggested that educational and correctional staff could share staff development activities and induction courses, to foster better understanding of each other's roles.

The pervasiveness of a 'them and us' attitude between prison officers and prisoners also impacts upon officers' attitudes to prisoner education. The extent of the division between custodians and inmates will depend to some extent on the nature of the prison regime and management styles. Prison officers are likely to bring with them the prejudices and attitudes of the outside world. If prison officers are recruited from a racist community outside the prison, as is often the case in regions with high Aboriginal populations, both inside and outside the prison, these attitudes are likely to be reflected in some officers' attitudes to Aboriginal prisoners.

The need to provide escorts for prisoners participating in courses is sometimes an obstacle to participation. If correctional staff are not available, educators may either have to escort prisoners themselves, or be kept waiting for prisoners to arrive, resulting in wastage of time and money, when educators are paid by the hour. It is sometimes claimed that this problem may be exploited by correctional staff with a grudge against particular prisoners. They may not support the provision of educational/training opportunities to prisoners, regarding these opportunities as a 'bludge' for prisoners, or that they do not 'deserve' access, or they may feel resentful of prisoners having opportunities which they themselves may not have had.

When there is a strong commitment to education and training in a particular prison, cutbacks to corrections operations budgets will have a direct impact on the practicality of delivering education and training. If, for example, courses are held in the evenings, sufficient correctional staff must be available to unlock prisoners from their cells and escort them to and from classes. Correctional officers must also be available to protect the safety of teachers, particularly in courses in which dangerous implements are in use, such as kitchen work, where knives and hot fat vats could pose a risk.

Funding

The gap between rhetoric and practice can often be established by the extent of resourcing of policies. The seriousness of the commitment to education and training by corrections agencies can be gauged from levels of expenditure and the administration of that expenditure. It is estimated that the total per capita expenditure on prisoner maintenance is around \$50,000 p.a.. As previously discussed, the per capita allocation of funds for prisoner education and training varies from \$500 to around \$1,150 across Australian states. This ranges from 1% to 2.3% of the total budget outlay. This may be compared with an estimated expenditure of around 4% of corrections budgets on education and training in Canada (Knight 1992, p. 59). Levels of funding are falling significantly short of overseas corrections agencies with which Australia would wish to be on a par.

It is interesting to note that in the private sector, it has been estimated that Australian companies spend around \$649 on 23.6 hours of training per capita per annum, at a cost of around \$27.50 per hour (Dwyer 1992, p. 14).

In some states where coordination of programs is decentralised, as it is in Queensland, there is a major discrepancy between the levels of funding available to individual prisons. For comparable prison sizes, the discrepancy can vary by a factor of five. The fact that the prisons with the lowest per capita expenditure also house the highest percentages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is cause for grave concern. This lack of funding equity between prisons can impact very seriously on the continuity of prisoner access to programs when transfers occur.

Inadequate resourcing of programs was the issue which generated the loudest and longest chorus in this investigation. It is likely that education will always be struggling to compete with the resource demands of security, unless the positive security aspects of the provision of education and training opportunities are wholeheartedly recognised by prison administrators. Alternatively, corrections education needs must be recognised as a priority sector of mainstream education provision, as it now is in the TAFE system in some states.

Lack of continuity of funding has been cited as a significant obstacle to the coordination and long-term planning of programs within institutions. The question of coordination with programs beyond the institution is even more difficult (Thomas et al 1992, p. 3). If it is difficult for prison educators to plan courses, it must be correspondingly more difficult for prisoners themselves to become motivated about any long term educational/training planning. It is impossible to undertake planning of programs without predictable funding. It has been recommended that:

In line with the recommendations of the 1991 report from the Senate Standing Committee on Adult and Community Education, funding for prisoner education be provided on the basis of tri-annual, rather than annual, funding submissions (Knight 1991, p. 146).

The rate of pay for prisoners participating in education and training compared with rates of pay available elsewhere in prisons needs careful consideration. Where students receive 20 cents per day for participation (as they do in the Northern Territory), prisoners must see this as an indication of the real priority of education within the prison regime.

If competition from prison work during the day results in the provision of education and training classes in the evenings, tutor fees may be higher. Thomas et al. reported that the fees for TAFE tutors in Queensland rose from around \$30 per hour during the day to \$50 per hour at night (Thomas et al. 1992, p. 6), increasing to \$100 per hour in New South Wales at night. This factor will impinge upon the range of programs available, and also the ability to hire tutors, particularly if the prison is distant from a regional centre, since there may be reluctance to travel long distances at night.

The TAFE system and the prison environment

The particular motivational difficulties of individual prisoner trainees have already been discussed, creating a unique set of problems for educators and trainers, which must be met with appropriate responses. Administratively, special problems arise with the range of sentences of inmates, with the mobility of the population, with the need to connect prisoners with post-release follow-up opportunities, to consolidate any educational and training initiatives they may have undertaken. Reconciling prisoner movements with the usual academic calendar can be very difficult.

The capacity of the TAFE system to provide effective programs to prisoners and cope with these difficulties has been best demonstrated in Victoria, where prisons have been attached to local TAFE campuses. Ideally, accessing TAFE programs provides mainstream accreditation for education and training; it provides access to equipment and resources at the same level as for students in the outside community; and it offers automatic continuity of programs for students in the post-release period. This is particularly important for courses in which technology is expensive and rapidly changing, such as computer studies, office skills and so on.

In some states, however, the costs of accessing TAFE courses have resulted in a movement away from TAFE services. This is particularly the case in New South Wales, where TAFE services are much more expensive than in any other state. It has been proposed to employ sessional staff and to apply to have courses provided accredited by the State Accreditation Board.

Some practitioners were wary of becoming totally dependent upon the TAFE system for programs. They valued the range of options which are currently available in some states, which include TAFE, distance education, and internal provision of courses. Flexibility and choice is vital when programs must be adapted to suit such a wide range of students and situations as occurs in the prison environment. Mainstream programs are sometimes rigid and unsuitable for prisoner students.

Corrections budgets are always under pressure, since allocation of funds in this area is not normally regarded as critical to success at the ballot box. Education within corrections institutions is even less of a priority in the general community when schools and pre-schools are being closed, and places in tertiary education are hard-won. If education and training within prisons is funded and delivered by corrections departments, competition with prison security needs will always threaten the viability of program budgets. Moreover, it is unlikely that funds would be allocated to provide access to special equipment for small groups of student prisoners from corrections budgets, when there are so many other claims on funds. In terms of allocation of education/training resources it is arguably unproductive to allocate resources to a small number of students, if access can be provided to a greater number of students, including prisoners, through mainstream programs.

Cuts to mainstream education budgets are regarded as much more politically sensitive than cuts to prison education budgets. Accessing mainstream services may provide a buffer against government cutbacks in times of recession.

The Special Needs of Prison Educators

Delivering education within the prison environment presents a truly unique set of challenges. Educators must satisfy and motivate prisoners: they must satisfy the requirements of prison administration; and they must maintain the credibility of prison education with the outside world, for their own professional sake, and for the sake of their students. Trying to marry the principles of adult education with the authoritarian prison regime requires some very fancy footwork. It should not be surprising that confused objectives are often the outcome. Acknowledgment of the special needs and skills of prison educators is not likely to occur until specialised training is available, so that the service provided receives the professional recognition it has so valiantly earned.

The isolation of prison educators has been raised repeatedly as an issue for individual educators (Thomas et al. 1992). Administratively, educator isolation leads to inefficiencies in that features of successful programs are not exploited for use elsewhere. The special expertise of individual educators in the development of program policy initiatives may not be fully utilised. Program coordination across the prison system will be less effective if the quality and frequency of communication between educators is not high.

Educator isolation is also detrimental to the continuity of programs at the level of the individual prisoner moving from institution to institution. Quality communication would enhance the system's responsiveness to the educational/training needs of individual prisoners, already disadvantaged by disruptions caused by prisoner movements. Satellite technology and on-line information systems offer the promise of streamlined communication when prisoners are transferred.

The lack of a career path for prison education officers and the difficult working conditions can lead to a high turnover of staff. One educator commented that after nine successful years in his position, he had progressed no further career-wise, due to the lack of a career path. Course teachers are usually hired on a sessional basis, for an hourly rate, with short term contracts. As casual employees, they receive no sick pay and no holiday pay. Turnover for teachers is consequently also high. Developing the knack of operating as a successful teacher in the prison environment itself takes quite a time, so high staff turnover can have a very destabilising effect on program delivery. Establishing trusting relationships with prisoners who have little faith in their own abilities, and who have had poor relationships in previous learning situations is severely impaired when staff come and go frequently.

Issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Prisoners

Employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Prison Education Staff. Many Aboriginal prisoners may be reluctant to talk to white prison staff at all. In acknowledgment of this fact, employment of Aboriginal prison officers and educators is essential to ensure equitable access of prisoners to education/training and other services.

However, difficulties in attracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants for prison positions have often arisen. There is strong competition for well-educated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the employment market, it has been claimed. The rigid structure of the prison environment may not appeal to potential applicants, or they may not wish to be placed in difficult situations, if, say, a family member is incarcerated and they are put under pressure to fulfil kinship obligations in the work place. Lest these arguments be turned around as a case against the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prison workers, it should be noted that these potential problems have been successfully circumvented in a number of prisons, notably Broome Prison in Western Australia.

Individuals may be deterred from applying for positions if they are uncertain about whether other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers are employed in a prison. Recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers may be more successful if some kind of cadetship scheme were entered into, whereby teams of workers could begin training and employment simultaneously, and provide support to one another.

Maintenance of family and community linkages. The importance of maintenance of family and community links between prisoners and the outside world is increasingly recognised as significant to the post-release resettlement of all prisoners. Dislocation from family and community is considered to be even more distressing for Aboriginal prisoners. In discussions with Aboriginal prisoner support workers, a recurring theme was the need for prisoners wherever possible, to serve sentences close to their communities so that family access is facilitated. Preoccupation with isolation from families is considered to be a significant factor in apparently low levels of participation in education and training courses by Aboriginal people (Mace pers. comm.).

Continuity of contact with family and local Aboriginal support agencies can also assist in the post-release period with access to Social Security entitlements, drug and alcohol counselling support, access to local training/educational opportunities and so on.

Need for courses which explain the operation of the criminal justice system. Limited understanding of how the criminal justice system operates is considered to be a factor contributing to low Aboriginal participation rates (Mace pers. comm.). If Aboriginal prisoners do not understand the mechanisms of parole, appeal, etc. or have impending court cases in a justice system which they do not understand, their ability to feel in control of their lives, and take initiatives, such as participating in programs, will be impaired.

It follows that there is a need for educational programs which provide information about the operation of the criminal justice system, about the rights and responsibilities of citizens and so on, so that confusion is minimised. It was noted that such education often takes place informally in the prison setting, whereby some Aboriginal prisoners are perceived to be 'bush lawyers', whose advice is sought by other prisoners. Some formalisation of this 'education' might be appropriate.

Need for training of prison educators and officers in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs and social history. Prison educators may require in service training to develop an understanding of the special needs of Aboriginal students, and to be sensitive to the pervasiveness of racist attitudes in Australian society. The need to provide adequate education and training opportunities for prison officers and management was also raised by practitioners, particularly in relation to Aboriginal culture, history and society, so that they could be more sensitive to the problems of Aboriginal prisoners, and be more supportive rather than resentful of the shift towards increased education and

training for prisoners in general. Non-Aboriginal inmates may also be interested in learning about Aboriginal life and culture (Thomas et al. 1992, p. 32).

Aboriginal programs. Thomas et al. reported on the success of the Aboriginal Living Skills course for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners in some Queensland prisons. Many prisoners attended the course more than once. When inmates were asked about their preferences for courses in the future, Aboriginal content courses were most favoured by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners. However, it was noted that there was a need for the course to be offered at a number of levels, to provide opportunities for ongoing learning.

A commentator in one North Queensland prison spoke of the difficulty which sometimes arose from inter-group tensions within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prison population. If individual prisoners perceived that a particular program was popular with a particular sub-group they would avoid participation in that program. Since parallel programs cannot be conducted for each sub-group, access is effectively denied to prisoners not in the dominant group. However, when this issue was discussed with practitioners elsewhere, it was not considered to be a significant problem. Particular skills may be required to prevent such barriers from arising.

Market relevance

Training and education in the prison environment needs to be sensitively attuned to developments in the labour market. If programs do not take this into account, any desired impact of training on rates of recidivism will be severely diminished, since the training will not assist the releasee to gain employment, confirming any preconceptions of marginality and social alienation. The good faith of taxpayers contributing funds to prison education will be devalued.

Labour market surveys show a general trend of growth in the service industries and a decline in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. In this context it is difficult to reconcile many of the activities which are carried out in prison with the demand for skills outside. For example, work on prison farms will not produce marketable skills outside. Victoria seems to be the only state which has seriously attempted to adjust training and education to market relevance, with the priority given to the development of vocational pathways in the hospitality, horticulture and business services/information technology industries.

Developing programs which have market relevance for Aboriginal and Islander prisoners requires careful examination of the employment options available. Research into this issue is undertaken by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research at the Australian National University. Care must be taken that the training provided actually increases the net employment potential, rather than leading to displacement of existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in Aboriginal organisations. A review of the future of Aboriginal employment options is contained in Altman (1991).

Accreditation. The value of accreditation in the workforce will depend upon standards of assessment. If the certificate only indicates that the participant has completed a course, or participated in a course, rather than indicating a level of competence, prisoners who have a high level of achievement will not have their efforts acknowledged in any marketable form. The incentive to take training/educational opportunities seriously will

be diminished accordingly. Thomas et al. noted that certificates of completion were the norm rather than any certificates of competence (Thomas et al 1992, p. 8).

Personal development/behaviour modification programs

When corrections budgets are cut, personal development programs are often trimmed first. The value of these programs is under-recognised, both as having intrinsic value for the reintegration of the prisoner into the community upon release, and also in supporting the releasee to make the best use of other skills they may have gained while in prison. 'Job skills are important for gaining employment but social skills are essential for retaining employment' (Semmens 1992, p. 9).

The role of personal development programs has apparently been highlighted in Canada, where recognition of the 'cognitive deficiency' model has been incorporated into penal practice. The emphasis has been to 'devise education programs which can have an impact on attitudes, values and thinking, and then possibly behaviour' (Duguid 1986, p. 331). According to this theory, the development of vocational skills needs to be supplemented by programs which address the thought patterns and attitudes which gave rise to the criminal behaviour at the outset.

Some practitioners made the comment that the value of some courses is not always obvious to prison management. The example of cartoon animation was cited. While at first glance, such a course may be regarded as light-weight, it was argued that animation was a successful vehicle for the development of cognitive skills, since the issues of cause and effect, decision-making, coordination of themes, human relationships and so on can be integrated into an entertainment medium. Success was independent of literacy skills, previous levels of education and so on.

The utility of anger management and communications skills is increasingly recognised as having value as a management tool. Prison counsellors may refer prisoners to personal development courses if they are having difficulties coping with prison regimes, or dealing with other prisoners.

The availability of personal development programs is determined by access to suitably qualified practitioners, such as health educators or clinical psychologists. For this reason, states with a large prison population in isolated areas, such as Western Australia, are often unable to provide courses on site. Prisoners with special needs for programs such as a sex offender's program or an anger management program may not be provided with such a course unless the prisoner is transferred to a prison with a program operating in a metropolitan area.

However, an anger management program which is developed for an urban, mainly European group of prisoners is likely to be totally inappropriate for a man from an isolated Aboriginal community. The meaning and context of violent behaviour is likely to be influenced by cultural and historical factors which differ markedly from an urban European context. Unless trained Aboriginal staff with an understanding of these differences are employed, the relevance of such programs to Aboriginal participants will be open to challenge. Programs currently available in South-east Queensland, provided by Aboriginal staff, are very promising.

The high incidence of homicide in some Aboriginal communities, and the accompanying high levels of victimisation of Aboriginal women and children, mean that this need for appropriate programs cannot be overlooked or placed in the 'too hard basket' any longer.

The incorporation of principles of personal development programs into other education and training programs, and to other aspects of prison management has been highlighted:

... while training in work skills is important, the way in which these skills are taught can make a difference to the thoroughness of preparation for community living (Semmens 1988, 2.4).

The movement towards unit management policies in some prisons in Victoria, also planned for New South Wales, is a step in this direction.

Prison to prison integration and coordination of programs

In some states, particularly Western Australia and Queensland, there is great variation between prisons in the profile of the prison population. Those situated close to metropolitan areas are likely to have a high proportion of urbanised prisoners, whereas prisons located in rural areas, such as Lotus Glen in Queensland, would have a high number of prisoners from isolated communities. The educational and training needs of each end of this spectrum are likely to vary accordingly. This variation should be balanced against the need for continuity of programs across the prison system, to accommodate prisoner mobility. Thomas et al. suggest that the development of a basic program, which could be adapted to a variety of situations might be one means of resolving this dilemma (Thomas et al. 1992, p. 29).

Continuity and coordination between pre and post-release environments

Where individual education officers are over-stretched in the day to day coordination of education/training for prisoners, attention to education and training continuity between the pre- and post-release environments will suffer. Continuity of opportunity between prisons will also suffer. In a new initiative in Victoria, Fairlea Women's Prison is proposing to appoint a vocational officer, with responsibility for developing a vocational plan for each prisoner. This officer will plan an education/training pathway through the corrections system for each prisoner, and will assist prisoners to access further education and training when they leave the system.

The importance of prisoner access to work/study release schemes was highlighted in the NBEET Report. Prisoners who do not present a security risk, and/or who are nearing the end of their sentence, will be assisted in the transition between the prison environment and the outside world through such schemes. The survey conducted herein showed that study leave was available in only 48 per cent of prisons surveyed, with the highest level of access in Tasmania and Victoria. It was available in some prisons in all other states, with the exception of the Northern Territory. It is ironic that the Northern Territory has by far the highest level of incarceration of offenders of all states in Australia, yet it does least in terms of developing links with non-offending lifestyles for prisoners.

Chapter 8

Conclusions

This report has highlighted the different approaches to the delivery of education and training within the corrections environment and in the post-release period. There is marked variation in the mode of delivery of programs, from the centralised coordination of programs in Victoria, to a decentralised approach in Queensland.

Much is yet to be done to improve the coordination of education and training opportunities across the prison system in Australia, and to enable pathways which provide continuity between the prison system and the outside world to operate. Until these changes are made, the desired impact of education and training on rates of recidivism is unlikely to be realised. It is arguable that without a structure which offers continuity, money will in fact often be wasted, since efforts to improve prisoner skills will fail to be consolidated or accredited. Prisoner motivation will be diminished if the chances of completing courses and acquiring accreditation are slim, and if account is not taken of the importance of education and training when decisions are made about transfers and so on.

It is probably inevitable that there will be conflict between the recognised principles of adult education and the corrections setting, particularly for prisoners with a high level of security classification. However, there is much that can be done to minimise the negative impact of custodial requirements on education and training. It may well be that prisoners who successfully participate in appropriate personal development programs, and whose self-esteem is raised through the experience of success in education and training will require less supervision.

General features of best practice

Assessment of prisoners

Many prisons rely on the initial prisoner interview at induction into a prison, to determine the educational and training needs of prisoners. Educators commented on the inadequacy of this approach, recommending a separate, private interview with prison educators, after the prisoner has had a chance to become more settled into prison life. The induction interview was regarded as a potentially threatening experience for the prisoner, and an inappropriate time to explore sensitive issues, such as literacy needs. All prisoners should be interviewed to develop an education/training plan for the sentence of each prisoner, rather than the sometimes ad hoc referral system often in operation. Many prisoners with minimally functional literacy/numeracy skills who have a need for extra skilling go unnoticed, since they appear to be 'surviving' and without need.

Prisoner education and training needs should be assessed at regular intervals, and programs adjusted accordingly.

Re-assessment of prisoner educational needs and achievements should also be undertaken as part of pre-release preparation, accompanied by vocational guidance and support.

Removal of informational barriers

Failure to assess all prisoners may deny some prisoners access to information about education and training options which may be open to them. The publication of attractive and interesting prisoner information materials in New South Wales is an example of what can be achieved in this regard.

Removal of institutional barriers

Access to prisoner education and training should be improved through the removal of institutional barriers to education such as: excessive use of security to deter prisoner participation in programs; overemphasis on prison work priorities either in terms of time available to prisoners, or rates of pay for education activities relative to income available from work; the timetabling of education and training in prisoner recreation time, when few inmates will be self-disciplined and motivated enough to give up recreation time to participate in programs; and prison discipline practices which impact unnecessarily on prisoner access to education and training.

Staffing

In-service induction programs should be conducted for all prison educators who do not have experience of teaching within the correctional setting. Where a large percentage of the prison population is Aboriginal, or any other non-Anglo cultural group, the in-service training should include training in cultural awareness of that group. In-service training and support programs for prison educators should be on-going, so that professional development is fostered and service delivery is improved.

Burn-out of education officers appears to be a very common problem, for the myriad of reasons revealed in this report. It was strongly argued that education officers should be provided with sufficient clerical support. Education officers should be supported, ideally by another education officer. If not, some other means of support should be provided.

A professional standard for viable education officer/prisoner ratios should be established and respected when priorities for recruitment of staff are developed.

Communication between prison educators and other staff was regarded as an extremely important issue. One educator commented on the importance of correctional and education staff eating together in his particular prison work-place, as an effective means of facilitating day-to-day communication. Administrative arrangements should encourage a close working relationship between counselling/welfare and education staff, so that personal problems of prisoners which may interfere with education/training can be taken account of, as might be expected in any other education environment.

Recognition of the value of peer tutelage, especially to Aboriginal students

Peer tutelage has successfully been established in New South Wales, apparently without detrimental effect upon security. Peer tutors are trained and accredited through the TAFE system. The importance of the support of peers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students has been highlighted repeatedly in this study. Peer tutors have also been able to break down some of the machismo barriers which have deterred some prisoners from participating in education and training programs, particularly those

courses in which participation may be regarded as potentially humiliating, such as basic literacy and numeracy courses.

It is increasingly being recognised that going to prison is the punishment, and that prisoners should not be imprisoned *for* punishment. Deprivation of liberty should not be accompanied by denial of access to education, which is arguably an additional and unwarranted punishment. It is also clear that the prison population mostly comprises one of the most educationally disadvantaged sections of the community, many of whom have been active school resisters, and/or marginal members of society. The obligation to provide this group with easier access to education and training, and with a suitable style of delivery lies with the whole community, and specifically with the corrections setting. Without acknowledgment of this need, the enormous financial costs of recidivism will remain undiminished.

Movements through the prison system minimise disruption to prisoner access to and continuity of education and training

The elements of a successful strategy are effectively summarised by Simmons:

... the concept of a training pathway within Corrections settings embraces the ability of a prisoner student to commence an accredited course of study at any point of time within his or her sentence and continue this study with planned progression through the varying security regimes. At all times the training pathway is intended to ensure that those courses commenced in prison settings reflect courses currently available to the wider community and that those courses can be continued or completed in a variety of locations within and outside the prison system (Simmons 1992, p. 6).

Consistency of accreditation across the correctional system is important here.

Incongruity between offenders' sentences and the academic year was also cited as an additional difficulty. Administratively, when this problem is multiplied by the number of potential prisoner participants, each with different sentences, the problem is further compounded.

Accreditation

Differential accreditation should be provided so that all levels of participation receive due recognition. When a prisoner does not complete a course or achieve a certain level of skill, a certificate of participation may be appropriate. A highly motivated prisoner may be unable to complete a course of training as a result of institutional barriers. The delivery of programs in short modular accredited units could diminish the impact of these barriers. Some educators recommended that achievements in personal development courses should also be accredited, and be recognised by prison management when reclassification/parole decisions are made.

At Sir David Longland Correctional Centre in Queensland, participation in personal development programs is acknowledged by the presentation of a personal reference which is the personal property of the prisoner. This reference can be used as he/she thinks fit, in contrast to a report, the use of which is outside the prisoner's control. The

reference could contain personal achievements as well as educational/vocational achievements.

Competency-based accreditation

Competency-based accreditation is increasingly recognised as most effective in terms of efficient allocation of teaching resources and students' time. Competency-based accreditation means that the students' existing skills are formally recognised, and that students who are able to grasp concepts and gain expertise quickly are accredited according to their level of skill and knowledge, not according to a fixed course timetable or fixed pre-requisites. This is particularly relevant to the prison system, since it means that a short-stay prisoner can top-up and gain formal mainstream recognition for existing skills, if he or she can satisfy a recognised accreditation panel.

Bibliography

- Altman, J. C. (Ed.) 1991. *Aboriginal Employment Equity by the Year 2000*. Research Monograph No. 2. Published for the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia. by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research. Australian National University, Canberra.
- Australian Prison Trends No. 191, April 1992*. Facts and Figures in Crime and Criminal Justice. Australian Institute of Criminology.
- Braithwaite, J. 1980, *Prisons, Education and Work: Towards a National Employment Strategy for Prisoners*. Australian Institute of Criminology, Queensland University Press.
- Broadhurst, R. G. [1992], 'Work and Education: The Effectiveness of Programs for Prisoners', paper presented at conference. The Way Out: the Role of Employment, Education and Training for Offenders in the Criminal Justice System, February, Perth.
- Byrne, E. M. 1990, *Unlocking Minds: From Retribution to Rehabilitation - a Review of Prisoner Education in Queensland*, (University of Queensland).
- [Corrections Industry Training Board (Vic.) 1992], *Corrections Industry Training Plan 1993*.
- Dower, G. [1992], 'The Value of Education in Prison', paper presented at conference. The Way Out: the Role of Employment, Education and Training for Offenders in the Criminal Justice System, February, Perth.
- Duguid, S. 1986, 'What works in Prison Education?', *Adult Education*. Vol. 58, No. 4, pp. 329-35.
- Dwyer, M. 1992. 'Training: an Exercise Under Fire', *Financial Review*, 11.12.92, p. 14.
- Edwards, A. 1992, *Second Chance: Women's Experiences in Community Based Corrections* Masters thesis, Melbourne University (unpublished).
- Harris, I. [1992], 'Corrections Education in Victoria: Reflections of an Experienced Practitioner', paper presented at conference. The Way Out: the Role of Employment, Education and Training for Offenders in the Criminal Justice System, February, Perth.
- Johnston, N. [1992], 'Barriers to Education and Training Institutions', paper presented at conference. The Way Out: the Role of Employment, Education and Training for Offenders in the Criminal Justice System, February, Perth.
- Knight, J. M. [1991], *Adult Education Within Correctional Facilities: with Specific Reference to and Recommendations for the Northern Territory*, unpublished Master of Education thesis, Faculty of Education, Northern Territory University.
- Mace, M. - Senior Project Officer, Corrective Services Commission, Queensland.

- National Board of Employment, Education and Training 1992, *Employment, Education and Training Opportunities for Prisoners and Ex-Prisoners*, Commissioned Report No. 17, June 1992. Investigator Bob Semmens.
- New South Wales 1991, *Department of Corrective Services Annual Report 1990/91*.
- New South Wales Department of Corrective Services 1992, *Vocational Art Studies Curriculum*.
- Penaluna, K. [1992], 'Integrating Employment and Training in Prison', paper presented at conference, The Way Out: the Role of Employment, Education and Training for Offenders in the Criminal Justice System, February, Perth.
- Queensland Corrective Services Commission 1991, *Annual Report 1990/91*.
- Semmens, R. 1986, Curriculum Aims for a Youth Training Centre, unpublished PhD thesis, La Trobe University, Melbourne.
- Semmens, R. 1988, *TAFE Research Project: Vocational Training in a Prison Environment* [Melbourne].
- Semmens, R. [1992], 'Program Evaluation at Barwon Prison (1991-1992)', report arising from research funded by the Criminology Research Council.
- Simmons, V. [1992], 'Victorian TAFE Approach to Delivery of Education and Training in Prisons', paper presented at conference, The Way Out: the Role of Employment, Education and Training for Offenders in the Criminal Justice System, February, Perth.
- Stevenson, I., Anderson, D. and Cluney, I. 1992, Report of the Working Party Established to Review Prisoner Education Services in Northern Territory Prisons - 1992, Northern Territory Department of Correctional Services and Northern Territory Department of Education.
- Tasmania 1991, *Department of Community Services Annual Report 1990-1991*.
- Thomas, K. L. Heim, H. and Burns, D. [1992], *An Evaluation of the Education, Training and Support Program for People of Aboriginal and Islander Descent in Corrective Services Centres in Queensland*, The Community Development and Crime Prevention Unit, Queensland University of Technology.
- Thompson, J. [1992], 'Appropriate Programs: Literacy in a Specific Context', paper presented at conference, The Way Out: the Role of Employment, Education and Training for Offenders in the Criminal Justice System, February, Perth.
- Walker, J. 1992, *Australian Prisoners 1991: Results of the National Prison Census 30 June 1991*, Australian Institute of Criminology.
- Western Australia 1991, *Annual Report of the Western Australia Department of Corrective Services 1990-91*.

PRISONER PROGRAMS PROJECT

QUESTIONNAIRE

The Australian Institute of Criminology is conducting a survey of pre-release programs, including education and other programs, on behalf of the Department of Employment, Education and Training. This research aims, among other things, to develop a nationwide profile of the types of courses presently available in prisons and of the level of participation in these courses, particularly of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners.

This research arises out of recommendations in the Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. The specific recommendation of the Royal Commission is No. 110, which reads:

That in view of the wide variety of pre-release and post-release support schemes conducted by Corrective Services authorities and other agencies and organisations in various parts of the country it is the view of the Commission that a national study designed to ascertain the best features of existing schemes with a view to ensuring their widespread application is highly desirable. In such a study it is most important that consultation take place with relevant Aboriginal organisations.

We would like to invite you to assist us with this project by providing us with details of educational and training programs in operation within your prison. We have only two months in which to complete this project, and therefore ask that all survey questionnaires are returned to the Australian Institute of Criminology by **Friday 9th October 1992**.

Attached is a survey questionnaire seeking details of **education and training opportunities** in your prison.

The questionnaire relates to a **one month period**, for the month of **August 1992** only.

Format of questionnaire:

Page 2 - Details of Correctional Institution - please complete.

Page 3 - Check List

Page 4 - Course Description - please complete.

Pages 5 and 6 - General Questions - please complete.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Please return completed questionnaire to:

Mr David Biles

**Deputy Director
Australian Institute of Criminology
GPO Box 2944
Canberra ACT 2601**

Name of Correctional Institution

Address**Name of contact person****Position****Telephone Number****Fax Number**

Security level of the Institution

If more than one level of security, please explain

Average number of prisoners during August 1992 _____,
of whom _____ were male and _____ were female,
including _____ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
prisoners. The proportion of non-English speaking
prisoners was _____.

Prevocational:

Basic literacy
 Basic numeracy
 English as a Second
 Language
 Other (please specify)

Secondary (Please
 specify)

Vocational:

Computer skills
 Wordprocessing
 Accounting
 Bookkeeping
 Childcare
 Tailoring/dressmaking
 Sports coaching
 Driver education
 Welding
 Motor mechanics
 Sheet metal work
 Fitting and turning
 Carpentry/joinery
 Plumbing
 Electrical trades
 Painting
 Spray Painting
 Tiling
 Bricklaying
 Signwriting
 Horticulture
 Hospitality
 Butchery
 Catering
 Other (please specify)

Arts and Crafts:

Music
 Art
 Pottery
 Leatherwork
 Jewellery making
 Photography
 Media studies
 Oral history
 Creative writing
 Other (please specify)

**Personal
 Development:**

Budgeting
 Living skills
 Nutrition and health
 Drug and alcohol
 information
 AIDS education
 Stress management
 Anger management
 Parenting skills
 Communication skills
 Family relationships
 Job search skills
 Other (please specify)

**Special Courses for
 Aboriginal
 Prisoners:**

Aboriginal language
 Aboriginal culture/arts
 Oral history
 Creative writing
 Film making
 Book-keeping
 Other (please specify)

Course Description For the Month of August 1992

Please photocopy prior to use if more space will be required)

[illegible]

General Questions

1. Approximately what proportion of the total prisoner population was actively engaged in organised education and training programs during the month of August 1992?

2. Which of the above courses are presented in a sequential/modular form?

3. What is the underlying rationale for the current education/training?

4. What factors limit the range of courses on offer?
Eg. size of prison, access to resources, access to teaching staff, lack of interest among prisoners.

5. Is participation in education/training activities guided by sentence management planning or any other assessment of prisoner needs? Please explain.

6. Are any measures taken to make courses/activities relevant to the special needs of Aboriginal prisoners, eg. traditional cultural activities, employment of Aboriginal teaching staff, access to Aboriginal media, either written or audio visual?

7. What opportunities are available for prisoners to negotiate the content and style of delivery of courses, eg. team learning, customised learning programs, self-generated projects?

8. What incentives are provided for prisoners to take advantage of training/educational opportunities, eg. remuneration, extra privileges, consideration for remission?

9. What disincentives exist for prisoners to participate in training/educational opportunities? Eg. loss of pay, loss of free time.

10. Is any provision made for study leave/release for prisoners to attend courses outside the prison? Who is eligible?

11. How many prisoners are involved in distance education programs and what particular problems arise for these prisoners?

12. Describe the relationship, if any, between pre and post release courses.

13. What are the critical success factors of the education/training program?

13. Which courses in your opinion are most useful in terms of readjustment to life outside the prison?

If available, please attach any descriptive material about the programs such as policy documents and reports which might assist us in our survey. Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire. If you would like to receive a copy of the report of the project when it is available please indicate here.



AUSTRALIAN
INSTITUTE OF
CRIMINOLOGY