

APCCA Newsletter No. 13

September 2001

News from APCCA Co-ordinator

Thailand well prepared for 21st APCCA

Under the guidance of Mr Siwa Sangmanee, Director General of the Department of Corrections of Thailand, preparations for the 21st APCCA to be held in Chiang Mai from 21 to 26 October 2001 are well advanced. A balanced program of formal conference activities, professional and cultural visits has been planned. In addition to the four agenda items to be discussed, there will be optional workshops on correctional through-care and indigenous offenders to be conducted by representatives from New Zealand and Canada respectively. The professional visits will include inspections of the Chiang Rai Central Prison, the Chiang Mai Women's Correctional Institution, and a crop replacement project in the Golden Triangle region. The cultural activities will include visits to an Elephant Training School and to Orchid and Butterfly Farms. Before the official welcome on the evening of Sunday 21 October, in the afternoon there will be a Preliminary Business Meeting. At this meeting, the report of the Working Party which met in Singapore will be presented and other organisational matters will be discussed. The Opening Ceremony for the Conference on Monday 22 October will be presided over by HE Prime Minister of Thailand. At a later Business Session, one hour has been set aside for the Working Party report to be discussed. Any decisions or resolutions stemming from this report will be made at the final conference session on Friday 26 October. In early June, the APCCA Coordinator, Professor David Biles, and his wife, Julie, spent two days in Bangkok assisting with the preparations for the conference. Professor Biles expressed his admiration for the fine work that had been done to that date and said that he was absolutely confident that the the 21st APCCA would be an outstanding success.

APCCA web site attracting many "hits"

The Internet web site (www.apcca.org), which is administered for the APCCA under contract by the Australian Institute of Criminology, continues to attract considerable attention. In

May 2001 the site was visited over 3000 times and since then the totals have been around 2500 each month. While most of the visitors come from the Asia and Pacific region or from North America, several come from more distant parts of the world. It is thought likely that at least some of the visitors are students from Charles Sturt University in Australia taking courses, in distance education mode, on correctional policy and practice in Asia and the Pacific.

Thailand and Australia sign treaty for the transfer of prisoners

On 26 July 2001 in Hanoi, Vietnam, the Thai Foreign Minister, Dr Surakiart Sathirathai, and the Australian Foreign Minister, Mr Alexander Downer, signed a treaty for the international transfer of foreign prisoners between the two nations. This paves the way for Australian parliamentary consideration of the treaty before it comes into force. Mr Downer said that, once in operation, the treaty will mean that Australian prisoners in Thai prisons can seek to serve part of their sentences in Australia where they will have better access to family and other support which contribute to rehabilitation. The Australian Minister for Justice, Senator Chris Ellison, said at the time that transfers will not be automatic and each case will be considered on its merits. Prisoners seeking transfers must have at least one year remaining of their sentence to be served and must have no other legal proceedings pending. Transfers will also be consensual, requiring the agreement of the transferring country, the receiving country and the prisoner.

Mr Downer and Senator Ellison explained that while signing this treaty is an important step forward, it will be some time before transfers will take place. There are several domestic processes still to be undertaken, including review of the treaty by the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties of the Australian Parliament. This treaty and other related matters will no doubt be discussed in Chiang Mai as one of the substantive agenda items is the International Transfer of Foreign Prisoners.

Summary of program for the 21st Asian and Pacific Conference of Correctional Administrators

Highlights include:

Saturday 20 October

Arrival of delegates

Sunday 21 October

1400 Registration

1500 Preliminary business meeting

1900 Welcome reception by Mayor of
Chiang Mai

Monday 22 October

0830 Opening ceremony by HE Prime
Minister of Thailand

0900 Official photograph

1000 Welcome address by Director General
of Corrections Dept of Thailand

1015 Discussion of Report of Singapore
Working Party

1115 National Report on Contemporary
Issues in Corrections

1900 Welcome dinner hosted by Ministry of
Interior

Tuesday 23 October

0830 Foreign Prisoners and International
Transfers

1030 Drug Offenders - psychological and
other treatment

1300 Management of special groups of
offenders

1900 Kan-toke dinner hosted by Governor of
Chiang Mai

Wednesday 24 October

1030 Visit Chiang Rai Central Prison

Thursday 25 October

0915 Visit Chiang Mai Women Correctional
Institution

Friday 26 October

1500 APCCA business

1600 Closing ceremony

1900 Conference dinner

Work Improvement Teams - wise, intelligent and thoughtful

Hong Kong Correctional Services

The Correctional Services Department of Hong Kong has set up 30 Work Improvement Teams (WITs) among all its institutions since December 1999 with the aim to improve efficiency and effectiveness, and to address specific organisational and operational needs.

The WITs are formed by front-line staff and led by trained facilitators. Each WIT acts as a think-tank to the head of institution with the objective of continuous quality improvement by adopting a problem solving approach.



An officer shows the media the innovative handheld searching camera designed and made by WIT members

In order to enhance the penetration at the initial stage, the Management Services Unit formally and systematically introduced the WIT setup to all institutions. Thereafter, the Unit also closely monitored the operation of each WIT and conducted regular training workshops/seminars for WIT facilitators and members.

The enrolment of WIT members is voluntary. Meetings are conducted regularly but informally. In order not to burden the facilitators with paperwork, no formal documentation is required. At the meetings, free discussion is encouraged with the focus on the smoothening of the daily operation of the institution.

Suggestions applicable to an institution will be implemented upon the endorsement by the head of the institution and those considered applicable to other institutions as well will be studied by the Management Services Unit for possible service-wide implementation.

Since the introduction of WITs, more than 300 of their suggestions have been adopted and implemented by institutions. Many of them can best be described as 'wise, intelligent and thoughtful'. Some of them have been put into service-wide implementation after study, to name a few:

- introduction of handheld searching cameras designed and produced by front-line staff
- application of electronic movement board for tracking Category "A" prisoners in maximum security prisons
- application of security labels and bags for handling prisoner properties
- use of improved key chains for uniformed staff and large key holders for specific post holders
- adoption of standardised and durable name badges for prisoner uniforms

The introduction of WITs among institutions has greatly improved the effectiveness and efficiency of the day-to-day operational management by adopting the constructive suggestions of front-line staff.

Internal communication and co-operation among staff have also been enhanced. The WITs have provided a more dynamic management environment wherein staff will be motivated to maximise their contribution to the service. Through the active involvement of staff, the quality management culture has been further enhanced.

Working Group on APCCA support services update

Hong Kong Correctional Services

The Working Group on APCCA Support Services under the chairmanship of Mr Benny Ng, Commissioner of the Hong Kong Correctional Services, met in Singapore on 27 and 28 June this year with the mandate to examine ways to enhance the support services for the APCCA. Attended by representatives of Canada, China, Fiji, Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand, the meeting has reached a range of recommendations that may help put the APCCA on a firmer footing than ever before.



The Working Party met in Singapore in June

One of the key recommendations made by the Working Group is to establish a permanent secretariat to take over most of the responsibilities of the current APCCA Coordinator, Professor David Biles, who had indicated his intention to retire from the Conference in the near future. The Working Group will submit a report for the endorsement of the full Conference at its 21st meeting to be held in Chiang Mai, Thailand in late October this year. To prepare for its deliberation, a copy of the report will be sent in advance to each member country/jurisdiction by the end of September for their reference and consideration.

The Working Group would like to take this opportunity to thank the Ministry of Home Affairs of Singapore and the Singapore Prison Service again for their hospitality, invaluable assistance and support without which the meeting would not have been possible. Special thanks also go to Professor Biles, who attended the Working Group meeting as advisor and contributed much to the discussion.

Complaints system wins quality assurance

Hong Kong Correctional Services

The efforts by the Complaints Investigation Unit (CIU) of Hong Kong's Correctional Services Department (CSD) to strive for continuous improvement have paid off with the Unit winning an ISO 9002 certification last August.



Councillor of the Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency, Mr T C Ingram (right), presents the ISO 9002 Certificate to the Commissioner of Hong Kong Correctional Services, Mr Benny Ng Ching-kwok

The Unit is the first Hong Kong investigation agency accredited by the Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency and the award reflects CSD's determination to attain its vision to deliver quality custodial and rehabilitative services recognised internationally for excellence.

The ISO 9002 certification also serves as an assurance to the public that the Unit has in place a quality system yielding best practices for investigation, measurable by internationally recognised quality standards. The CSD internal complaints system was formalised in 1979 with the establishment of the Complaints Investigation Unit and the formulation of complaints handling procedures.

The Unit is committed to expeditiously, thoroughly and impartially investigating and processing all complaints received by or referred to it.

The CIU quality management standard adopts the Total Quality Management philosophy with emphasis on customer satisfaction and the effective connection of quality management system to organisational processes. This helps to improve organisational performance in all aspects.

For continuous improvement, the Unit is already planning to attain the ISO 9001:2000 standard within the next three years.

Inmates led the catwalk - fashion show with no supermodels and designer labels but full of meaning

Hong Kong Correctional Services

Ten inmates joined six staff members of the Correctional Services Department (CSD) of Hong Kong on the catwalk for the first time. The show was one of the highlights of the 48th Autumn Fair of the CSD Sports Association held on 18 November 2000. Before the inmates and staff paraded the casual wear designed by students of the Institute of Textiles and Clothing (ITC) of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, professional models displayed shortlisted entries of the Fashion Design Competition for Persons Under CSD Custody.



Professional models display some of the winning entries to the Fashion Design Competition

One of the objectives of the competition cum fashion show is to help inmates keep pace with the times and enhance their self-image, which can help their re-integration into society upon release. It also enhances public awareness of the talents of the offenders and helps to generate more community support for their rehabilitation.

Moreover, it is hoped that with the inmates and staff members jointly appearing on the stage, acceptance of inmates by the community can be further enhanced.

The competition cum fashion show was jointly organised by ITC and CSD and sponsored by the Buddha Light Association of Hong Kong Ltd., a religious body.

The event was made possible after months of careful planning and the dedication and diligent practice of the inmate and the staff models, who had no knowledge on how to walk on the catwalk before.

Preparation for the show started with the assistance from ITC and a local company and hobby classes on fashion design and modelling were organised for inmates. As for the staff models, they practised their catwalk work by enrolling in modelling classes after work.

Picking "The Millennium Style - Casual Wear for Men or Women" as its theme, the competition attracted more than 250 entries from various CSD institutions and 74 of them

were selected for display by professional models before a panel of judges at the Autumn Fair.

All the entries on display were manufactured by garment workshops in CSD institutions.

Singapore Prison School - the school that changes lives

Singapore Prison Service **Why the need?**

Kaki Bukit Prison School was one of the 15 institutions (prisons and drug rehabilitation centres) under the Singapore Prison Service. It commenced operations on 3rd Jan 2000. The school was the result of a review of the Singapore Prison Service's concept of inmate rehabilitation, in particular educational services. This review highlighted the fact that different prisoners have different needs, and that education is essential in the rehabilitation of offenders, especially those who are younger.

In the past, education for inmates was provided in seven different prison institutions. Teachers had to travel from one institution to another in the course of their work. Moreover, the environment at the institutions was not conducive for learning. The inmate students had little positive peer motivation and encouragement since they were housed with non-studying inmates.

The setting up of Prison School enabled us to centralise all our teaching resources and provide a conducive environment for learning. Students here can follow a proper school regime with structured school curriculum. In fact, Kaki Bukit Centre was chosen as the location because it was a primary school previously and had the basic school infrastructure.

What happens in the School

A typical school day starts at 8 am and ends 12 hours later at 8 pm. The regime here is much more intensive and exhaustive than that in an ordinary Singapore school. But the activities are similar. Students in the Prison School are required to attend daily assembly where they

recite the Singapore pledge and sing the national anthem. They undergo academic courses ranging from secondary to post secondary levels. The school also provides information technology and vocational training. To ensure that the students are well rounded, moral education, religious counselling and social skills training form an integral part of the school regime. For extra-curricular activities, there are basketball, street soccer, gardening and drama. Individual and group study sessions are also held with supervision in the evenings. Through such rigorous programmes and activities, the students are able to rebuild themselves intellectually, socially, emotionally, morally and physically.

In the School, teachers make extensive use of case studies to help students to understand the subjects they are studying and make them applicable to real life. These include topics like setting up a company and doing market research and advertising. Students are also required to do projects which train their creativity.

One important programme administered by the school is National Youth Achievement Award (NYAA). This programme aimed to encourage students to develop qualities of self-reliance, perseverance and sense of responsibility towards themselves, their society and the nation. Almost half of the School's students took part in the NYAA.

Since its opening, the Prison School has received numerous visits and drawn much attention. Some of its distinguished visitors include Permanent Secretary from the Ministry of Home Affairs and Senior Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Community Development & Sports. There were also a number of foreign visitors from Hong Kong, Brunei and Malaysia.

As aptly said by the Minister for the Ministry of Home Affairs, 'Education is crucial to the rehabilitation of the offenders', the Prison School seeks to provide the best possible environment, facilities and guidance to our inmates who are keen to study and start their lives afresh. We hope that these students will return to society as responsible citizens who can make a positive contribution to our nation.

Prisoners serving their sentence at home

Singapore Prison Service **Home Detention for prisoners introduced**

In view of the successful use of Home Detention both locally and overseas, the Singapore Inter-Ministry Committee on Community Based Sentences has, in September 1998, recommended that Home Detention be allowed at the tail end of a custodial sentence for selected prisoners incarcerated in the Singapore penal institutions.

Home Detention (HD) is the release of prisoners on temporary licence to live at home under specified conditions, including electronically monitored curfew hours. Prisons first introduced Home Detention with electronic monitoring in 1991 on drug inmates placed on the "Residential Work Release Scheme". (This is now known as the "Community Based Rehabilitation (Residential) Scheme"). HD was extended to Criminal Law Detainees released on Police Supervision in 1992, and then to Reformative Trainees released on aftercare supervision in 1997.

The latest HD initiative allows prisoners sentenced to prison terms of 6 months and more to serve out the last few months of their sentence at home under a temporary release license. These prisoners must first have served at least half of their prison term. Certain categories of offenders, such as those convicted for sexual offences or violent crimes, and those with a history of attempted escape are not eligible for this scheme.

All eligible inmates will undergo a suitability assessment carried out by the Institutional Classification Committee ("ICC") who will forward its recommendations to the Home Detention Advisory Board. The Advisory Board will hear all the recommended cases and advise the Director of Prisons who will then grant his approval if the inmates are found suitable.

Those selected will be transferred to Pre-Release Centres. Here, they will undergo briefings for their job assignment and pre-release counselling. They will also be assigned an aftercare officer each who will follow up on them after their release, and tagged with the electronic monitoring device.

Conditions of Home Detention

Under the provisions of the Singapore Prisons Act, all prisoners on HD will be governed by the terms and conditions of their temporary release license. The licence can last up to 6 months and will expire upon the Earliest Date of Release of the inmate. Some of the conditions of the licence are that the inmate must be electronically monitored and undergo compulsory treatment such as counselling. He must also report to the authorities at certain times. These conditions could be gradually relaxed to facilitate his progressive reintegration into society.

A violation of these conditions will lead to a recall of the prisoner and a thorough investigation into the violation. Depending on the severity of his violation, the prisoner could either be allowed to continue with the HD after a short stint in the prison, or be made to serve out his remaining term inside the prison. If the prisoner goes so far as to commit a crime while on HD, he is liable to be prosecuted for this new offence.

How prison officers are involved and affected

Many prisoners hope to be selected for the HD scheme as it gives them an opportunity to be re-united with their loved ones. However, not all are suitable. Careful assessment of the prisoners must therefore be carried out. Prison officers carry out such assessment through observing their performance in the workshops, their conduct in the halls and the people they associate with. Their recommendations are one of the major factors in determining whether a prisoner eventually gets placed on HD.

The introduction of the HD scheme also gave prison officers an additional tool to help them in managing the prisoners under their charge. The incentive of being placed on this scheme encourages prisoners to behave well during the course of their imprisonment. This will hopefully help to instill in them a lasting understanding of what the accepted social norms are and what adherence to rules and regulations means.

The implementation of the HD scheme also has a major impact upon prison officers. Many of them joined the Department because of a desire to help steer offenders towards becoming responsible citizens. This scheme has managed to rekindle that spark and desire to help in many of our officers. Through it, our officers are now more aware that their job is

not simply to ensure the safe custody of the prisoners. They also have the responsibility to help the inmates and their families to start their lives anew.

Home Detention - an aid to reintegration and rehabilitation

Ultimately, the HD scheme reflects the Singapore Prison Service's renewed emphasis on rehabilitating offenders. They are given an opportunity to strengthen ties with their family members and society before completing their prison sentence. They also have the chance to work and earn money. This greatly facilitates their re-integration into society. It also helps the offender's family by lightening the economic, social and relational costs of having a family member convicted of an offence.

Pennant Hills HS fire: CSI assists in rescue

NSW Department of Corrective Services

Over the Queen's Birthday holiday weekend, a deliberately lit fire devastated Pennant Hills High School. Catering for more than 1,300 students, Pennant Hills High occupies a handsome, well treed site. The horrific scene left by the arson attack seems totally at odds with the beauty of the location.

Faced with the destruction of many class rooms, school authorities had to act quickly to ensure minimal disruption for the students as they approached the end of the second term. For senior students, the crucial end-of-year period was not too far down the track.

The blaze destroyed 11 classrooms, six staff studies, the administration building, the industrial arts complex and a toilet block.



Demountables become classrooms as CSI's speedy response helps Pennant Hills High School overcome the fire tragedy

John Hall, Leader of Demountable Co-ordination for the NSW Department of Education and Training, contacted CSI Services Demountables at Cessnock and Goulburn Correctional Centres.

"We have an agreement with Corrective Services Industries to supply demountables in circumstances such as this. I visited Cessnock on the Tuesday and selected the modules we would need," he said. "They acted efficiently and the first demountables were on site on the Thursday lunch time following the fire." Cessnock has a long history of supplying demountables in emergency situations. Cessnock Operations Manager George Hunt explains that CSI has now entered the second half of a ten year agreement with the Department of Education and Training for the storage and maintenance of demountable classrooms.

In all, CSI supplied 79 demountable modules for Pennant Hills High School, making the administration centre, staff studies, industrial arts complex, eight classrooms and toilets. The remaining classrooms came from neighbouring schools. "The first students were using the temporary classrooms only nine days after the tragedy," John Hall said. "We really are grateful to CSI for the work they did in assisting us, in particular SOS Alan Provenzano who

really went out of his way to help. In fact, they ended up a day ahead in the delivery program."

John also thanked CSI's demountable unit at Goulburn Correctional Centre which contributed to the rescue operation.

Pennant Hills High School Principal Geoff Wing - speaking from a temporary office within the school's library building - echoed John's thanks to CSI: "Without the help we have been given in getting these demountable classrooms here so quickly we would not be able to open at all. We are very grateful."

by Julian Faigan, published 12 July 2001

Focus on Goulburn as Premier opens HRMU

NSW Department of Corrective Services

On the first day of winter in this new millennium - 1 June 2001 - NSW Premier Bob Carr officially opened the High Risk Management Unit within the Goulburn Correctional Centre. The \$22 million complex will house up to 75 of the worst inmates in the system, including those described by Mr Carr as "psychopaths" and "career criminals".

Amongst those present to hear the Premier's address were Corrective Services Minister John Watkins, Corrective Services Commissioner Dr Leo Keliher, Goulburn Mayor Cr Max Hadlow and Member for Burrinjuck Katrina Hodgkinson.

Escorting the Premier upon his arrival were Goulburn Governor David White and South West Regional Commander David Farrell.



Premier Bob Carr (centre) and Corrective Services Minister John Watkins (right) discuss the Unit's security measures with Goulburn Correctional Centre Governor David White

Members of the Department's Board of Management also attended along with many senior operational and administrative officers and a large contingent of officers and staff from Goulburn Correctional Centre and the South West Region.

Launching the ceremony, Sister Eileen Reardon blessed the new facility, its staff and future residents.

In his speech to the gathering, Senior Assistant Commissioner Woodham recalled that the facility was first considered four years ago. "We had experienced some very violent incidents within our system," he said. "At the same time indicators were emerging outside of correctional centres that in the future we would have to prepare to manage a number of people who operate in well organised street groups or gangs. These groups were not only well organised but very violent. It was therefore agreed that a long term, secure housing unit was required in the corrections system of New South Wales. This unit would have to be humane but extremely secure."

Mr Woodham said that it was obvious we had some highly dangerous inmates in NSW, "in the sense that they have committed coldly violent crimes inside and outside correctional centres." These are not impulsive hot-heads, he said, but cool planners of violence. "Some

of whom have no respect for law enforcement, no respect for the judiciary, no respect for correctional centre staff and no respect for human life. We also have some prisoners who have a prisoner-of-war mentality who regard it as their duty to escape or at least make regular attempts."

The first six inmates destined to move into the new accommodation are responsible for no fewer than 20 murders. These people, Mr Woodham stressed, are very resistant to change. "They can be described as cold, callous psychopaths." The HRMU, he concluded, was "as close as you are going to get to an escape-proof gaol."

Introducing the Premier, Commissioner Keliher praised the efforts and professionalism of all involved in planning and managing the High Risk Management Unit.

Premier Carr reiterated the dangers to society which the Unit's future residents posed. "They are the psychopaths, the career criminals, the violent standover men, the paranoid inmates and gang leaders," he declared. "The intensive programs in place in the HRMU will try to break the cycle of violence so these prisoners can safely be placed back into the mainstream prison population."

Praising the state-of-the-art design of the Unit, Mr Carr drew attention to the benefits which Goulburn and district would gain from the facility. "Regional training of 90 new prison officer recruits in Goulburn, along with the redevelopment of the gaol, is providing a massive economic injection for the city by reinforcing security and creating new jobs in the region."

Redevelopment of Goulburn Correctional Centre has created an extra 80 jobs in Goulburn - 62 in the Unit itself - taking the total staff numbers within the Centre to 335.

The media attended in force and the event was widely covered on television news and in newspapers across Australia.

by Julian Faigan

Video links will save time, improve security

NSW Department of Corrective Services

A new \$5.7 million "virtual court" system allowing prisoners to appear in court via video link will save time and expense and improve security in the criminal justice system.

Launching the link in mid July, Attorney General Bob Debus and Corrective Services Minister John Watkins said a network of advanced video technology now was being rolled out to electronically link 43 correctional centres, courts and other facilities by the end of 2001.

Mr Debus said the network would include 13 courts, nine correctional centres, seven juvenile detention centres and other justice agencies. It would allow experts and other witnesses to give evidence to the courts from remote, interstate or overseas locations.

"The video network means an increasing number of offenders on remand will not have to physically attend court for a range of preliminary criminal matters such as some bail applications, arraignments and adjournments but can instead take part from prison," he said.

Mr Watkins said the video link was an efficient operation, significantly reducing the number of offenders Corrective Services officers needed to escort to court.



An MRRC inmate in contact with the Supreme Court

It has been estimated that the new system could ultimately save up to \$1 million in prison transport costs a year.

Remand prisoners have made more than 1,000 appearances by landline video link since January from the Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre at Silverwater to the Supreme Court, Downing Centre District Court and Central Local Court in the city. Liverpool Local Court also has linked into the system in the past month.

Based on its use of the system this year, about 90% of bail applications to the Supreme Court are expected to be dealt with by video link.

The NSW Cabinet also has approved video link Parole Board proceedings, leading to further savings from reduced prisoner and staff movements to attend hearings.

In a "virtual court" matter, the inmate enters a soundproof room at the correctional centre. It contains a video camera to transmit his/her image via landline to the court and also a monitor for him/her to watch proceedings. The court has parallel technology.

The inmate can view the magistrate or judge and communicate privately with his/her legal representative by phone, preserving client/lawyer confidentiality.

Mr Watkins pointed out that Corrective Services conducted more than 100,000 court escorts a year. "Reducing the number of inmates who need to be transported to court will significantly reduce the cost, time and staff involved in these transport operations," he said. "It also will improve security on transport operations and in the court precincts by reducing the number of offenders who have to be moved around the court complex. Inmate participation in court matters can be achieved more swiftly, cheaply and easily by video from the centre, without infringing on their legal rights."

Mr Debus said State Parliament had recently passed new legislation, the Evidence (Audio and Audio Visual Links) Amendment Act 2001, to encourage all parties involved in criminal cases to take advantage of the new technology.

He said the legislation established a presumption that video links would be used for certain procedural matters unless an objection was upheld by the court. "To protect the rights of the accused, the legislation also establishes a presumption that a defendant will physically attend court for any substantive matters, particularly where they could lose their liberty," he said.

"This includes the accused's first appearance before a magistrate to apply for bail, committal proceedings, trials or hearing of charges and sentencing or appeal hearings. These measures will not only encourage the courts and legal parties to use the technology but also ensure the court retains its inherent power to control proceedings as it sees fit and, most importantly, protect a defendant's right to a fair trial."

Similar legislation will be introduced in relation to Parole Board proceedings.

There now are two video links into the MRRC, with another two soon to be commissioned, allowing expanded use of the network. Another link will be connected to the Mulawa Women's Correctional Centre within the next two months.

The network will then be extended to other correctional facilities, including Grafton, Goulburn, Cessnock, Bathurst, Parklea and two centres within the Long Bay Correctional Complex.

Other courts to be operating video links with correctional centres by the end of this year include Dubbo, Lismore, Parramatta, Newcastle, Penrith, Woy Woy and Bankstown Local Courts.

Links also will be established at Campbelltown, Bidura and Lidcombe Children's Courts; seven juvenile detention centres; Bourke and Griffith police transport units; the Westmead Forensic Laboratory; the Sydney Police Centre; two Legal Aid offices; the Public Defenders' office; the Community Relations Commission; and DPP offices at Sydney and Newcastle.

Julian Faigan, published 26 July 2001

Canadian Commissioner visits NSW corrections

NSW Department of Corrective Services

Recently retired Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), Dr Ole Ingstrup, recently spent a week in New South Wales, meeting departmental officers and visiting correctional facilities in both metropolitan and regional areas.



Young Jacaranda Cottages resident Inoa (4) was happy to show the facility to Canadian visitor Dr Ole Ingstrup (right) and his host Dr Leo Keliher

His schedule included tours of the Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre, the Bathurst and Emu Plains Correctional Centres and the Malabar Special Programs Centre at Long Bay.

His visit was hosted by NSW Commissioner Dr Leo Keliher.

After completing a doctorate in law at the University of Aarhus in Denmark, Ole Ingstrup became Deputy Warden for the Correctional Service of Denmark when he was 27. Three years later, he became Warden. He was also an active member of the European Committee on Crime Problems and served as Chairman of the Select Committee on Prison Regimes and Prison Leave during this time.

In 1983 Dr Ingstrup went to Canada as special advisor to the Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada. He was appointed Chairman of the National Parole Board in 1986 and in 1988 he was made Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada. He was Principal for the Canadian Centre for Management Development from 1992 to 1995, and returned to serve as Commissioner in June of 1996, retiring from that position in September 2000.

Ole Ingstrup is a Commander of the Danish Order of Knights, and was the first Canadian to receive the Volunteers of America's Maude Booth Award for leadership. He was also presented with the Latvian Order of Justice's "Breast Badge of the 1st Degree". In 1997 he was named "Chief Spotted Eagle" by the Samson Cree Nation in Hobbema, Alberta.

While there are superficial similarities between the correctional systems in Canada and NSW - indeed, Australia - upon closer examination it is clear that the differences are greater. First and foremost, Commissioner Ingstrup was in charge of the Canadian Federal correctional system and therefore dealt only with inmates sentenced to serve more than two years in a correctional facility. Each Canadian province and territory has its own prison system which deals with all persons on remand and all offenders sentenced to terms of up to two years. The Federal and provincial systems each have their own Probation and Parole Service.

The Canadian Federal correctional system houses around 14,000 inmates with another 9,000 under community supervision. The Federal system is divided into five regions and has 52 correctional institutions, the oldest of which is the Kingston Penitentiary, near Toronto, which was built in 1835 and has been extensively renovated over the years. As these figures indicate, Federal correctional centres have smaller rather than larger inmate populations. While the Province of Ontario, for instance, has opted to house its inmates in "super max" centres, the Canadian Federal system remains committed to smaller institutions.

In the midst of a busy schedule, Dr Ingstrup found time to talk to the Bulletin.

He was in Australia, he explained, at the invitation of the Western Australian correctional authorities with whom he was discussing matters relating to indigenous incarceration and programs.

"This has given me the opportunity to take a more in-depth look than previously at the correctional facilities in NSW."

Talking about the split between Provincial and Federal systems, the former Commissioner felt that the present Canadian system allows inmates to be kept closer to their homes. "It is less good in that there is a 'fault line' within the system and this can lead to a communication gap."

Canada, he points out, has 14 correctional CEOs - the Federal Commissioner and the heads of 13 provincial and territorial administrations. "We meet twice a year and it is essentially a meeting of friends." A downside to the divided Canadian system is the general lack of programs at the provincial level.

"Programs are expensive and while these are a high priority within the Federal system, the provinces, which have remand or short term inmates, have not expended greatly in that area."

With the mention of correctional programs, it is clear that Dr Ingstrup is warming to his subject. "We have always felt that good programs are good security. In that sense, the more programs you have the better."

With an international reputation for innovative programs, the CSC takes great care to document and evaluate the wide ranging programs it administers. "We put a lot of money into research and evaluation," he explains. "It pays a huge dividend to us in showing which programs are successful. We have an enormous data bank which we make use of throughout our whole department."

Recidivism, Dr Ingstrup says, does not give a complete picture of program success. "Well over half of our inmates are in the federal system for the first time. We tend to look at program success within the confines of certain offences. For instance, convictions for violent offences - the greatest source of public concern - have dropped by 45 per cent over the last six years. Federal offenders on conditional release are now responsible for less than one per cent of Canada's overall crime rate."

The Department's mission is viewed very literally. When asked how he dealt with inmates who try to avoid intervention - the inmates who are always "somewhere else" when they are meant to be seeing the psychologist or working with their case manager - he quotes the relevant section of the mission statement: "The Correctional Service of Canada...contributes to the protection of society by actively encouraging and assisting offenders to become law-abiding citizens, while exercising reasonable, safe, secure and humane control." He stresses

the idea of encouragement: "we pursue them, we see they take part in their programs. If they don't they will see the result when their parole consideration comes up."

What message does Canada's eminent correctional ambassador have for the NSW correctional system? "Your department is on the right track," he believes. "You have some excellent staff."

"The citizens of NSW are getting very good value for the money they invest in you. And let's keep sharing ideas and experiences. Canada has been working with case management and inmate programming longer than many other administrations - and we are happy to share our knowledge with you."

"The ultimate test of a country's social policies," Dr Ingstrup suggests, "is the size of its prison population."

In 1997, the Canadian incarceration rate was 129 per 100,000. The similar rate for New Zealand was 137, for New South Wales 135 and for Australia 126. The rate in France was 90 and in Norway was 53. At that time, however, the incarceration in the USA was 649. One cannot help but conclude that the Canadians are managing their criminal justice system rather better than their powerful neighbours south of the border.

Dr Ingstrup is likely to agree.

by Julian Faigan, published 8 March 2001

Canada recognises volunteer contribution

Correctional Service of Canada

On April 26, as part of the International Year of Volunteers, the Canadian government recognized volunteers in a special ceremony on Parliament Hill.

"Ours is a stronger and richer organization because of their generosity and their efforts," said Pierre Allard, Assistant Commissioner, Community Engagement, Correctional Service of Canada (CSC).

Three volunteers were honoured as representatives of the more than 10,000 people who volunteer with the CSC.

- Darlene Rempel from Winnipeg was recognized based on her work with the Winnipeg Parole Office Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC). Darlene has chaired the CAC since its inception in 1991 and initiated a number of their best practices, including the Stony Mountain Institution's Citizen Observer Program. She provided training for the observers and in the last year has single-handedly expanded their membership base from three to eleven.

Darlene's interest in the correctional process was sparked by her own personal family tragedy. Her son was murdered a number of years ago and she has worked with victims groups and victims' advocacy groups ever since.

In the aftermath of this tragedy, she became the executive director of the Manitoba Chapter of Victims of Violence, working closely with victims and their families and, along with her husband, was instrumental in establishing the Manitoba Office for Victims of Violence Canadian Centre for Missing Children. Darlene's most recent undertaking has been the development of the Manitoba Organization of Victim Advocates (MOVA), and serves as executive director of this organization.

- Volunteer Marie Beemans of Deux Montagnes, Quebec, has devoted a lifetime to visiting prisoners, beginning in 1951 at the Nicholas Street Jail for Women and continuing on in the Prison for Women in Kingston. She has served extensively on the board of the Person to Person visiting program, designed to give offenders without outside contacts the opportunity to be in touch with members of local communities.

"I volunteer with people whose lives are broken," she says. "I hope to be able to help them. They are the reason I am there..."

Since working against the return of the death penalty in the early 1980s, she has regularly visited lifers and other offenders serving long sentences in all the Quebec penitentiaries. "Many of them have become second family to me. They live with me as family members and while the parole office covers their expenses, I help them integrate back into a society they have never felt part of."

- Why would a correctional officer go out of his way in his spare time to help convicted sex offenders? Mike Gillespie admits that it's not something everyone would choose to do. For the last five years, Mike, on his own initiative, has run a support group for sex offenders at Westmorland Institution.

He believes that the group complements the work done in CSC treatment and maintenance programs. "I started this thinking that maybe I could make a difference; to help these guys work out what they learn in their programs. If the group helps them to understand their own behaviour, then maybe they will be less inclined to re-offend."

The men who attend Mike's support group every Wednesday evening do so voluntarily. They receive no official credit or time off their sentences. They show up because they are serious about getting to the bottom of their problems and understanding their offence cycles. The group offers them an atmosphere of trust where they learn to open up and communicate. They discover that they are not alone in their predicaments. They not only receive support but can also offer support to others in their recovery.

For some, it is a special opportunity to communicate honestly and learn from each other. "It can be tough," Mike explains. "The group challenges individuals about denial and responsibility. Each man must be willing to confront his own anger, impulsiveness and the fact that he has harmed others. They have to understand that despite the traumas they may have suffered early in their lives, they are adults responsible for their own choices and actions."

Support is not confined within Westmorland's perimeter. In the past seven months, Mike has extended his helping hand to offenders on parole and to men who have served their sentences but want to continue working on their relapse prevention in the community. They meet every second Tuesday for a 90-minute session.

"It's ongoing," says Mike, "because there's no pill that's going to cure them. In the community they must recognize high-risk situations and use their coping strategies to deal with situations. With support, they have a better chance of not relapsing. If my effort results in one less victim, then it's all worthwhile."

- Dan Caskenette of Edmonton, Alberta, volunteers many hours with the Emmaus Partners through which volunteers agree to "walk alongside" offenders being released into the community.

Dan came to the Emmaus Partners when he was volunteering with The Mustard Seed, a street ministry in Edmonton. He continued to help others, including spending hours at a drop-in centre at The Mustard Seed.

Myron Krause, the Director of Chaplaincy for The Mustard Seed, asked Dan if he would consider becoming an Emmaus Partner and arranged a meeting with a recently released offender. The offender had committed sexual offences and was released under the supervision of the city police, who agreed not to release the offender's name to the media if the offender was part of the Emmaus Partners program.

When Dan first met him, the offender was clear about the nature of his crimes.

"It turned my stomach in knots," remembers Dan, "but then I thought, 'If I get up and walk out on this person, I'm not doing what God wants.' "

Along with another Emmaus Partner, Dan gets together with this offender at least once every two weeks as well as speaks to him on the phone frequently.

"He's a fellow that's going to need a partner for a long time," says Dan. At the same time, he has learned a great deal from his experience. Once while Dan was offering advice, the offender stopped him. " 'Now you're starting to sound like my father,' he told me."

"It's important not to try to change them but to support them. There are times when I get discouraged, but it's important not to let the discouragement get in the way of the good things," Dan says.

Enthusiasm for peer program

Queensland Department of Corrective services

Townsville Correctional Centre's inmates are driving peer support toward new horizons.

Since the introduction of the peer support program earlier this year, the initiative has quickly expanded, with inmates enthusiastically driving the program into new areas and embracing the subsequent opportunities.

Participants in the program are trained to provide support and immediate referral to professional staff about fellow inmates who may be at risk of self-harm or suicide or who have other issues of concern.

The training, which is conducted over a six-week period, focuses on suicide awareness, reading body language, cultural awareness and the importance of being leaders and role models.

Female participants of the recent program also expressed an interest in family-oriented issues, with their training including topics such as relationships, children, and family dynamics.

Based on a similar program conducted in New South Wales to combat drug and alcohol problems, Townsville has expanded the program further, with peer support inmates becoming spokespeople for the wider prisoner community.

On behalf of their inmates, they bring issues of concern to the attention of staff and also assist in coordinating a range of information gathering opportunities in answer to requests by inmates.

Over 40 external organisations have become involved in the program, regularly visiting the centre to provide information direct to the peer support participants about a range of issues from health and employment, to law and justice topics.

Peer support participants then take the information back to their fellow inmates, generating a cycle of self-help opportunities which can assist inmates upon their release.

The program is proving to be increasing the self-esteem of participants, providing them with leadership skills, and a role of responsibility within the centre which has led to increased optimism and hope about their futures upon their release.

Facilitator of the program Noel O'Brien said inmates had always wanted to help one another, but there had been a limited organised format to assist them achieving it.

"Our program has gone beyond issues of drugs and alcohol to address broader issues which will assist inmates on the outside," he said. "We are looking to establish hope and optimism upon their release with one of the most important factors being the skills they will take back with them to their communities."

A group of indigenous male prisoners were the first to graduate from the program earlier this year, with 12 female inmates from both the secure and low and open custody areas, recently graduating from the women's peer support program.

Non-indigenous male prisoners will soon participate in the third phase of peer support training, completing the support network across all areas of the centre.

Since indigenous male participants put their training into practice during the last few months, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Senior Adviser Ken Wano said feedback from prisoners, staff, and visitors to the centre had been extremely positive.

"Participants are taking their responsibilities very seriously," he said. "The program is utilising the biggest resource of the centre - the prisoners themselves. They can provide support at ground level, providing initial contact with fellow inmates, with professional staff providing additional support. The success of the program is because it is not solely staff driven."

Ken added that the prisoners are the major stakeholders and based on their feedback during the program's consultation period, their areas of interest have been incorporated into the program. "Participants are also gaining tangible benefits from the program when they return to the community, with the program providing them with self-esteem, knowledge, leadership skills and responsibilities," he said.

Carly Wood

New unit opens its closed doors

Queensland Department of Corrective Services

The wraps were taken off the new Maximum Security Unit at the Sir David Longland (SDL) Correctional Centre when it was officially commissioned by Corrective Services Minister Tony McGrady.



A/Deputy Director-General Peter Severin and Minister for Corrective Services Tony McGrady with the commissioning plaque

The \$6.6million centre provides 18 accommodation cells and two detention cells for the management of disruptive or difficult prisoners.

Inmates will be transferred to and from the main prison entrance via a secure vehicle, and will be isolated from the remainder of the centre until they address their offending behaviour.

Personal and legal visitors to the Maximum Security Unit (MSU) will be processed at the centre's general visits area, and then be transferred in a secure prison vehicle.

On officially opening the MSU last month, Mr McGrady said the government was committed to more secure prisons and tough law enforcement.

"I'd rather see this money spent on education, or health. But it's a fact of life that there will always be criminal activity and people who need to be kept behind bars under the strictest supervision," he said. "I think the general public want to be kept safe from criminals and are happy that the government is being tough on crime. However, we must recognise that every person who is imprisoned will one day come out. With this in mind, we must ensure there are programs to support prisoners in making the transition back into society so they can make a productive contribution and not re-offend,"

SDL A/General Manager Lidia Pennington said the prison population had hardened in recent years as community options for less serious offenders had expanded.

"The fact that Sir David Longland needs a Maximum Security Unit after 12 years of operation clearly demonstrates that we receive some difficult cases here," she said.



Custodial Correctional Officer Owen Keinzley keeps a watchful eye on proceedings from the Maximum Security Unit's master control room

"We will have very little choice in the type of people we receive in the MSU. I can say with confidence that staff will do the best they can with the people we receive at Sir David Longland. Staff in the MSU have undergone a comprehensive training program which included the security management systems, departmental procedures and contingencies, x-ray machine, advanced control and restraint, cell relocations, application of restraints, fire systems, breathing apparatus and chemical agents delivery. Following a period of assessment, prisoners entering the MSU will have access to education, recreation, and counseling in accordance with their individual management plans."

While accommodated in the MSU, prisoners will also have the opportunity to progress to an area that allows greater interaction with other prisoners in the unit.

"SDL received the first prisoners the day after the commissioning and is now fully operational," Ms Pennington said.

by Karen Crook

New drug helps to combat alcoholism

Queensland Department of Corrective Services



Clinical nurse Yvonne McRoberts has just completed what is believed to be the first programmed use of campral within corrective services, helping an inmate begin the process of overcoming

Upon being released from prison on previous alcoholism occasions a 36-year-old WORC inmate suffering from alcoholism admitted he would usually have headed to the pub.

However, after a recent short-term sentence which included participation in a new drug program combatting alcoholism, the same prisoner has left WORC telling his supervising clinical nurse his first stop was to purchase a sweater he'd seen in a catalogue.

Clinical nurse Yvonne McRoberts, based at the WORC program headquarters at Wacol, Brisbane, said it was a small, positive step which would hopefully lead to the prisoner breaking a 13 year cycle of intermittent drink-driving related sentences.

The man is believed to have been the first inmate to participate in the campral program.

A relatively new drug to the market, campral works by reducing the craving for alcohol through a complex series of actions involving the brain's central neurotransmitters.

Clinical trials have indicated campral proved its efficacy when used as an adjunct to counselling, prolonging periods of abstinence and, if people did return to alcohol use, they tended to drink less.

The recommended period of treatment is 12 months and should be maintained even if the patient relapses. Complete abstinence is the ultimate goal.

While in a correctional facility the department meets the costs of the drug, and upon their release, program participants can obtain prescriptions at a reasonable cost from any general practitioner.

Yvonne said the WORC prisoner was identified as a chronic alcoholic who had been in jail intermittently for the past 13 years.

"He had been in prison for short periods of time in relation to drink-driving offences and we don't usually get to do programs during such short terms," she said. "I spoke to a psychiatrist and a counsellor and we decided to give him the opportunity to be involved in a campral program to help with his alcohol problem."

A visiting psychiatrist who specialises in drug and alcohol rehabilitation tested the inmate's suitability and an intensive program was subsequently tailored to his needs and conducted during his three-month sentence.

Taken in pill form three times a day, the doses of campral were accompanied by counselling sessions and the establishment of a support network which became active upon his release and includes contacts at Alcoholics Anonymous.

Yvonne said the inmate was initially reluctant to become involved in the program, but become more receptive as counselling progressed.

"As time passed he became more enthusiastic," she said. "I believe it was the first time he had been given a positive alternative to alcohol. He had been in jail for 13 years on and off for drink-driving and the remarkable thing was he had not yet killed anyone. We thought the day would come eventually. We wanted to make an attempt to give him a life after alcohol. Even if we were unsuccessful at least we had given him the opportunity to help himself."

Yvonne added: "The day he left he came to see me and he told me about a \$150 sweater he had seen in a catalogue and how he was on his way to buy it. This was a man who held down a good job and was used to spending \$600 a week on alcohol and who had, upon being released from prison on an earlier occasion, had headed straight to the pub. It was a small, but positive step. I don't think campral has been around long enough to say 'It's fantastic and will be a new wonder drug', but I was happy with the first trial and would consider using it again. It has been amazing to see the change in this man during such a short time. It is now time for him to take responsibility. We gave him the opportunity to change and that's the main thing."

by Carly Wood

Procedures safeguard artwork

Queensland Department of Corrective Services

A new policy and procedure has been developed in relation to the sale and disposal of artwork produced by prisoners.

Policy Support Services Manager Irene Webb said the new policy and procedure would provide a regulated process, which would protect both prisoners and staff.

"The policy and procedures will be implemented as part of the new legislation," Irene said.

"It is intended that the new policy and procedures will assist in the accountability process."

Offender works of art are defined as items produced by, and the property of, inmates. Such items are likely to have been made by the inmate in a hobby, handicraft or art class, in their accommodation cell or in some other space set aside for offender art activities.

"This definition is intended to prevent confusion between works of art, or similar items, that may be made by offenders as part of a prison industry," Irene said.

"Under the new policy, works of art can only be handed out to members of the offender's immediate family, exhibited, sold or donated to an approved organisation or retained by the offender. The intention is to prevent other offenders or staff from purchasing or dealing in works of art produced by offenders. Offenders wanting to sell their art work must follow a set process that requires a valuation, a contract or agreement, and indemnity or insurance against loss or damage. Except for handout to family, no work of art will be allowed to leave a corrective services facility without an agreement."

The purpose of the agreement is to legitimise the removal of works of art from a corrective services facility and to provide a record of who, what and where if required.

Works of art retained by the offender will be placed into the offender's property in compliance with departmental procedures.

"Where artwork is to be retained in the inmate's accommodation, it is essential that it is recorded on the offender's property record following completion to establish ownership should this come into dispute," Irene said.

"Works of art can be donated to approved organisations or people, however each donation must be individually approved. The policy specifies that no one employed by, or associated with, the department or engaged service providers may benefit from the transaction."

As for the disbursement of proceeds from the sale of works of art, the commission will be paid to the selling agent, as agreed per agreement; 20% of the remaining proceeds will go to a central departmental account and the remainder of proceeds will go to the artist, to be held in offender's trust account.

Money raised from the 20% of remaining proceeds will be used by the department to purchase art materials to be used by offenders.

Graffiti busters leave their mark

Queensland Department of Corrective Services

A mobile team of graffiti busters, made of community service workers, have almost halved the incidents of graffiti in the Mackay area and are saving the local council more than \$40,000 a year.

The scheme, which can take up to six offenders at a time, was started about four years ago by Mackay and District Aboriginal and Islander Justice Alternatives Group (MAIJAG) coordinator Jeffrey Lawton.

The project is run in conjunction with the Mackay City Council who supply the offenders with paint, brushes, rollers and even a van.

"Having the van is great," Jeff said. "It means that we are very mobile and can move quickly from one site to another especially if there is something that needs to be fixed urgently. The team will clean-up and paint over just about any graffiti around the town but they mainly focus on Council amenities such as toilet blocks, park benches and community centres which have been vandalised," he said.

"The team members take a lot of pride in their work and they do a good job. It frustrates them a lot when they complete a job only to come back a few days later and find it vandalised again."

Community Corrections Supervisor Peter Cartwright from the Mackay Area Office said about 500 offenders take part in the program each year. While most of these offenders are indigenous, non-indigenous offenders can also join the team.

Jeff said the program has a very high success rate of offenders completing their community service orders.

"Probably one of the reasons for this is the van. Because I can go around and pick the offenders up from their homes each morning and drop them off in the afternoon they have no excuses as to why they can't do their community service."

The team works six to seven hours a day three days a week and according to Jeff the work never seems to dry up.

"We cover a pretty large area as we go up to 60km south and north of Mackay to not only fix up graffiti but to generally clean up parks and beaches throughout the area," Jeff said.

"I am also looking into the possibility of expanding the project by getting the workers to go out to the islands and other beaches to clean them up."

On 30th May this year the ACT Minister for Corrective Services announced that the Government had decided to proceed with the establishment of a comprehensive correctional facility in the ACT. ACT's new correctional centre will cater for remandees, therefore replacing the outdated Belconnen Remand Centre, as well as sentenced prisoners, thereby ending the system of incarcerating ACT sentenced prisoners interstate in NSW prisons.

The facility will house ACT remandees and ACT sentenced prisoners and cater for both men and women. The facility will have a built capacity of 480 beds - 370 beds within perimeter security and 110 beds outside, comprised of 60 beds for transitional release prisoners and 50 beds for periodic detainees. The existing Periodic Detention Centre at Mugga Lane, Symonston, would be closed.

The complex will be of a campus-style development with a range of free-standing buildings including administration, gatehouse, visitor facilities, central facilities including health, kitchen and laundry, and program facilities. Accommodation within perimeter security will consist of two types - secure cell and residential units and the outside perimeter security accommodation will be in the nature of hostel type accommodation.

This is a significant decision for the ACT, not just from a correctional and social policy perspective, but also in terms of ACT capital infrastructure and impacts on the local economy. From a correctional and social policy perspective it represents a real opportunity for the ACT to develop its own prison culture and philosophy, one based on rehabilitation of offenders through the application of an integrated throughcare model involving careful case management and the provision of appropriately targeted programs to address health, behavioural, education and life skills needs.

The Government in announcing its decision in May indicated that the facility would be publicly owned. The estimated capital cost of the facility is in the order of \$110m.

Of course, for a prison the really significant cost factor is its operating cost. As announced in May, the Government is giving further consideration to the operating model.

The ACT Prison Project Office together with its consultants are currently examining the various delivery methodologies for the project. The preferred model at present is to develop specifications for design and construction with these specifications developed to the schematic design stage. This will ultimately lead to the calling of expressions of interest and subsequently tenders for finalisation of design, documentation and construction.

The preferred site for the prison is at Symonston and would occupy approximately 50 hectares of a much larger block originally identified as being suitable for this purpose. The development of a prison on this site is currently the subject of a preliminary assessment study under the provisions of the ACT Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991. The location of the footprint will avoid or be sympathetic with environmental and certain other constraints on the block.

In summary, the ACT believes it has a unique opportunity to establish a correctional centre that caters for all prisoners and remandees, accommodating women, Indigenous persons, the young, the elderly, those with an intellectual or physical disability and those from a culturally diverse background. Particular needs of these groups of prisoners and remandees are being taken into account in the project planning processes.

The ACT is currently assessing best practice in the management of drug offenders and prisoners with substance abuse backgrounds. The needs of these remandees and prisoners are being considered in conjunction with the health administration. The throughcare approach preferred in the ACT will encourage a safe and secure environment supported by health professionals and the necessary education to assist in the rehabilitation process.

Further information on the establishment of ACT's first comprehensive correctional centre has been placed on the ACT Corrective Services web site - www.cs.act.gov.au.