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Report No.



**Report of the Follow-up Inspection of  
Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison  
February 2002**



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR  
OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**Report of the Follow-up Inspection of  
Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison – February 2002**

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# The Inspector's Overview

## THE START OF A REVIVAL

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When we departed from Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison in August 2001, following our Unannounced Inspection, we left behind a raft of matters requiring urgent attention. These were initially identified in the de-brief (transcribed and made available to Head Office within a week or so) and later, more fully, in the Report to Parliament.

The most pleasing thing we discovered in this Follow-up Inspection was that the Department, in its response, had gone beyond our own Recommendations and had tried to ascertain for itself additional problems. In other words, it was doing its own thinking rather than just reactively responding to the Inspectorate's thoughts. This marks a distinct step forward in the relationship of the Department to the Inspectorate – a sign of growing maturity and diminishing defensiveness. The community and the State will derive greater value from the Inspectorate model if the Department maintains this mode of response.

Consequently, our impression is that there is genuine commitment to change – though this still runs far ahead of actual change. This commitment seems stronger when it is considered that the Department's own way of identifying issues was genuinely consultative – not one of its strongest management characteristics in the past. The improvement in staff morale was tangible, though there is still a long history to overcome and a long road to walk.

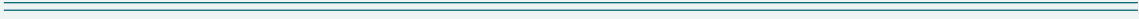
The Report that follows is self-explanatory. It chronicles the good intentions and the achieved changes. It also identifies some other matters requiring attention. The additional recommendations are in the spirit of the original ones and, if implemented, will fortify the philosophy that underpinned the first Report.

In the end, much revolves around the historical neglect of regional prisons generally and those with predominantly Aboriginal populations in particular. Regional neglect in the prisons' business is in a sense symptomatic of much wider-ranging regional neglect. But it is also more than this, with an element of structural racism that cannot be ignored. The present Government's policy platform states that 'prisoners of the same status and classification should have access to the same sort of conditions and services'. Demonstrably, this has not been the case, particularly at the 'Aboriginal prisons'.

A challenge that the Department must confront and meet in the next few years is that of equalising conditions for Aboriginal and also women prisoners. This is one of the criteria by which its performance will be judged.

Richard Harding  
**Inspector of Custodial Services**

*9th May 2002*



# Chapter 1

## THE UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION AND THE CONTEXT OF THE FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION

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1.1 In August 2001 the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services conducted an Unannounced Inspection of the Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison. A series of visits by Inspectorate officers had resulted in a perception that the prison was failing and that immediate action was required to determine the extent of that failure. The Inspection itself found that it was indeed a failing prison, with significant deficits in outcomes for prisoners. At the conclusion of the Inspection, the Inspector advised that he would return in six months' time to determine if the Department were committed to rectifying the identified deficits. The body of this Report thus deals with the findings of the Announced Follow-up Inspection.

### ASSUMPTIONS PRIOR TO THE UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION

- 1.2 The key assumptions that had precipitated the Unannounced Inspection of the Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison and defined the prison as failing were:
- that existing management practices diminished prisoner services;
  - that there were differential conditions for particular groups of prisoners (Aboriginal, women, secure prisoners);
  - that there was a focus on corporate requirements at the expense of good practice in prisoner management; and
  - that the prison was in a poor state of repair with detrimental hygiene conditions.

### WHAT THE UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION FOUND

#### Policy and Operational Compliance

- 1.3 The major deficits identified in the Unannounced Inspection were extensive. The Department of Justice had itself, over an extended period, recognised some of these deficiencies, such as the poor quality of the infrastructure and ongoing staff/management problems. However, successive administrations, both local and central, had failed to take decisive action, with the consequence that the prison had continued to decline. The majority of prisoners accommodated at the prison are Aboriginal, many from outlying remote areas; however, the prison regime in no way reflected this predominance in its management approach. There was very little in the way of carefully thought out and articulated policies to guide the staff and prisoners.
- 1.4 The budget provided to the Superintendent was inadequate, and there was almost no discretionary funding within it. Head Office apparently did not judge the success of the Superintendent and his management team by the quality of services they delivered, but by expenditure, regardless of the outcomes. Requests for additional funding, some of it critical for the successful management of a prison, were ignored. In some instances, allocated funding was actually taken away without consultation or explanation. Senior Head Office staff had regularly visited the prison, most recently only one week prior to our Inspection, yet had failed to identify or demonstrate concern about its obvious failings.

## THE UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION AND THE CONTEXT OF THE FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION

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### The Lack of a Service Focus

- 1.5 There was no clear direction or focus by the prison in the management of its key function, that is, as a releasing prison for predominantly Aboriginal prisoners. The conditions for minimum security prisoners were significantly worse than those provided at an equivalent metropolitan prison, such as Wooroloo or Karnet. Although prisoners at Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison are predominantly classified as minimum security, because the prison also holds a small proportion of prisoners rated at higher security levels, some facilities and services defaulted to those standards appropriate to the higher security ratings. Security was often overt and invasive, and the opportunities for prisoner development minimal.
- 1.6 The prison was identified as being racist, essentially in its outcomes. This was reflected in the low levels of resource allocations and indifference to conditions that would not be tolerated in metropolitan prisons. It was perpetrated at a local level by a lack of commitment by some staff to delivering services consistent with a 'good practice' prison.

### Equity Issues

- 1.7 As well as accommodating the full gamut of security ratings, Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison also manages both male and female prisoners, and prisoners from a diversity of cultural groups. At the time of the Inspection, the prison accommodated local and remote area Aboriginal people, non-Aboriginal Australians and Indonesian prisoners. There was some tension between these groups based to some extent on access to services and various other factors.
- 1.8 Female prisoners were even more disadvantaged than their male counterparts. Fewer activities and services were provided and amenities were even less accessible. Minimal changes to physical barriers would have resulted in a higher standard of amenity.

### Leadership and Staffing

- 1.9 The prison has seen a succession of superintendents and senior staff come and go; Kalgoorlie is not considered to be an attractive posting. The incumbent management team was caught up in the same problems that had bedevilled the prison for the past decade, and like their predecessors had succumbed to survival tactics rather than active leadership.
- 1.10 The staff of the prison included a significant number of new recruits, working on fixed term contracts. Many of these were unhappy about having to live in Kalgoorlie, and viewed the prison as a means of obtaining a permanent job in the metropolitan area. A number of the permanent staff had two jobs; some of these viewed the prison officer role as their 'second job'. This all added up to a culture of 'getting by', rather than active achievement. There were also major rifts within and between the administrative and uniformed staff at a number of levels, which worked to everyone's detriment.



## THE UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION AND THE CONTEXT OF THE FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION

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1.11 There was generally little interaction by staff with prisoners, and what did occur was purely functional. Staff spent an inordinate amount of time performing meaningless tasks, often dictated by inappropriate physical and procedural security arrangements and the demands of an information technology system geared to processes rather than outcomes. Both prisoners and staff appeared resigned to this state of affairs. Nevertheless, in the midst of this, some staff stood out as being innovative, energetic and enjoying their work.

### The Prison and Correctional Purpose

1.12 The decrepit facilities in which prisoners lived and staff worked reflected the indifference shown to the prison by successive administrations. Prisoners and staff considered that they were undervalued; there seemed to be little hope on the horizon; and there was no reward for creativity, innovation or simply doing a good job.

1.13 Correctional purpose was ill defined. There had been little recent investment in offending reduction programs. Those that were operating were confined to basic alcohol and anger management courses, which were questionable as to their suitability for local Aboriginal people. The Release Planning Officer provided some program support, but this came at the expense of her release planning role, which was in itself inadequately resourced. However, there were opportunities with external agencies for program development, though these had not been fully explored.

1.14 Education was of a better standard. Staff members were positive in their outlook, but the service was not extended to significant numbers of prisoners with little else to do. Recreation services were poor and lacked imagination and prisoner input. Peer support services were almost non-existent and Aboriginal Visitor Scheme services were not valued by the prisoners or well supported by the prison.

1.15 The basic standards expected for health and hygiene were lacking. The prison was dirty and gave the appearance of being neglected; for example, holes in cell walls were patched with paper to stop drafts. Prisoners were cold at night, with insufficient heating or blankets.

1.16 Prisoner employment was limited and often questionable in its relevance to external employment opportunities. There were concerns as to the equity of access to Section 94 programs; non-Aboriginal prisoners appeared to be favoured. There were problems in managing the Section 94 programs, and also a need to expand their availability and variety.

1.17 There was general agreement that a new prison was urgently required; however, the location and the priority ranking of that prison had been contentious both within and outside the Department and no definitive action plan had been agreed. There had been some discussion with a limited number of community groups; however, staff had not been involved in these discussions.



# Chapter 2

## THE STATUS OF THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

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- 2.1 At the conclusion of the Unannounced Inspection, the Inspector gave Department officials a thorough briefing in relation to the main findings. This session had been recorded and transcribed, and copies of the transcription sent to the Department. The purpose of this procedure (adopted for the first time at that Inspection but now a standard aspect of inspections) was to give the Department an opportunity to commence addressing some of the main issues in advance of completion of the formal Report. In the event, that Report was tabled in Parliament in December 2001.
- 2.2 In the period following the Unannounced Inspection the Department advised that major changes had been implemented to the prison's infrastructure, its management and its operational philosophies and practices. The Department committed itself to addressing all of the eleven formal Recommendations made in the Inspection Report. The Recommendations and the Department's Action Plan are reproduced in this Report at Appendix 1 (Consolidated Table of Initial and Follow-up Recommendations)<sup>1</sup>. To its credit, by the time of the Follow-up Inspection the Department had gone beyond the issues identified by this Office and developed an 'Issue Management Log'. This document was developed locally in consultation with staff and prisoners and identified areas of service deficit, measures to address them and assigned responsibilities. It was a commendable process; the staff and management were pleased to show the Inspection Team their progress on various issues in the Log.
- 2.3 The Department had allocated \$800,000 to remedy the structural deficits identified in the Inspection Report, and a further \$2m for repairs and infrastructure costs to extend the life expectancy of the prison over the next ten years. There was also a commitment to spend \$10,000 on upgrading the staff offices in each section that accommodated prisoners. However, as the financial allocations had not been approved until 31 January 2002, work had yet to commence by the time of the Follow-up Inspection. Consequently, the Inspection turned into one that focussed not simply, or even primarily, upon changes implemented so far but upon undertakings and processes for achieving future change. This is never entirely satisfactory; even the best intentions can fall short with the passage of time because of shifting priorities and unanticipated contingencies in the actual delivery of necessary services.

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<sup>1</sup> The implementation status of that Action Plan as at February 2002 is also noted in Appendix 1.



# Chapter 3

## THE FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION PROCESS

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### THE INSPECTION PLAN

- 3.1 Since the Unannounced Inspection, there had been frequent communication at various levels between the Inspector's Office, the Department's Head Office and the prison. This enabled the Inspectorate to provide input into the Department's development of the various plans for improving the Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison.
- 3.2 Prior to the commencement of the Follow-up Inspection, the Department had committed itself to making changes to the philosophy, practice and structure of the prison. Documentation was requested from the Department to determine the actual extent of these undertakings. Each of the previously identified issues and commensurate recommendations were reviewed in the context of documentation received to determine current status.
- 3.3 The Department's Director of Regional Prisons had taken personal responsibility for ensuring that there were sustainable changes at the prison, which would positively impact on services for prisoners. This was appropriate in light of the Inspector's view that Eastern Goldfields Prison had been a monument to correctional failure. After many years of neglect, its claim to adequate funding and support was of the highest priority.
- 3.4 Despite the resignation of the incumbent Superintendent shortly after the completion of the Unannounced Inspection of Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison, it would be unfortunate to ascribe blame disproportionately to the holder of that office at the time. In reality, failure as profound as that at Eastern Goldfields is never attributable to one individual. In fact, the culpability for the prison's condition at the time of the Unannounced Inspection extended across the corporate structure and back through successive administrations, both local and at Head Office. For many years, superintendents had not received the support that would have enabled them to succeed in managing the prison. The Department sent a number of senior prison administrators to the prison following the departure of the Superintendent to provide management leadership until the new Superintendent was appointed. That this was not done previously was unfortunate, but credit is due nevertheless for these efforts.
- 3.5 Immediately prior to the Follow-up Inspection the Department had also sent its own internal review team to gauge progress. While noting that there were still substantial issues outstanding, the Department's report identified that progress was steady and seemed to be achieving designated milestones. It should be noted that the report chose to focus on local rather than corporate issues.

### THE FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION

- 3.6 The Inspection Plan for the Follow-up Inspection endeavoured to take account of the foregoing issues. During the two-day Inspection staff, prisoners and representatives from external agencies were interviewed to ensure that all who wished had the opportunity to present their issues to the Inspection Team. It was helpful that a number of the prisoners who were in the prison at the time of the Unannounced Inspection were still in the prison when the Inspectorate returned. This provided an excellent opportunity to gauge the extent of progress made to create an environment for significant reform. Extensive interviews and focus group discussions were held. Equally, staff perceptions and reactions were crucial, and widespread consultations took place.



# Chapter 4

## CURRENT PRACTICES AT EASTERN GOLDFIELDS REGIONAL PRISON

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- 4.1 The purpose of the Follow-up Inspection was to identify what changes had been made and whether those changes were sufficient and implemented in a way that is sustainable. At the time of the Follow-up Inspection the prison had a population of 84 prisoners, a significant reduction from the 113 on the first day of the Unannounced Inspection. This is consistent with the general decline in the Western Australian prison population.
- 4.2 The critical test of whether a prison is failing or succeeding lies in the daily experiences of those who live and work at the prison. Staff and prisoner experiences in a successful prison should, to a certain extent, mirror each other. If conditions for prisoners are humane and just, then staff can generally expect that they will be working in a less stressful and more positive environment, and vice versa.

### SERVICES AND FACILITIES IMPACTING ON PRISONERS

- 4.3 Since the Unannounced Inspection, prison life for the prisoners at Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison has certainly improved. This process began shortly after the final day of the Unannounced Inspection, when the Department purchased 200 new blankets to replace the threadbare current issue. We spoke to one ex-prisoner from the Central Desert region who had read the Report of the Unannounced Inspection and who returned to the prison during the Inspection in order to share his experiences with us. During a walk around the prison with the Follow-Up Inspection Team, he conferred extensively with friends still in custody. His assessment at the end of the visit was that the treatment and conditions for prisoners had improved since the time the Inspectorate had conducted the Unannounced Inspection.
- 4.4 The improvements to the prison were immediately noticeable as the Inspection Team drove up to the front entrance on the first day of the Inspection. The prison had been extensively painted and there were prisoners working in the front gardens. Both internal and external walls had murals painted on them, and most were of Aboriginal design. Although we are well aware that a coat of paint can only conceal physical not moral decay, nevertheless the work seemed to represent a genuine sense of purpose for both prisoners and staff.



*Presenting a fresh exterior*

### Classification of Prisoners

- 4.5 The appropriate classification of prisoners is an important tool for successfully managing prisoners through their sentence and for minimising future risk to the community. However, prisoners should wherever possible, be retained near their own communities in order to maintain their wellbeing and to maximise their chances of successful community reintegration by maintaining essential family and

social ties. For these reasons, there needs to be some flexibility in the classification system. However, superintendents only have limited discretion in this area. This issue was contentious during the Unannounced Inspection, as maximum security prisoners who were residents of the region and were being held at the prison, preferred to be there, yet knew that they would be held in substandard conditions; on the other hand, there was always the likelihood of being transferred out (often at short notice) to a designated maximum or medium security prison some considerable distance from the Goldfields.

- 4.6 Prisoners retained at the prison and likely to be affected by this system were at first reluctant to offer information to us, as they believed local management discretion could be jeopardised. Subject to clear overriding security considerations, it would be detrimental to prisoner welfare if Head Office over-ride this practice. One remand class prisoner informed us that on previous terms of imprisonment he had been classified at either maximum or medium security and sent down to Perth. On this occasion, he has been rated minimum (an unusual practice for remand prisoners) and was able to remain in the locality.
- 4.7 On speaking with the managers of the prison, as well as to remand and sentenced prisoners, it is reasonable to conclude that the local management attempts to retain prisoners at the facility at every opportunity. However, exercising this flexibility will become increasingly difficult as the requirement to fill Acacia Prison becomes more compelling for the Department. Pressure may mount to classify 'borderline' prisoners as medium rather than minimum, so they can be sent to Acacia to meet contractual population requirements. This fear was already being expressed by some prisoners.

### Physical and Procedural Changes

- 4.8 Since the Unannounced Inspection there have been incremental changes to the physical and procedural environment. A symbolic feature of this was that the security fence surrounding the Aboriginal Meeting Place had been removed, thus enabling easier access. The Superintendent indicated that the management was looking at an alternative additional site for a meeting place, but that a decision would only be made with input from the prisoners.

### Female Section

- 4.9 Unlike the male section, which has discrete maximum and minimum sections, the female area is a 'one size fits all' unit. This effectively means that minimum security female prisoners are held under almost the same conditions as maximum prisoners. Apart from being poor custodial practice, this is not conducive to prisoners being given opportunities to prepare for release into the community. While changes to the



*Welcome changes through landscaping*



women's accommodation and day areas have yet to take place, there have been welcome changes to increase outdoor amenity and, importantly, the women's ease of access to other areas of the prison. More changes to the women's regime have yet to occur and the situation will be monitored.

- 4.10 The internal fence in the recreational yard has been removed; this has opened the yard and given it a more spacious appearance. The yard has been landscaped, a BBQ installed, and some of the area has been covered by sailcloth. With the removal of the fence, prisoners who were outdoors during the day are able to find shade under the veranda and not be either confined indoors or bake in the oppressive sun.
- 4.11 Other structural and procedural changes now allowed female (and maximum security male) prisoners to walk to the visits or education facilities without being restrained in handcuffs. These changes have also freed up a staff member who would otherwise have been detailed to enter the female area and handcuff and escort prisoners.
- 4.12 There are nevertheless still concerns with several aspects. Recreation activities are poor, particularly access to the oval, which depends entirely upon the availability of the Recreation Officer. Another limitation is the fact that the women are locked in their cells when the officer leaves for meetings. Indeed, there is quite frequently a period of a couple of hours in the middle of the day when prisoners are locked into cells. This seems to be an unnecessary infringement upon the routine operational regimes.

#### Male Maximum Section

- 4.13 At the time of the Unannounced Inspection, the conditions for both staff and prisoners in the maximum security male section were oppressive and the atmosphere tense. Some prisoners had been held for months in this section without access to outside grassed areas. This was of particular concern to this Office. Although no work had commenced on the construction of the proposed external exercise areas, the section had been painted and extensive work had been carried out upgrading its cleanliness. Both exercise yards have been painted and cleaned up, with doors being placed on the toilets. Hand basins have also been installed in the yards near the toilets. The library was at least now open to prisoners. However, progress was otherwise minimal in that the holdings consisted predominantly of old worn-out books of marginal relevance or interest to the prison population. The kitchen and cell areas were clean. Staff and prisoners both stated that there was still a problem with cockroaches, but it was not as severe<sup>2</sup>. Although there is much to be done in this section, work has commenced to improve the physical conditions.
- 4.14 The staff office remains cramped and claustrophobic and is not conducive to safe working practices. It is a matter of some regret that the funding package has reduced funds that would have improved staff physical conditions. In many respects staff felt isolated, vulnerable and at risk, which is not conducive to encouraging positive interaction with prisoners.

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<sup>2</sup> The source of the problem had been discovered a few days before our arrival, and the process of rectification had just been commenced.

- 4.15 Despite the physical improvements, life for prisoners in this section is almost devoid of stimulation. There is access to education once a week, something many prisoners looked forward to. Apart from this there is remarkably little purposeful activity for these prisoners.

#### Male Minimum Section

- 4.16 The male minimum security section was identified in the Unannounced Inspection as a depressing and dirty place. However, there has been considerable effort made to improve the hygiene, cleanliness and ambience of the section. The garden areas had been landscaped by prisoners. Passageways and cells were clean, and adequate bedding was evident throughout the section. Repairs to cell walls and furniture had been completed.



*View of the Minimum Security Section*

#### Regimes, Incentives and Privileges

- 4.17 The regimes in different units are still prejudiced by the structural deficiencies at the prison. The necessary improvements to the regime within the male maximum section cannot be implemented until the external security yards are in place. However, there are developed plans for this to occur. Female prisoners continue to receive restricted access to the oval area because of staffing constraints. We were advised that it is difficult to arrange a rotational basis that would allow alternate days for use of such facilities. This would not seem to be an insuperable problem.
- 4.18 The Superintendent indicated that approval has been sought to change the regime of the prison so as to allow male minimum prisoners to remain unlocked until 10.00 p.m. Although this is a positive development, it again raises the question that is similar to that at Broome Regional Prison: why are female prisoners not included in such positive actions? It was stated that, due to the female section possibly holding either maximum or medium prisoners, a late lock up cannot occur as additional staffing levels would be necessary for security reasons<sup>3</sup>. This explanation seems to confuse the level of security risk posed by the women. The problem does not appear insurmountable. A partial, technological solution, that at least would allow women access to their yard, would be to attach sensor wire to the surrounding roof area, as at Casuarina.
- 4.19 There are better employment opportunities at the prison now, and incentives have increased with the introduction of an upgraded gratuity profile. Consequently, there are enhanced opportunities to purchase canteen items and improve the prisoners' lifestyles.

<sup>3</sup> Our Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison (April 2002) threw up parallel arguments in support of greater access to facilities and privileges for women prisoners. The assumptions relating to what is an acceptable regime for women prisoners are deeply rooted in the culture of Department of Justice regional prisons.

### Unit Management

4.20 There is evidence of an improved commitment to unit management. Meetings are being held on a regular basis, and outcomes are documented. A number of issues raised by prisoners were noted as being successfully addressed. However, there are still considerable gaps evident and there needs to be more focus on demonstrating to staff that unit management is not an imposition; rather, it represents a repertoire of interpersonal skills that will assist them in managing their work responsibilities.

### Preparation for Release

4.21 Release planning in regional prisons is much more difficult than in the metropolitan area. Prisons are often expected to overcome the neglect perpetrated over decades by Government inactivity in health, education, housing and employment in remote Aboriginal communities. While it is unrealistic to expect that all of this can be overcome from a prison setting, there is still much that can be done if staff are motivated and trained and there are realistic expectations. Creating safer communities involves, amongst other things, encouraging prisoners towards law-abiding lifestyles and developing skills that enable them to be productive members of society.

4.22 Preparation for release covers a range of defined prison activities, such as education and correctional programs, as well as other less clearly defined ones, such as prisoners' interactions with staff so as to develop models for pro-social behaviours. Performance in these important areas has gone backwards since the Unannounced Inspection. Funding has been significantly reduced, and the dedicated Release Planning Officer previously located at the prison has been replaced by a Community Justice Services Officer, who visits only once a week. Prisoners were not fully aware of these changes and there was some confusion about access to the Community Justice Services Officer. Uniformed staff were also often unsure of the correct release planning processes. Many prisoners complained about their confusion and the lack of assistance from the point of view of securing parole, home leave, work release, and so on.

### Employment and Section 94 Work

4.23 From the employment profile and observations during the Follow-up Inspection, it appears that work opportunities at the prison have increased. Most prisoners appeared to be actively and purposefully occupied. There was plenty of refurbishment work being carried out, and it was encouraging to observe that many Aboriginal prisoners were part of work teams and developing vocational skills.

4.24 There has also been an increase in the number of prisoners who leave the prison on the Section 94 program. However, one impediment to successfully managing the program is the lack of resources. For example, the bus used for transporting prisoners is unreliable, and there have been difficulties in securing a consistent, dedicated Section 94 officer. Nevertheless, the number and variety of Section 94 projects was pleasing. On the two days of the Follow-up Inspection, various groups were observed heading out on work projects. One party of Aboriginal prisoners was heading for as far afield as Coolgardie.

- 4.25 A number of work locations were visited and discussions held with participants. The local police station had a female Aboriginal prisoner working there who, though apparently happy to be out of the prison, was performing work that was essentially demeaning. There are a lack of options for female prisoners in terms of Section 94 work, and the Department needs to raise its horizons beyond demeaning work such as cleaning out police cells that often are soiled with urine and/or vomit.
- 4.26 Three prisoners were engaged in the upkeep of a local park. They all agreed that they enjoyed the work and often received compliments from visitors to the park. These compliments gave them a sense of achievement and a sense that they were important to the community.
- 4.27 One important project – the Loop Line railway project – was in abeyance. At the time of our initial Inspection, it had been the only project functioning effectively. Section 94 projects require an immense amount of planning, and a commitment to an effective working relationship with project providers is crucial. At other prisons, not just Eastern Goldfields, this Office has gained the impression that the administrative and resource needs of Section 94 officers and programs is not fully understood by management.

#### Correctional Programs and Education

- 4.28 There remains a deficiency of dedicated offender treatment programs, for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal prisoners. This program deficit is a complex issue in relation to traditional Aboriginal men and women prisoners from remote communities. Appropriate programs need to be developed for people with limited English language skills, and that are in accord with needs and values different from the mainstream norm. Ideally, programs in prison would include release support at the community level when prisoners eventually return to their homelands. Effective and sustainable programs require planning, commitment and resources to be successful.
- 4.29 Education services for prisoners are adequate but constrained by funding, which was reduced by \$19,000 this financial year. At the time of the Follow-up Inspection there were four full-time students enrolled at the Education Centre, which has one full time and three part-time staff. Students participate in basic literacy and numeracy, and as at other prisons, some vocational training where prisoners can receive accreditation upon completion of their courses.
- 4.30 A group of five students (three Aboriginal, two non-Aboriginal) was interviewed regarding their experiences of the educational service. Their responses reflected a positive attitude to the education centre. The two who ultimately would return to remote localities appreciated the chance to learn more about art and hoped to apply their knowledge on release.



*A positive approach to education*

### Prisoner Safety

4.31 There was remarkably little discussion or evidence from prisoners to indicate that bullying, intimidation or self harm were major issues in the prison. In this respect the prison appears to be managing effectively. However, with regard to race-related disharmony, which was clearly evident at the Unannounced Inspection and evidence of which is still apparent, long term sustainable strategies must be developed and set in place as a priority.

### Health Services

4.32 It was evident from the Follow-up Inspection that two important issues documented in the Unannounced Inspection Report have been acted upon. The examination area in the main clinic was now fitted with an appropriate screen to allow for privacy and, we were advised that Health Services staff are no longer involved in strip searches of prisoners.

4.33 However, it was of concern to find that the small clinic room located in the maximum area is still being used for clinical examinations. The use of this room actually contravenes Local Order No. 49 – ‘Escorting procedures for maximum and medium security prisoners’ – and should be discontinued as it is unsuitable for this purpose.

4.34 As highlighted in the Unannounced Inspection, only basic medical equipment was available. A defibrillator needs to be available in the clinic and oxy-vivas need to be located in each of the units. Not only does this equipment need to be accessible, both health and custodial staff need to be trained in its use. Both of these items are available in models that can be used by simple step-by-step instructions. The Department should purchase this equipment and institute necessary training.

4.35 The Medical Director of the Aboriginal Medical Service (Bega Garnbirringu Health Service), has stated that the Service is able to supply a doctor and Aboriginal Health Workers to the prison, if agreement can be reached on a comprehensive service and appropriate remuneration. The Inspector was advised that the Department had not yet attempted to negotiate a contract with the Service.

4.36 Another significant unresolved health issue is that no arrangements have been made to secure formal psychiatric sessions from the Health Department. Without psychiatric assessments by qualified practitioners, and counselling for prisoners with psychiatric issues and disorders, the mental health needs of prisoners clearly are not met.

4.37 There is still no provision made to meet the dietary requirements of diabetes.

### POLICY AND PRACTICE IN ACTION

4.38 During the Unannounced Inspection the prison’s lack of adherence to written policies and procedures was noticeable. The new matrix of Director General’s Rules, Standing Orders and Local Orders introduced in late 2001 now provides a sound conceptual, as well as pragmatic, basis for local practice.

4.39 The appointment of positions in the prison’s management structure is the next facet that needs to be stabilised. The movement of acting superintendents in and out of the prison has had a destabilising

effect, with any strategic direction and leadership being provided by the Department's Director Regional Prisons in Head Office. The longer the process drags on, the more difficult it will be to maintain the current, long-distance arrangement. The selection of the new Superintendent is therefore critical in enabling the prison to fully establish its ethos and direction. It should be said that Eastern Goldfields would be an ideal prison for the Department to appoint its first Aboriginal Superintendent. Before the position is advertised, the Department should give thought to the possibility of laterally recruiting an appropriate person.

- 4.40 The local senior officers have not previously seen themselves as leaders or managers of change; yet their assumption of this role would be an important factor for the prison to maintain its forward impetus. They must be developed as middle managers, with the capacity to initiate and incorporate reforms within their areas of responsibility. Past history was still a powerful operating force for some of these officers. This will continue to be a difficult issue for the Department to resolve and manage effectively

### STAFF ISSUES

- 4.41 A feature of the Unannounced Inspection had been the inertia of the staff. They lacked motivation, many did not want to be at the prison, and there were significant rifts. Some of these seemed to be personal; others were apparently based on allegiances and value systems associated with traditional prison officer culture. On the Follow-up Inspection staff generally appeared more relaxed and the atmosphere less charged. However, it is clear that more work in this area needs to be undertaken.
- 4.42 Work has begun to address probably the most significant staffing issue, that of staff not wanting to be at the prison and seeing it as a staging point on the way to the metropolitan area. The Department stated that it is working on an incentive package to encourage staff to remain in the region. This is an overdue but commendable initiative and needs to be progressed urgently.
- 4.43 However, more also needs to be done to recruit locally. The contrast is striking between the Eastern Goldfields Prison and the southern prisons of Albany and Bunbury, in terms of local staffing and a very settled environment that results from this approach. Staff at the southern prisons are mainly locals who want to be there and have a positive investment in making the prison successful. Any incentive package must contain critical elements such as local recruiting, an investment in staff development and, a Departmental commitment to a 'best practice prison' if it is to be successful.
- 4.44 At the time of this Inspection, there was an Acting Superintendent who had been in Kalgoorlie for three months and was enjoying a period of positive support. However, this support for him, or rather his successor as Acting Superintendent<sup>4</sup>, may be transitory as many of the staff problems are long standing and have persisted under various regimes. As noted in the Unannounced Inspection Report, the industrial and management issues were key factors that had led to the prison becoming dysfunctional and crisis driven.

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<sup>4</sup> He left the prison the week after this Inspection was completed.

THE PRISON'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ITS COMMUNITY AND ITS FUTURE

- 4.45 The local community is well aware of the prison's presence. The prison is reasonably well located on the outskirts of Boulder. Visitors experience few difficulties getting to the prison; transport and other services are in close proximity, as are current and potential work locations; and the neighbours are far enough from the prison not to cause either party any concern. The prison has a good relationship with a number of community agencies such as the Salvation Army, who are involved with the activities of the prison. However, more could be done. This in some ways is reflective of the continuous turnover of superintendents that has occurred over the past five years. Once the permanent new Superintendent is installed, it would be productive to establish a stronger involvement with a variety of community agencies, in order to better establish the prison as an important institution of the town.
- 4.46 As part of the Follow-up Inspection, a meeting was held with representatives of the Coolgardie Shire Council, at their request, to discuss this Office's view that Coolgardie was not a suitable option for the location of a new replacement prison for the region<sup>5</sup>. The Shire's representatives were advised that the Inspector is not the decision-making authority for a new prison, but will, along with other bodies, provide advice when requested as to an appropriate location and design. It was reiterated that Coolgardie is not appropriate because of its isolation from the services available in Kalgoorlie as well as from the majority of families, friends and other important groups who provide support to prisoners.
- 4.47 The Inspector reiterates his view that proper consideration should be given to the possibility of re-developing the existing site and adjacent available land when the time comes to conceptualise and construct a new prison or complex of correctional facilities in the Eastern Goldfields. Community links are crucial for the success of regional prisons and now that these are being consolidated, it would seem needlessly wasteful to discard them unless some clearly better alternative is available. None of the other eight locations that have been assessed in a preliminary way is superior to the current location.

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<sup>5</sup> See *Report of an Unannounced Inspection of Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison 2001*, page 8.





# Chapter 5

## MAINTAINING THE MOMENTUM: SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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5.1 A promising start has been made to planning and commencing a significant change program for the prison. The following improvements were noteworthy:

- improved hygiene throughout;
- the replacement of worn out bedding;
- an improvement in the quality of clothing issued to prisoners;
- the start of the cell refurbishment program, including painting cupboards and shelves, putting in new shelves, and installing modesty doors on toilets;
- the external painting of the prison, which has improved its facade from the street and elsewhere and is giving an appropriate message about an important community institution and facility;
- the refurbishment of various outdoor areas;
- more equitable distribution of work opportunities, so that Aboriginal prisoners are not excluded, as they previously were, from the more desirable jobs;
- the development of an orientation booklet and video;
- the enhancement of Section 94 programs;
- the revival of the fading Peer Support Group, and an enhanced role for the Prisoner Support Officer;
- the expansion of the education programs and an apparent increase in staff available to deliver correctional programs;
- the delivery of a cultural awareness training module to a wide cross section of staff; and,
- the projected extension of out-of-cell hours for male minimum security prisoners.

5.2 Change is in the air, therefore. However, there is a considerable amount still to be done. The continuation of this momentum will require motivation and support at both a local and an executive level. The following areas were identified during the Inspection as still requiring considerable work.

### MALE MAXIMUM SECURITY SECTION

5.3 The Department had agreed with this Office's proposal to open up the Unit to fresh air. Unfortunately, because the funding package was not signed off until 31 January 2002, this had not yet occurred, and as a consequence there is still a lot of frustration and services are still well below an acceptable standard. The main complaint of prisoners remains that of utter boredom. It is important to emphasise that, even if the area is opened up, much still needs to be done in terms of improving access to services such as education, correctional programs, and outdoor recreation. Creative ways must be examined which will encourage staff to interact more with these prisoners in ways that will enhance their case management.

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## THE FEMALE SECTION

5.4 The removal of some barrier grilles and the refurbishment of the garden area represent much needed improvements in the women's section. Maximum security women prisoners can now access other areas of the prison without being mechanically restrained. The Department needs to constantly monitor the conditions in which female prisoners in regional prisons are held, as the default to the highest level of security appears to have become an automatic response for managing women in prison.

5.5 Finally, late lock up, which is an excellent move for male minimum prisoners, may be denied to the minimum security female group whenever a maximum security female prisoner is accommodated in the area. This is yet another example of discriminatory practices that disadvantage women prisoners. The Department must commit itself to achieving equality of regimes, including lock-up times.



*Shaded barbeque area*

## RELEASE PLANNING

5.6 The termination of the arrangement whereby the Community Justice Services Division of the Department shared the cost of this position with the Programs Directorate of Prison Services has been very unfortunate. The alternative arrangement, whereby a parole officer comes in from the Kalgoorlie Office one day a week, is not working effectively. Prisoners are not getting the information, support or programs required to successfully make the transition into the community. The Department should reverse this decision. Eastern Goldfields is a regional releasing prison and as such should have its own dedicated Release Planning Officer.

5.7 At a local level, more could be done by way of linking the local Community Justice Services Office into the prison. Community Justice Services have excellent relations with many of the remote communities and, while there is a reasonable local relationship between the two Departmental Divisions, a closer relationship would have positive benefits for prisoners in terms of release planning. This would demonstrate the Department's commitment to seamless through-care in the management of offenders.

5.8 At executive level, the Department of Justice needs to become more involved in the inter-departmental regional planning issues to ensure that the planning for government services is conducive to maintaining Aboriginal people in a self-sufficient, meaningful life-style. The value of planning for release is marginal if the person is released to an impoverished community, with no viable options. Importantly, much more needs to be done at an inter-departmental level to ensure that the work done inside prison is in fact supported, particularly in the return to remote communities. If there are inadequate infrastructure, education, employment and social support

networks, then a prisoner's return to his or her community is likely to be a short one. The Department can commence by at least recording and representing these deficits to other arms of government services. As it stands, this obligation falls to offenders and their families.

#### SECTION 94 ACTIVITIES

- 5.9 The increase in Section 94 activity is a laudable achievement. However, the program as a whole has not yet settled down, and some of the projects have questionable value. While there is always a value simply in getting the prisoners out of the prison, Section 94 work should ideally also involve some degree of skilling and the work should be meaningful.
- 5.10 Clean-up work is acceptable when it is cleaning up for communities. That provides the proper reparation objective, and it is inherently meaningful. However, cleaning up police cells is not appropriate Section 94 work. This work is also carried out by prisoners at Broome and Derby. In each of these places the work is demeaning because of its nature, which not infrequently includes cleaning up vomit, urine or excreta. It is also inappropriate because the workers at these locations are almost invariably Aboriginal; the history of Police/Aboriginal relations in Western Australia is such that Aboriginals should not be placed in a servile and structurally unequal relationship with another arm of the State, the police. The Department of Justice should consider, as a matter of policy, taking police work off the list of Section 94 programs.

#### HEALTH SERVICES

- 5.11 The aspects of prisoner health services that concerned this Office previously have not improved sufficiently. At the time of the Unannounced Inspection, the contract to deliver health services was not achieving an acceptable and culturally appropriate standard. Alternative arrangements for health service delivery into the prison must be made as a matter of urgency. Bega Garnbirringu is the primary group that the Department should negotiate with. That agency can provide a comprehensive range of services including GP services – as well as services that are essential for prisoner health and well being, such as health promotion and health education services. It was our impression that no serious and committed attempt has been made to negotiate a full suite of health services.



*Sparse health facilities*

#### CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMS

- 5.12 Programs at regional prisons, and more particularly at Eastern Goldfields, are very much dependent upon the availability of qualified service providers. This has been an ongoing problem for the

Department, unnecessarily exacerbated, as mentioned above, by the recent termination of arrangements to employ a prison-based Release Planning Officer. It is essential that, as a releasing prison, Eastern Goldfields has access to appropriate program providers and that programs, such as treatment for violence and substance abuse, should be on offer. Equally important is that these programs are culturally appropriate. All such programs should be evaluated and continually monitored – a matter in relation to which the Department must improve its performance generally. The Department also needs to review its strategy for placing programs staff in regional areas to ensure that there is continuity of service delivery; the cycle of losing staff, looking for replacements, developing them for correctional programs and then losing them again means that programs continue to run on an ad-hoc basis.

#### RECREATION

5.13 An important problem with recreation is that there does not appear to be an effective back-up system for the Recreation Officer. On paper there is a structured program, but the focus is a rather passive one – walking the oval is typically one of the activities. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that recreation only happens ten days out of fourteen, because of the lack of back-up. Recreation programs should typically be a rich mix of individual and group activities including opportunities for organised team sport. At present, they are not adequately resourced and supported at the prison.

#### STAFF APPRAISALS

5.14 On its Inspections, the Inspectorate has found on occasion that there are two or three officers who do not conform to the standards and expectations of the prison service. These people always cause a degree of consternation out of all proportion to their numbers. As reported previously, this prison has two or three officers whose attitudes and behaviours can only be described as racist. Prisoners, as well as other staff, constantly complain about them; it is discouraging to the many good staff to see poorly performing colleagues continue to flout prescribed standards of behaviour with no sanctions or repercussions. These officers should be getting stronger guidance and leadership from senior officers and management. The formal system of staff appraisal, which is not operative in this prison (nor in most others), needs to be re-activated.

#### STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

5.15 The increased involvement by staff in the Cultural Awareness Program is welcome. However, there still seems to be undue attention given to security, restraints and related training in comparison to other more interactive and development-focussed training<sup>6</sup>. The requirement for security and restraints training is obvious and proper; it gives people confidence in the way they do their own

<sup>6</sup> Department of Justice training is dominated by the requirements of Worksafe orders. Historically, these date from the period following the Casuarina Riot of December 1998. Thus, custody and control training dominate the other aspects of the four cornerstones – care and wellbeing, rehabilitation and reparation – whilst middle management development training is almost non-existent. The Department is involved in negotiations to try to reduce the dominance of Worksafe-focussed training. However, even though this matter is beyond its direct control, more resources should nevertheless be allocated so as to balance up training programs across the spectrum of needs and activities.

jobs. However, this is predominantly a minimum security prison and the training is misplaced in comparison to the risks and needs of the prison. Staff generally indicated that they would welcome the opportunity to develop their interpersonal and management skills.

#### SHIFT COVERING

5.16 Numerous complaints were received about service reductions brought about through the apparent inability to cover shifts. In a prison with a small overall workforce, one or two absences can have quite profound knock-on effects. For example, to cover the absence of a Section 94 officer, someone may be taken out of the minimum security section or the women's unit, at which point any further absence to cover whatever contingency would leave the remaining staff with little capacity to deliver scheduled services. Whilst the complex industrial agreement significantly contributes towards this situation, it is nevertheless incumbent on the Department to review and secure the necessary coverage of sufficient positions to deliver scheduled services.

#### STAFF INCENTIVES AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT

5.17 Along with Roebourne, Eastern Goldfields is a prison where there are tangible disadvantages for staff. This is because of the cost of living and other factors such as the need and expense of maintaining contact with families who chose to remain in the metropolitan area, because moving to those particular locations is unappealing. Moves by the Department towards an incentive package for people in some regional prisons as part of the Department's Prison Improvement Program are welcome. However, it must be said that this issue has been on the agenda, without resolution, for far too long. Personnel have become sceptical as to whether the vague undertakings will ever translate into practical realities. Morale has suffered as a consequence. There is no doubt that, if an incentives package were implemented, it would be a very positive contribution to the running of the prison.

5.18 Staff are also concerned about their physical work conditions, and it is acknowledged that efforts are being made to improve these conditions. Transportables, or dongas, are being converted into additional office space, but nevertheless this is still a relatively underprivileged workforce.

#### IN CONCLUSION

5.19 Attention has been drawn to eleven matters that are still of concern to the Inspector. The tabling of this Report does not indicate that the issues identified in this and the previous Unannounced Inspection Report have been resolved. The Department and the prison are making progress in addressing the identified issues. However, there is still a long way to go. The Inspector will continue to closely monitor the activities in the prison in order to assist it to become a functioning regional prison providing quality services consistent with those expected of a 'good practice' metropolitan releasing prison.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.20 It is evident from this Report that the rehabilitation of Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison is very much 'work-in-progress'. Whilst the Inspector, and probably the Department itself, would prefer that change and improvement could be brought about more rapidly, it is nevertheless understandable that these things take time. For this reason, the overarching Recommendation of this Report focuses on the continuation of efforts to implement the previous recommendations, setting a target date for practical completion – 30 June 2003 – that permits the Department a further full financial year to allocate the necessary financial and human resources. After that date, there should be no excuses.
- 5.21 That is not to say that the Inspector will not be keeping an eye on the prison in the meantime. The Department and local management can be assured that there will be regular liaison visits. The Department's own schedule of service reviews should also take account of the proposed schedule for practical completion, and for that reason another Recommendation is that such a review be carried out no later than 30 June 2003.
- 5.22 The detailed Recommendations are set out below, and also for convenience will be found in the Consolidated Table of Initial and Follow-up Recommendations (Appendix 1). They are as follows:
1. That the Department of Justice continues to work towards full implementation of the Recommendations made in the Report upon the Unannounced Inspection, with a view to completing this process by 30th June 2003.
  2. That the Management Team at Eastern Goldfields be stabilised as soon as possible by substantive appointments, and that a genuine effort be made to appoint and support a qualified Aboriginal person as part of that management team.
  3. That the notion of a Regional Incentives Package appropriate to the legitimate and special needs of employees working in the public sector in the Goldfields be energetically pursued and implemented.
  4. That a staff appraisal system be activated and that effective shift-covering arrangements be introduced, as part of a general review of HR issues at the Prison.
  5. That lock-up times for women be equitable with those for men, and in particular that a 10.00 p.m. lock-up should become the norm.
  6. That the Department should negotiate in good faith with the local Aboriginal Medical Service with a view to introducing an integrated health service into the Prison.
  7. That, noting that Eastern Goldfields is above all a minimum-security releasing prison, the position of on-site Release Planning Officer be restored and that, generally, the Department strengthen the links between the Prison Services Directorate and the Community Justices Services Directorate with a view to improving throughcare for prisoners who are released from the Prison.
  8. That work at the local police station should be discontinued as a Section 94 activity and that this be adopted as a state-wide policy.

5.23 In August 2001 Eastern Goldfields epitomised all that is deplorable about imprisonment policy and prison administration in Australian society. Implementation of the initial and the follow-up recommendations would take us back towards reclaiming some decency and dignity. The indications are that the Department of Justice shares this view, and this will become fully apparent over the next year.

# Appendix 1

## CONSOLIDATED TABLE OF INITIAL AND FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

Previous Inspection Recommendation	Department of Justice Response in Action Plan
<p>1. That the Department develops:</p> <p>a. A plan for the future operations of Eastern Goldfields Prison that is underpinned by the philosophies espoused in this Report for a prison that serves a local, mainly Aboriginal, mainly minimum security population, and that is in accord with a clear definition of the role and purpose of a regional prison.</p> <p>b. A working blueprint and associated timetable for the urgent systematic reform of the prison in accordance with that plan.</p>	<p>A full review of the approach to regional imprisonment is being developed by the Department. In addition for this prison:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 12 month strategic plan with an accountability matrix has been developed;</li> <li>• A full investigation has been completed to address the role and definition of the security within this prison;</li> <li>• A full business plan has been developed for the prison; and</li> <li>• An issue management log was drawn up within days of the Inspection that has responsibility and time frames for delivery attached.</li> </ul>
<p>2. That the Department addresses the reform of the prison at two levels.</p> <p>a. At the level of ideology and theory with regard to best practice in management.</p> <p>b. At the practical and local levels as outlined in detail in this Report, taking particular note of the approach to security and the revisions to the plan of the prison submitted by the Inspector to the Department.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p>
<p>3. That the Department develop and sustain a leadership role in relation to the prison. Such a role should include guidance and support for the Superintendent and his senior management, the institution of sound human rights and correctional values at the local level, and improved staffing arrangements. The staffing issue should also address incentives for local service, resolution of the uncertainty surrounding the position of contract staff; and, exploration of whether the distortions to service that arise out of 12-hour shift arrangements can be ameliorated.</p>	<p>Directors have been in constant contact and have made regular trips to EGRP to assist with implementation of changes. These have included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A consultative workshop with all staff to identify issues and solutions. Staff responded well to the opportunity to make a difference and have since set about implementing their recommendations.</li> <li>2. The Prison Peer Support Group was extensively interviewed. This group has now been revitalised and empowered to assist with the reforms including increased participation in the induction and orientation of new prisoners, grievance processes and meetings with management.</li> <li>3. Human resources has conducted interviews with all staff to address their concerns with permanency, regional incentives and shifts.</li> <li>4. A full communication audit is underway to identify standards and channels of communication.</li> </ol>



CONSOLIDATED TABLE OF INITIAL AND FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

Current Status of the Previous Inspection Recommendations	Further Recommendations	Current Status
<p>There has been progress made on this recommendation. The Department has worked hard at developing short and medium term strategies for creating a better prison. If these are translated into meaningful changes for prisoners and staff then the Department will have a prison that begins to achieve acceptable standards.</p> <p>However, these strategies still lack the authority of a comprehensive endorsement by the Department backed by a guaranteed resource commitment.</p>	<p>That the Department continues to look towards full implementation, with a view to completing this process by 30th June 2003.</p>	<p>Agree. The Department of Justice is committed to strategies previously agreed upon.</p>
<p>The reform of the prison is progressing, albeit at a slow pace. While practical steps are evident and can be measured, the same cannot yet be said for a change in ideology and theory. The installation of a new superintendent and the stabilisation of the management team should enable the momentum of reform to pick up pace.</p>	<p>That the management team be stabilised as soon as possible; that a genuine attempt be made to appoint and support a qualified Aboriginal person to the management team.</p>	<p>Interviews for the position of Superintendent have been conducted and will be filled at the earliest possible time.</p> <p>The Department is striving to include an Indigenous staff member at EGRP at a senior management level.</p>
<p>The Department has made a positive start to providing “corporate” leadership to the prison. However there is still a leadership vacuum as the new superintendent is still to be appointed.</p>	<p>That the notion of an incentives package be energetically pursued and implemented; that a staff appraisal system be activated; that effective shift covering arrangements be introduced; and that the general human resource issues at the prison be addressed.</p>	<p>Remote Areas Incentives Strategies are progressing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A communication strategy is currently being developed.</li> <li>• Information packages are being prepared.</li> <li>• Options for a staff appraisal system are being examined.</li> </ul>

CONSOLIDATED TABLE OF INITIAL AND FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

Previous Inspection Recommendation	Department of Justice Response in Action Plan
<p>4. That the conditions, services and opportunities for women prisoners, minimum security men (especially Aboriginal men) and secure men be addressed in line with the directions outlined in the body of this Report. In relation to each group and in a way that befits the context, reforms should aim for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Access and opportunity that is not discriminatory on the grounds of race or gender;</li> <li>b. Levels of security that are not unnecessarily or unfairly restrictive, and that are not imposed for reasons of gender;</li> <li>c. Decent, clean, hygienic accommodation that is climatically appropriate and well ventilated;</li> <li>d. Improved access to appropriate health care, recreation, education, treatment programs, work and intra-prison visits, especially for women and secure prisoners.</li> </ul>	<p>A review has been undertaken of the security arrangements, policies and procedures in place at the prison.</p> <p>Structured and procedural changes are being made to open up areas and provide more access to program and recreation areas for all.</p> <p>All accommodation units are being stripped out, repaired and painted. All bedding and mattresses have been replaced. Ablutions are being tiled and plumbing repaired.</p> <p>Prison Officer's duties have been updated and responsibilities allocated for ensuring hygiene cleanliness standards are maintained.</p> <p>The Department is aware of health problems for Aboriginal prisoners and recognises the importance of Aboriginal health representation. We intend encouraging Bega Garnbirringu (Aboriginal Medical Service) to tender for the prison health services.</p> <p>Increased recreation facilities and opportunities are being created especially for female and maximum security.</p>

CONSOLIDATED TABLE OF INITIAL AND FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

Current Status of the Previous Inspection Recommendations	Further Recommendations	Current Status
<p>This recommendation aims to redress the inequalities inherent in the prison that led to the prison being described as a racist prison. For this to happen the positive changes which the Department is currently making must not be seen as the end product but rather as a stepping stone to changing the basic culture of the prison. Such a culture would see prisoners taking on more responsibility and decision making to better prepare them for their life upon release.</p> <p>An essential feature to ensure that this recommendation is fully put into operation is that an appropriate grievance process is fully operational. To date this has not happened and until it does prisoners will not have an appropriate mechanism through which to raise their concerns about their conditions, services and opportunities.</p>	<p>That lock-up times for women prisoners be equitable with those for men; and in particular that a 10pm lock-up becomes the norm.</p>	<p>Currently in the process of implementing a 10pm lock-up for women. This practice will be in place in the immediate future.</p> <p>The Department of Justice Grievance process has been operational since December 2001 at Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison.</p>

CONSOLIDATED TABLE OF INITIAL AND FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

Previous Inspection Recommendation	Department of Justice Response in Action Plan
<p>5. That the level of security in the prison in both its material and procedural forms be re-assessed in line with the concept of the prison serving what is, for the most part, a minimum security population.</p>	<p>Agreed. However due to severe structural restraints imposed by the poor design of the prison the Department is limited as to how much physical change can take place</p>
<p>6. That the roles and functions of health and security be formally and operationally recognised as discrete and requests for female clinic staff or premises to be involved in strip searches cease forthwith.</p>	<p>Completed.</p>
<p>7. That prison officers receive training that fits them as front-line agents in the comprehensive custodial care of prisoners. This includes consciousness raising that attunes them to the need for, and values appropriate to, a role that balances the requirements of the four cornerstones. It also includes training to fit them for working with Aboriginal prisoners.</p>	<p>Training will be reviewed.</p>

CONSOLIDATED TABLE OF INITIAL AND FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

Current Status of the Previous Inspection Recommendations	Further Recommendations	Current Status
<p>There has been progress made on this recommendation with considerable work still to be done. Conceptually the Department has to develop a strategic approach that incorporates the Government's belief that "prisoners of the same status and classification should have access to the same sort of conditions and services".</p>	<p>That the Department continues to work towards full implementation with a view to completing the process by 30th June 2003.</p>	<p>Currently expenditure proposed for EGRP includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male Maximum Security Cells Internal Repairs and Refurbishment</li> <li>• Interview, Multi-Function, Cleaner's Rooms, Dayroom Kitchen area</li> <li>• Male Maximum Security External Exercise Facility</li> <li>• Female Section Internal Repairs and Refurbishment</li> <li>• Laundry Improvements, Dayroom Kitchen area</li> <li>• Male Minimum Internal Repairs and Refurbishment</li> <li>• Female and Male Programs Rooms</li> <li>• Male Reception minor Repairs</li> <li>• Male Peer Support &amp; Interview Rooms</li> <li>• Maximum Security Visits Improvements</li> <li>• Staff LCO's minor Repairs</li> <li>• Main Control Office Repairs and Improvements</li> <li>• Corridor Grillage Interlocking and Re-configuration</li> <li>• Kitchen minor Repairs.</li> </ul>
<p>The separation of these functions appears to have been appropriately managed.</p>	<p>The Department must negotiate in good faith with the local Aboriginal Medical Service with a view to bringing an integrated health service into the prison.</p>	<p>The Department is continuing to negotiate for the provision of Aboriginal Medical Services at EGRP.</p>
<p>There is still no clear practical demonstration by the Department as to its commitment to this Recommendation.</p>	<p>That the Department continues to work towards full implementation with a view to completing the process by 30th June 2003.</p>	<p>The Department has embarked upon extensive regional specific Cross-Cultural Training. It is the intention of the Department to provide staff with extensive ISTP training.</p>

## CONSOLIDATED TABLE OF INITIAL AND FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

Previous Inspection Recommendation	Department of Justice Response in Action Plan
8. That the Department pursue a comprehensive, targeted and timely reform agenda for Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison that is independent of any possible plans to build a new prison in the region.	The Department has allocated \$800,000 to remedy the conditions at the prison.
9. That nevertheless facility planning for Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison should be commenced as a matter of urgency. All options, in particular that of optimising the utilisation of present and adjacent sites should be fully considered, as should a graduated or incremental replacement building program. This planning process must proceed within a genuinely consultative framework, and should be informed by the substance of this Report.	Wide ranging consultation and research is proceeding to determine the most appropriate solution for managing offenders in regional and remote communities, including this region.
10. That the detailed recommendations made in this Report should also be taken up and implemented as appropriate, in particular those relating to the need to continue the appointment of the Release Planning Officer, the need for more and more appropriate treatment programs, the desirability of improving access to funerals, the need for making the Arunta phone system prisoner focussed, the need to increase Section 94 work and recreational activities and, the need to increase Departmental expenditure on education.	All of the points made in the Report are being detailed and appropriately addressed within current budget restraints. Other issues identified through a number of internal audits have also been included in the implementation plan.
11. The Department should ensure that its system of compliance audits or service reviews are particularly active in relation to Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison until such time as an acceptable standard of service and performance has been attained.	This is being carried out.

CONSOLIDATED TABLE OF INITIAL AND FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

Current Status of the Previous Inspection Recommendations	Further Recommendations	Current Status
<p>This recommendation is proceeding satisfactorily.</p>	<p>That the Department continues to work towards full implementation with the view to completing the process by 30th June 2003.</p>	<p>As per recommendation 5.</p>
<p>There is limited progress to date on this recommendation.</p>	<p>That this planning process now be commenced.</p>	<p>Current research in the Kimberley and stakeholder consultations is providing a model for similar research in the Goldfields. Goldfields representatives are included in this planning committee.</p>
<p>The detailed recommendations relating to improved services in treatment programs, recreation, education etc are still to be realised. Given the reducing budget allocations to individual prisons, service improvements which require additional funding are unlikely to be supported in this year's budget. However, other improvements, such as improved access to Section 94 work, which should not require additional funding are yet to be fully realised.</p>	<p>That the position of on-site Release Planning Officer be restored. Generally that the Department strengthen the links and co-operation between the Prison Services Directorate and the Community Justice Services Directorate in the context of the needs of the Eastern Goldfields as a releasing prison. That work at police stations be discontinued as a Section 94 activity; and that the Department continues to work towards full implementation of the previous detailed recommendations, with a view to completing this process by 30th June 2003.</p>	<p>The functions of a release planning officer are still being undertaken by Community Justice Services in conjunction with prison staff. The close proximity of the CJS office to the prison enables an officer to attend frequently and as required.</p> <p>Prisoners assigned under Section 94 to the police station work in the gardens and do general maintenance duties and are not required to conduct demeaning duties, such as the cleaning of toilets.</p>
<p>Although the Department has completed one service review of the prison it is still too early to conclude that this is part of an ongoing systemic approach.</p>	<p>That the Department undertakes a compliance audit no later than 30 June 2003.</p>	<p>Agree. The Department will undertake a compliance audit of Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison before June 2003.</p>

## Appendix 2

### COMPOSITION OF THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Professor Richard Harding	Inspector of Custodial Services
Peter Upton-Davis	Senior Inspections Officer
Jocelyn Jones	Senior Research Officer
Marie Chatwin	Inspections Officer
Gareth Morris	Department of Justice*

\* Gareth Morris had been seconded to the Office for a year. At the request of the Department of Justice, this secondment came to an end a short time before the Follow-up Inspection, even though originally it had been intended that he would still be with this Office at that time. Because of his close involvement with the original Unannounced Inspection and the planning of this Follow-up Inspection, the Inspector requested that the Office could “borrow his services back” for a few days.











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