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OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES

REPORT OF AN ANNOUNCED INSPECTION
OF BUNBURY REGIONAL PRISON



Report of an Announced Inspection of
Bunbury Regional Prison

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The Inspector's Overview

The previous inspection in 2002 highlighted the promising opportunities emerging for Bunbury Prison, given its overall good performance and the pace of development and growth in the broader regional community context. The Overview to that inspection set out the conditions expected by my Office for all regional prisons – essentially that they should be ‘full service’ prisons with the capacity to cater for the full range of prisoners that they accommodated. It was hoped that Bunbury Prison, on account of its relative stability, could move at a faster rate to pilot the associated operational initiatives to meet the criteria for a more autonomous regional custodial management strategy. These points were reinforced in Report 30, The Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody.

The event of 16th March 2005 was a significant set back for the prison. The deep sorrow felt for the victim of this event affected the people, processes and performance of the prison and reverberated across the entire correctional system. It was central to the decision of Government to inquire into the then Department of Justice (Mahoney Inquiry) and to establish the Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody by my Office. These exceptional circumstances necessitated special considerations for the planning and on-site phase of the 2005 inspection.

The key finding of this inspection is that Bunbury Prison was in a very fragile state but that the past good work of the prison was manifest in strong and enduring prisoner/staff relationships. Dynamic security plays an essential part in the management of custodial institutions, but the concept is not yet sufficiently developed in Western Australia. Interactive management is essential in providing a safe and secure environment. There is a need for Head Office to take all reasonable and appropriate measures at Bunbury Prison and elsewhere with regard to improved staff integration, better training and stronger systems development. Deficiencies in human resources planning and management that have plagued the Department as a whole for many years were starkly revealed in the aftermath of the 16th March event. A targeted and sustained restorative plan should now be established to guide the development and progress to meet current and future challenges.

Bunbury Prison is a good prison with excellent future prospects. The new Department of Corrective Services has accepted each of the recommendations that we have made arising out of this inspection. If implementation of these recommendations now occurs on the ground in a committed way and at an energetic rate, the Prison can achieve excellent levels of performance.

Richard Harding
Inspector of Custodial Services
May 2006.

Chapter 1

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES: THE INSPECTION OF BUNBURY REGIONAL PRISON

THE EVENTS OF 2005 AND THE IMPACT ON THE SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION

- 1.1 The inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison was scheduled to occur in December 2005 in accordance with the regular three-year cycle of inspections consistent with the Inspector's statutory obligations.¹ A number of traumatic events that occurred in 2005 caused the Inspector to question the prudence of proceeding with the planned inspection. Perhaps most publicly prominent was the event of 16 March when the longstanding and highly respected Manager of Education Services was taken hostage and seriously assaulted by a prisoner ('the March incident'). Then in August a senior member of the uniformed staff unfortunately took his own life. While the reasons for this act were undoubtedly complex, he had been directly involved in managing the March incident and had consistent contact with the prisoner involved. This was a third blow to everyone at Bunbury Regional Prison: earlier in the year (February) another uniformed staff member had been the victim of an assault by a prisoner and many staff were involved in the subsequent very serious self-harming event by that prisoner.
- 1.2 A number of concerns surrounded the question whether to proceed with the inspection. The events of 2005 inevitably had some impact on the 'normal' operations of the prison, and it was uncertain whether the inspection team would see a fair reflection of the prison at a time when it was still recovering from these critical events. The impact that any scrutiny may have on the wellbeing of individuals at Bunbury was also considered an important factor, as was the desire for the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services ('the Office') to be sensitive to the healing process for all those involved.
- 1.3 A number of steps were therefore taken to determine whether the inspection should go ahead as planned. Conversations were conducted with the local management at the prison and head office to ascertain its preparedness for the inspection process. A senior Department of Justice ('the Department')² manager who had recently spent some time at Bunbury, but was not personally connected to the prison, was also asked for his assessment. The Inspector conducted a visit to Bunbury Regional Prison to discuss the inspection with management and the Office's Bunbury liaison officer conducted a visit and discussed the issue with a number of staff and prisoners.
- 1.4 These enquiries revealed that while there was a great deal of fragility in the prison, it was perhaps in some ways an opportune time for an inspection, albeit one with a particular focus. It was determined that the inspection would focus on the staff of Bunbury Regional Prison – the impact of the incidents of 2005 on the staff, the departmental systems and processes in place for managing critical incidents, the recovery of the prison, and whether the events had impacted on the ability of staff to deliver services to prisoners. It is not the purpose of this Report to examine the events of March 2005: this has been done by others and does not need to be revisited. Rather its purpose is to review the systems that are in

1 *Inspector of Custodial Services Act 2003 (WA)* s 19.

2 In February 2006 the Department of Justice was restructured and split into two departments. Prisons, juvenile detention centres and community justice services are now within the Department of Corrective Services. Some other custodial services have been relocated to the new Department of the Attorney General.

place to respond to the needs of those affected by the tragic events to assess whether the quality of prisoner services had been adequately maintained in the wake of the March incident.

METHODOLOGY

- 1.5 Having decided to proceed with the inspection, an assessment was made whether to employ the standard Office inspection methodology or whether it was more appropriate (given the circumstances and particular focus of the inspection) to somewhat alter the approach. In particular, it was necessary to consider how to assess the impact of the incidents on staff and how to best capture the information important to them.
- 1.6 Documentation was requested from the Department to allow the Office to conduct a desktop analysis of a number of areas of service delivery at Bunbury Regional Prison. The Department and Bunbury Regional Prison management also provided a briefing to the inspection team prior to the inspection detailing how they believed the recommendations of the previous inspections had been addressed, the performance achievements and the perceived challenges. All of this was consistent with standard inspection methodology.
- 1.7 A pre-inspection site visit was also conducted to carry out surveys with prisoners regarding services at the prison and how the events of 2005 had impacted on them. However, unlike previous inspections, a decision was made not to distribute surveys to staff. The reasons for this were that the complexity of the issues likely to be raised by staff and the very sensitive nature of the issues to be discussed did not lend themselves easily or appropriately to a written survey instrument. Instead, a letter was distributed to all staff members making them aware that the inspection would be conducted in December and that their views would be actively sought by a series of focus groups and individual interviews. Staff were also invited to write to the Inspector if there were any issues they would specifically like to raise prior to the inspection.
- 1.8 The inspection commenced on Sunday 11 December and concluded on Friday 16 December 2005. In the aftermath of the events of 2005 the prison had experienced a number of occasions on which it was crowded with 'outsiders' conducting reviews and endeavouring to assess required changes in response to the events. The Office therefore conducted the inspection with a slightly smaller team than usual to attempt to minimise the impact of another group of 'outsiders' descending on the prison. Due to the specific focus of the inspection, a human resources expert inspector was included in the team to bring additional skills in the area of management of staff relations and the management of serious incidents in the workplace.
- 1.9 While the inspection focused primarily on staff issues, prisoner issues were not ignored. Bunbury Regional Prison traditionally has shown strong performance in the delivery of services to prisoners and it was also important for this inspection to explore what, if any, impact the incidents had had on the delivery of those services. Some members of the inspection team were therefore dedicated to a review of access to prisoner services and the relationship between prisoners and staff.

DEMOGRAPHICS: BUNBURY REGIONAL PRISON AT THE TIME OF THE INSPECTION

- 1.10 On Monday 12 December 2005 Bunbury Regional Prison accommodated 184 prisoners, a higher number than found at the time of the last inspection. Of these 184 prisoners only 29 prisoners were Aboriginal (16%), making Bunbury a prison with one of the smallest proportion of Aboriginal prisoners in the state. This raises particular issues for the Aboriginal prisoners accommodated there, which will be explored in Chapter Three.
- 1.11 Bunbury is not designed to accommodate maximum-security prisoners on a long-term basis, but does so for short-term stays for the purposes of court appearances or visits. There were no maximum-security prisoners accommodated at the time of the inspection, with 75 per cent of prisoners being classified as medium-security and 25 per cent minimum-security. All medium-security prisoners are accommodated within the secure perimeter of the prison in either the standard accommodation of C block, overflow of this area in the maximum-security cells or in the self-care units.
- 1.12 In the past Bunbury had been used to accommodate a large proportion of sex offenders in its population due to its non-tolerance of bullying and the ability to mainstream all prisoners regardless of their offending history. This has always been a good achievement of the prison. One of the reasons traditionally identified for its success in this endeavour was the ratio maintained between sex offenders and other prisoners. It had generally been thought that a critical mass of 40 to 50 per cent ratio of sex offenders kept them safe. With the opening of Acacia Prison the number of sex offenders at Bunbury had fallen and at the time of the 2005 inspection only 30 per cent of prisoners (56 individuals) were sex offenders. Meanwhile, the number of violent offenders had increased significantly (95 prisoners or 52%). Despite this, the prison has managed to maintain its safe environment, an achievement for which it should be commended.
- 1.13 A significant change in the prisoner demographic since the time of the last inspection is the increase in the number of prisoners that hail from the local area. About 50 per cent of prisoners were identified as having their usual place of residence in the south-west of the state, allowing them to maintain important family and community contacts for support upon release. Despite this, there is still a large number of prisoners from the area who are not accommodated at Bunbury: because they are classified maximum-security and cannot be accommodated; because there is insufficient bed space; or because they are female and there is no suitable accommodation available. These shortcomings were discussed in the Office's *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody*,³ which recommended that Bunbury must become a truly regional prison and be able to accommodate the large number of prisoners that naturally come within its catchment.

3 Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS), *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody*, Report No. 30 (November 2005).

THE 2002 INSPECTION FINDINGS

1.14 The overall standard of services found at Bunbury Regional Prison in 2002 was of a good quality and the prison was found to be performing well. Nine recommendations were made in the inspection report⁴ relating to a range of areas that would further improve services to prisoners. Specifically the Office recommended that:

- the range of treatment programs be expanded so prisoners could fulfil Individual Management Plan requirements without having to be transferred to other prisons;
- staff training be improved;
- local providers for specialist health care services to prisoners be secured;
- better integration of work, education and training for prisoners be achieved;
- equity of access to services for Aboriginal prisoners be improved;
- services for minimum-security prisoners, including Section 94 opportunities, be improved;
- the facilities and operating conditions for social visits be improved;
- staff be provided with better support; and
- more focus be applied to Bunbury fulfilling its role as a local prison.

1.15 While the focus of this inspection was on the management of the recovery of the prison from the traumatic events of 2005, the issue of the extent to which the recommendations contained in the 2002 report were addressed remained relevant and were encompassed in the examination of the delivery of services to prisoners. The degree of progress made towards addressing the recommendations will be examined throughout the body of this Report.

4 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison – December 2002*, Report No. 16 (June 2003).

Chapter 2

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT, STAFF WELFARE AND THE RESPONSE TO THE INCIDENTS OF 2005

- 2.1 One of the primary objectives of this inspection was to assess to what extent the prison and the staff had recovered from the events of 2005, and in particular the March incident. To this end, a great deal of time was spent speaking with and listening to staff, whatever their role at the prison. At the time of the inspection the prison had an approved full-time equivalent (FTE) uniformed staff⁵ of 105, but only 97 of those positions were filled. In addition the prison had permanent staff in the health centre, prisoner counselling service (including psychologists) and education centre. Group meetings were conducted with each staff group, as well as meetings with individual staff during the course of the inspection.
- 2.2 This chapter will examine the Department's response to the incidents of 2005, in particular the systems and processes in place to manage critical incidents. While serious incidents such as the March incident do not occur often in the prison environment they are, unfortunately, possible and difficult to predict. It would seem fundamental that there is a systemic response to react to such incidents of violence or loss to meet the needs of those involved. This is more than a security or operational response; it is directed towards the wellbeing of those involved. An outline of appropriate critical incident management and trauma response will be provided, followed by an examination of the response by the Department in the case of the March incident and how staff felt about that response.
- 2.3 The staffing issues found during the inspection extended much further than just those related to the March incident. Issues that had been raised during the previous inspection remained, as well as other newly identified matters. Staffing issues identified in the 2002 inspection report⁶ included:
- dissatisfaction with head office human resources practices;
 - lack of ongoing performance appraisal and management;
 - bullying and intimidation (of a number of staff, but particularly of females) by a small number of employees; and
 - limited access to, and questionable relevance of, professional development training.

The events of 2005 exacerbated the anger and bitterness that these problems had caused for staff and the response from staff during the inspection reflected this. This chapter will therefore also examine general issues related to staffing at the prison that must be addressed to ensure that staff are retained and the generally good performance of the prison is maintained.

5 This includes management, administration, all grades of uniformed officers and vocational training officers.

6 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison – December 2002*, Report No. 16 (June 2003) ch 6.

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT: SOME THEORETICAL ISSUES

Trauma management⁷

- 2.4 Significant traumatic events (such as the March incident) typically produce an anxiety response that could temporarily overwhelm staff's ability to cope. This is not a reflection on the staff at Bunbury Regional Prison or their ability to cope, but a normal human response to significant trauma. Importantly, despite the likelihood of initially being overwhelmed, most people move towards regaining a coping state fairly rapidly and many move through a traumatic experience with little long-term impact. This is achieved by adopting a range of coping mechanisms that allow individuals to successfully deal with the emotional, psychological and physiological anxiety symptoms arising from the trauma. Each coping mechanism fulfils a need and has a purpose, and once that need or purpose has been dealt with, most are discarded or replaced until such a time as the emotional, psychological and physiological symptoms have abated.⁸
- 2.5 Individual coping mechanisms broadly fall into four categories: physiological, behavioural, cognitive, and systemic or procedural. The coping mechanism used tends to change as the person progresses beyond the traumatised state. Unfortunately, coping mechanisms can become maladaptive and harmful when retained for too long or when they are generalised to situations where their use is not appropriate.⁹ It is important to note that although coping mechanisms may become maladaptive, they can still serve a coping purpose for the individual. However, maladaptive coping mechanisms are nonetheless destructive because they tend to become self-perpetuating by supporting the individual on one level while keeping them in a state of trauma on another. Phobic responses are the strongest examples of this, where the coping mechanisms essentially maintain the phobia rather than allowing the individual to move beyond a state of fear.
- 2.6 Because individuals and systems move rapidly to a state of coping, finding accurate markers to assess levels of trauma can be problematic. For example, using the fact that staff appear to be getting on with their jobs as a marker for a successful transition out of a traumatised state, may not provide a true reflection of the individual's state of mind. Just because the mechanisms currently used to cope enable that person to get on with their job does not mean that they are not maladaptive or highly prone to becoming maladaptive. As a result, the coping mechanisms used at both the individual and systems levels need to be monitored and assessed to see if they are still appropriate and are delivering an overall desirable outcome.
- 2.7 For example, following the December 1998 riot at Casuarina Prison some staff members became more rigid in their approach to prisoners and tended to classify a range of activities

7 The following section relies on the work in the areas of post-traumatic stress and critical incident management by practitioners such as Marshal and Dodson.

8 Mellman et al., 'Phenomenology and Course of Psychiatric Disorders Associated with Combat-related Post-traumatic Stress Disorder' (1992) 149 *American Journal of Psychiatry* 1568–1574.

9 Bremner et al., 'Chronic PTSD in Vietnam Combat Veterans: Course of illness and substance abuse' (1996) 153 *American Journal of Psychiatry* 369–375.

and situations as security-related that had not previously been classified as such.¹⁰ These are examples of good, protective short-term coping mechanisms that if well handled become a positive focus on standards, record-keeping and consistency in management (advanced coping mechanisms). But if poorly handled, the same response could lead to excessive rigidity over an ever-growing range of situations and the institutionalisation of a state of fear. Unfortunately the two inspections of Casuarina Prison conducted by this Office have found the latter to be the case.¹¹ Similarly, at the systems and procedures level, the focus on static security through segmentation, barrier monitoring and fortressing¹² was an understandable short-term approach to enable the system to settle after the riot and to reduce the need for extensive individual coping strategies. Again, in Casuarina's case, these measures were retained beyond their initial utility, resulting in staff disengagement from prisoners.¹³ This situation was not helped by the lack of support for staff through training and development in gaining or regaining competencies in working closely with prisoners.¹⁴

Standard trauma intervention regime¹⁵

- 2.8 Good practice in dealing with traumatic events is to address both the individuals and the systems involved. This should happen in a planned and purposeful manner with progression through primary, secondary and tertiary interventions.
- 2.9 The intent of the primary response (which should occur within 24 hours of the incident or event) is to:
- ensure the safety of those involved: that individuals are not placing themselves or others at undue risk; and that staff leaving the situation are monitored, have somewhere to go, do not drive themselves, and have someone aware of the situation at home;
 - reduce the stimulation by removing individuals from the situation as soon as practicable; and
 - assess if the system is sufficiently robust to cope without external supports.

This requires a timely and accurate identification of those involved in an incident and those likely to be traumatised, including those not on-site. It also requires an objective assessment of the functioning and resilience of the individuals and systems (such as management and command structures) in place and the ability to bring additional support to bear if required. While not necessarily requiring staff with specialist skills in trauma management, the provision of a primary response requires suitably trained individuals, not directly involved in the management of the critical incident, to be in attendance and working with local management.

10 *The Report of Inquiry into the Incident at Casuarina Prison on 25th December 1998* (Smith Report); Carter KW, 'The Casuarina Prison Riot: official discourse or appreciative inquiry?' (2001) 12(3) *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*.

11 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Casuarina Prison - October 2001*, Report No. 11 (October 2002) [2.54], [2.60] and [3.48]–[3.53]; OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Casuarina Prison August 2004*, Report No. 28 (June 2005) [3.6]–[3.12].

12 *The Report of Inquiry into the Incident at Casuarina Prison on 25th December 1998* (Smith Report).

13 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Casuarina Prison August 2004*, Report No. 28 (June 2005) [3.6]–[3.12].

14 *Ibid.*

15 The following intervention model owes its theoretical base to the work of Judith Herman and its practical application to the efforts of the Health and Safety Executive in the UK determining best practice models for workplace critical incident interventions.

2.10 The purpose of the secondary response is to:

- provide or enhance simple individual coping mechanisms by which the majority of staff will move out of their traumatised state;
- identify, assess and monitor those staff who are not coping;
- try a range of systemic or procedural initiatives to assist those not coping – establishing a timeframe for review and markers for success; and
- monitor systemic or procedural initiatives for their appropriateness and ongoing utility.

This requires a comprehensive assessment of the individuals and systems in place and the promotion of a range of coping mechanisms with known utility and durability to maladaptation. It requires specialists with experience working with the resources in place.

2.11 Finally, the purpose of a tertiary response is to:

- *Identify and manage those with maladaptive coping.* Most staff at this stage will have implemented sufficient coping mechanisms to enable them to successfully move out of their traumatised state; However, for various reasons some staff will not have made a successful transition.
- *Ensure ongoing monitoring of systems and procedural change.* Systems also require careful planning to progress them to a positively adaptive state, with the understanding that a healthy, robust system would generally be able to be reset over time and not require ongoing intervention. The more dysfunctional the system was prior to the incident, the more and longer the intervention is likely to be required.

2.12 In the primary phase of intervention the focus is very much on the safety of the individuals involved, in the secondary phase the focus moves to promoting coping of individuals and ensuring that systems approaches are in place to achieve this, and in the tertiary phase the focus is largely on these systems approaches with attention paid to individuals who remain traumatised.

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE MARCH INCIDENT

2.13 Using the primary, secondary and tertiary model described above, the Department's response to the needs of their staff arising from the March incident will be reviewed. Information was sought from the Department regarding the response to the incident and discussions were held with head office and on-site management.

Primary response

2.14 In managing the impact of the incident on staff, the Department took a number of immediate steps that comprised their primary trauma response.

- Local management established a command centre and prisoners were required to return to their cells where they were locked down.
- When the police arrived, the prison retained its command centre but the police assumed control of the incident.

- General Manager Public Prisons and Special Services Branch were notified and a joint command centre was established at Perth head office with a representative from WA Police.
- At the request of the Director of Regional and Rural Prisons a retired departmental psychologist with credibility in the custodial setting and well known to long-term staff ('the incident psychologist') was contracted as a staff support measure. He arrived on site at 8.00 pm on the evening of the incident. He was asked to do whatever possible to 'keep things on the rails' and was offered as much support as he felt was required.
- Members of the local prison officer support team were present during the incident.
- Arrangements were made to PRIME to attend the prison that evening.
- A representative from the prison's management team and a prison social worker went to the home of the staff member who was the victim of the incident and offered support to the family.
- A debriefing of staff involved in the incident occurred that evening at 11.00 pm following the release of the victim and apprehension of the prisoner involved in the incident.

Secondary response

2.15 Over the following months, the Department implemented a number of individual-focused initiatives that comprised their secondary trauma response.

- The Department has a contract with a private counselling service (PRIME) for staff members and their families to access up to six counselling sessions per incident. Post-trauma counselling was made available to all staff and their families at Bunbury Prison via a PRIME affiliate based in Bunbury. During the inspection, the Department stated that for this incident, the six-session limit had been removed; however, PRIME told the inspection team they were unaware of this.
- In addition, PRIME was contracted (again through their local affiliate) to provide additional on-site counselling in the two weeks following the March incident.
- The Community and Public Sector Union/Civil Service Association offered to pay for any counselling required by its members that was not covered by the Department.
- The incident psychologist was retained for limited one-to-one counselling and to identify staff requiring assistance and channel them to the counselling offered by PRIME. The brief given at that time was to talk to every staff member, to gain awareness of how they were coping and inform them of their support options. This was prioritised to enable those directly involved to be assessed first, followed by the remainder of staff.
- Pastoral care representatives from the prison made themselves available to staff.
- A prison-wide staff meeting was held on 30 March 2005, where local management and the incident psychologist attempted to identify those staff still requiring assistance and to encourage staff to share their feelings.
- A similar meeting with education centre staff was conducted the following day.

- A subsequent prison-wide staff meeting – again coordinated by local management and the incident psychologist – was held in October as a consequence of the suicide of a member of staff.

2.16 The Department also implemented a number of systemic initiatives in the secondary response phase.

- The prison asked one of their staff psychologists to develop and deliver training in grooming to staff. The Department has subsequently asked that this training be delivered in all of its prisons.
- Pamphlets on post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms and management options were also developed locally by this psychologist and distributed into the unit offices.
- Changes were made to procedures and to the physical structure of some offices and rooms throughout the prison to improve staff safety. As part of this, custodial staff began escorting non-custodial staff around the prison.
- Mobile duress alarms were issued to all non-uniformed staff and civilian contractors entering the prison.

Tertiary response

2.17 At the time of the inspection, the Department had implemented a number of initiatives that comprise their tertiary trauma response.

- Safety and security procedures were continuing to be assessed and modified to improve staff safety.
- The requirement to escort non-uniformed staff was reduced to line-of-sight monitoring.
- Staff support was expanded from six members to nine and expanded to include more non-custodial staff.
- An upgrade of the duress alarm system had been funded by the Department and should become operational in the first half of 2006.
- The contract for the incident psychologist was completed during the inspection and at the time of writing this Report had not been renewed.
- PRIME continues to offer counselling to staff on a range of issues.

Problems with the response

Primary response

2.18 A successful primary response will place a high priority on the safety of staff and try to minimise their exposure to the trauma. This requires accurate knowledge of who is involved in an incident and a capable and responsive management structure. During the March incident the Department faced a number of challenges in this regard. For a substantial period of the incident, prison management did not have control over the site. While from an operational perspective this made sense, clear policies and procedures for how this would

operate were lacking or at least could not be found.¹⁶ Further, despite critical incidents being relatively common in prisons,¹⁷ the Department lacked policies and procedures for the management of incidents from a staff welfare (rather than a security) perspective. Consequently, the support mechanisms necessary for staff during an incident such as that in March were unclear.

- 2.19 While no two incidents will be identical and each may require tailored interventions to some extent, core aspects of any intervention remain much the same and should be articulated so that staff and prison management know what to expect and are able to identify where specialised interventions are required. Individual prisons should not be responsible for this aspect of incident management since they are unlikely to have the resources, personnel or expertise to develop a general intervention plan. Leaving this as a local responsibility also fails to recognise the possible trauma that local management may be experiencing as a result of an incident. This is a head office responsibility, which is not to say that staff with such specific skills should be employed; rather, resources should be used to buy such expertise in where required.
- 2.20 From the Department's own report¹⁸ and in discussions with staff, it appears that the application of these primary support mechanisms was somewhat haphazard. and while local resources such as Prison Counselling Service (PCS) and programs psychologists were available, their roles are not clearly defined in the case of such an incident and nor had they specialised training in such trauma support. Staff support team members were present throughout the incident, but it is unclear what support they received in a role for which they had undertaken no training. In addition some staff support team members may also have been struggling to cope with the situation. An additional option to support staff was the Department's staff support psychologist; unfortunately this position was vacant at the time.
- 2.21 It is also unclear whether an accurate log was kept of staff exposure and involvement in the incident or that adequate arrangements were made to ensure the safety of staff when they finally left the site. Such arrangements might have included for example, ensuring that all staff had somewhere to go where they would be supported and that staff members directly involved were either driven or taxied home.
- 2.22 At the end of the incident, a security debrief session was held where senior prison and departmental representatives attended and offered assistance and condolences to the staff. The majority of staff interviewed at the time of the Inspection stated that the Department's expression of care and concern lacked credibility and was not well received. Prison officers were suspicious of the Department's motives and were insulted by its claims of concern for staff welfare in light of previous experience of post-incident management.¹⁹ Overall the staff

16 Department of Justice Internal Investigations Unit (IIU), *Critical Incident Review: Bunbury Prison hostage siege, 16 March 2005* (21 April 2005).

17 Albeit, not ones of such a serious nature as that which occurred at Bunbury.

18 IIU, *Critical Incident Review: Bunbury Prison hostage siege, 16 March 2005* (21 April 2005).

19 For an examination of staff attitudes and experiences of head office management see: OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison – December 2002*, Report No. 16 (June 2003) ch 6.

had poor expectations of the Department's response in the wake of traumatic incidents and this may have discouraged some staff from seeking assistance. The reasons for this view are explored elsewhere in this report, but its impact was clear at the time of the inspection.

- 2.23 In addition, there appears to have been inadequate assessment of the impact the March incident would have on the ability of the local management team to cope and fulfil their duties following the incident. Previously, Bunbury Prison had been a low incident prison where staff and prisoners relied on good relations and stability for safety. Staff and management were equally in 'shock' from the incident and the Department does not appear to have adequately taken this into account when determining the level of additional resources required at the management level.
- 2.24 The Department and the staff of Bunbury Regional Prison should be commended for their attempts to support staff in this critical primary phase. Unfortunately, these efforts were restricted by the lack of clear policies and procedures for managing traumatic incidents; insufficient professional and expert input into incident management; the lack of training and support for core groups (such as management and staff support); the poor opinion of the Department held by staff in relation to welfare issues; and the failure to recognise the extent to which traumatic events can impact on the functioning of all staff, including non-uniformed, administrative and managerial staff.

Secondary response

- 2.25 At the secondary response level, a principal intent is to provide – or at least support – robust and appropriate coping mechanisms at the individual and systems levels. At the level of the individual, the Department was heavily reliant on its external counselling provider to direct and monitor the coping mechanisms used by staff. This was supported, to some extent, by the incident psychologist and efforts from a pastoral care person who performed one-on-one counselling. At a more generic level, the prison also developed and distributed some locally produced literature on trauma. At the systems level, the Department provided some training for staff on grooming, modified some physical structures in the education centre and staff offices, increased the focus on safety in its local and standing orders and issued duress alarms to non-custodial staff.
- 2.26 For various reasons, the incident psychologist was not able to make contact with all staff and because staff did not self-identify, important groups of staff appear to have been overlooked. As a consequence, the number of staff who received professional counselling was limited. Further, the incident psychologist and pastoral care person lacked specific training or experience in dealing with significant trauma or systems approaches to trauma management, and this was the first occasion the external counselling provider had been inside any prison. This is not to criticise in any way the counsellors involved: they were clearly experienced and skilled in counselling. However they lacked crucial experience of assessing coping mechanisms within a prison setting. The Department did have the option of purchasing expert counsellors, but decided against this. It also failed to seek expert advice on what generic coping mechanisms it should be promoting and making available, or on how its efforts would impact on staff's choice of coping mechanisms.

- 2.27 As a result of these factors, the Department was not able to comprehensively identify individuals and systems using maladaptive coping mechanisms. It is important to note that individuals requiring support are often unaware or in denial of their problems and even when they are aware, they do not always come forward for support. Long-term denial and suppression of emotions were some of the maladaptive coping mechanisms still evident in staff at Bunbury Prison at the time of the inspection. Staff were still clearly dealing with trauma associated with the March incident, yet very few had accessed formal support services, preferring instead a self-supporting model where staff turned to each other as a primary source of support and kept functioning to honour their colleague.
- 2.28 Local management was aware of this coping mechanism, describing it as a ‘hero’s response’. This response is not unusual in a work environment where vulnerability can be seen as a weakness. Self-support models such as this do have clear short-term advantages: staff appear to be coping, their job security is not threatened, they remain in an environment in which they are familiar, and they get some satisfaction from getting the job done and not letting their colleagues down. However, in the medium- to long-term self-support models can lead to repression of trauma symptoms, reduced performance levels, less flexibility in staff attitude, and extended periods of stress and sick leave. Self-support models also tend to sensitise staff to trauma in the event of future incidents, which in the prison environment may not be far off.
- 2.29 Similarly, systems that are essential to the selection and maintenance of coping mechanisms often function for extended periods before problems become evident. Consequently, addressing the system is fundamental to a planned human resources solution to critical incidents. The Department made some effort in this area but it did not appear planned or aimed at influencing coping mechanisms. Staff felt that the systems level changes lacked consistency, were tokenistic and targeted areas that would only marginally improve their safety. They also believed that some of the efforts (considering the traditionally low rate of assaultive behaviours at Bunbury Prison²⁰) were resource heavy and so doubted their sustainability. Staff were concerned that the Department’s response had addressed only ‘quick fixes’ and was not looking at longer-term safety and security issues such as:
- profiling the prison so that the right mix of prisoners is present, including profiling of sub-populations such as sex offenders, violent offenders, and prisoners with mental health issues;²¹
 - improving the security classification system for prisoners so that safety and security risks are known and can be better managed;
 - having a system more responsive to dynamic changes in risk;
 - addressing serious issues with local and standing orders regarding safety of some staff (for example, non-custodial staff were escorted to their offices but for the rest of the day moved around the prison unescorted);

20 Bunbury Prison experiences around one assault per month on staff (verbal or physical) which is approximately the same as experienced by Greenough (a slightly higher rate) and Wooroloo (a slightly lower rate). This has not changed from the six months prior to the March incident and the six months prior to the inspection.

21 At the time of the inspection there were 47 prisoners with an identified mental health need at Bunbury, a significant increase over time.

- fixing problems with duress alarms issued to non-uniformed staff which could not be heard in all parts of the prison (something the prison's management appeared unaware of);
- improving security in areas such as industries, kitchen and the sex offender programs area;
- supplying a roving security patrol within the prison for areas lacking in a sufficient uniformed presence;
- improving management response to risks identified by staff. For example, a request to rotate the prison worker in one area of the prison for safety and security reasons was not supported on the basis that it was difficult to identify enough suitable workers for such a practice to be put into place.²² This raised the perception that management see operational efficiency taking precedent over safety;
- training staff in recognising risk and dealing with prisoners. Staff said that safety and security starts with good knowledge of prisoners and that this comes about by having positive relationships with them. Training was seen as an important adjunct to this, but officers viewed their current training as 'only lip service', ineffectual, patchy and poorly aligned to the day-to-day operations of their jobs.

- 2.30 Assessing the type and utility of coping mechanisms is sometimes difficult, but it appears that the only formal assessment the Department undertook was at the March staff meetings and the assessment relied on staff identifying how they were coping. The Department sought no external assessment or advice on the utility of coping mechanisms or suggestions for alternatives. The Superintendent acknowledged that there were still a significant number of staff actively traumatised and struggling, and the incident psychologist (whose contract expired during the inspection) supported this. The experience of a number of staff members interviewed during the Inspection was that they did not feel that they had been given an appropriate opportunity to contribute to the discussions about systems and their personal safety.
- 2.31 The assessment process was limited by the fact that those doing the individual counselling (predominantly a private provider which operated under strict client confidentiality) were separated from the prison management who were dealing with the day-to-day functioning of staff members. While the need for confidentiality is understandable, the Department clearly requires a human resources master plan that takes this into account and facilitates the identification of staff who require more support.
- 2.32 It seems that the Department assumed that the prison had a system in place to monitor the coping mechanisms being used by staff and their impact. Yet, despite similar issues being raised following the Casuarina riot in 1998,²³ the prison did not have access to the type of information it required to institute such a plan. In the Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody, this Office found that individual prisons are not held accountable for monitoring and reporting on their stress leave, lost time injuries and general absenteeism.²⁴ This information is collected and maintained corporately and is not

22 In its response to the draft of this Report, the Department stated that this issue had now been addressed: Department of Corrective Services, Response to Recommendations, 12 May 2006.

23 Carter KW, 'The Casuarina Prison Riot: official discourse or appreciative inquiry?' (2001) 12(3) *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*.

24 OICS, *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody*, Report No. 30 (November 2005).

communicated to prisons, yet this information would greatly assist prisons in assessing the coping behaviours of staff following a traumatic incident.

- 2.33 Management stated that there had been no increase in stress leave since the two incidents and the absenteeism figures seem to support this. While there was a spike in custodial officers' sick leave in May and June 2005 (with 91 and 97 absences respectively when the average is 74 per month), this cannot necessarily be attributed to the events, as there have been spikes on other occasions. For example in December 2004 there had been 108 absences. The increase in absences for non-custodial staff in May 2005 was much more noticeable. In the six months prior to March there had been only one or two absences per month, which increased to nine in April and 23 in May. This is an indication of the significant impact that the March incident had on non-custodial staff.²⁵ Interviews with uniformed officers conducted during the inspection indicate that the stress leave data may not provide a complete picture of actual stress being experienced by staff. Many officers indicated that they had taken annual leave rather than stress leave following the incident. Those who could not access annual leave stated that they remained at work out of loyalty to their colleagues and managed their stress privately through counselling or medication.
- 2.34 The subsequent suicide of a staff member in August was an additional stress on staff and PRIME was again contacted to conduct staff counselling. There is no evidence that the Department performed a systematic analysis of this incident's impact on staff and systems in light of the prison's pre-existing fragility. The prison attempted to identify further traumatised staff and took some additional action to support them, but there was no analysis undertaken to ascertain whether there were sufficient preventative measures in place for staff welfare. This kind of analysis would be better undertaken at head office, rather than prison level, particularly in circumstances where prison management may also be impacted by the relevant events.
- 2.35 It was also unclear what the ultimate achievement for staff or systems should be: normalisation, increased security focus or something else. This makes it difficult to determine where and to what extent coping mechanisms are moving staff and systems in the direction desired by the Department.

Tertiary response

- 2.36 A tertiary response to a critical incident can be divided into two broad areas: identifying and managing those staff with maladaptive coping; and continuing to monitor and guide systems and procedural change. Both assume that the Department has a clear goal in place and, as stated above, this was not apparent at the time of the inspection. The lack of a clear goal for Bunbury Prison severely limits the ability of the prison to implement any sensible tertiary response beyond increasing the number of staff support officers and attempting to do what it can for staff who are demonstratively struggling. In this light, the Department's intent of further modifying procedures to improve security in a facility that has always had a very low rate of incidents could be questioned as a retrograde step for staff welfare and

25 Leave data supplied by the Department of Justice and management of Bunbury Regional Prison. It should be noted that the figures did not include education centre staff.

prison performance. Similarly, spending large sums of money on a duress system which is only found in one other prison in the state (Hakea Prison – a maximum-security environment), does not make sense in a medium-security environment. This is a reactionary response.

Conclusions

- 2.37 The management of the trauma experienced in the aftermath of the March incident was severely restricted by the absence of a systemic planned response to such incidents at a departmental level. In an environment in which serious and sometimes traumatic events can to some degree be expected, the lack of a critical management response plan is a serious omission. While well-meaning and genuine, it would seem that the response was reactionary, not based on industry best practice in the management of critical incidents and relied too heavily on the local management who were also potentially subject to post-incident trauma. It is essential that some positive lessons be learned from these tragic events and that a systemic plan be developed.

STAFF ISSUES

Comments on the staff meetings

- 2.38 During the inspection members of the inspection team met with various groups of staff including uniformed officers, vocational officers, education staff, programs staff, PCS staff, medical centre staff, administrative staff, staff support and occupational health and safety representatives. In addition to an open uniformed staff meeting, separate groups were conducted with female staff and senior officers. All were well attended and most participants made contributions. The high attendance and even spread of contribution is unusual for an inspection. Also unusual was the very high level of anger and discontent voiced at many of the meetings. While it is common for staff to direct some amount of displeasure at the Department and/or local management, the Bunbury inspection saw ‘distress, anger, disappointment and bitterness expressed ... exceeding anything we have previously encountered’.²⁶
- 2.39 Despite the whole-of-staff meeting conducted by the prison following the March incident, a number of uniformed officers commented that this was the first opportunity they had had to talk as a group about the incident. The officers indicated that the absence of management and administrative staff at the inspection meeting enabled them to talk more openly than at the March meeting. It was also said that the March meeting lacked genuineness and staff were sceptical about the Department’s response. The primary purpose of the March meeting was to identify staff who needed support, while the focus of the inspection meeting was systemic and organisational improvement. At the inspection meeting officers spoke about a wide range of issues, not just those relating directly to how they felt or their safety. They saw these issues as important because they impacted on their relationships with each other, with prisoners and on the business of custodial management within Bunbury Prison. As such, these issues were crucial to the recovery process. This is a link the Department and local management appear to have missed.

26 OICS, *Bunbury Regional Prison Inspection Exit Debrief* (16 December 2005) 2.

2.40 During the meeting with the vocational support officer (VSO) group the mood was fairly flat and guarded with the comments reflecting a feeling of hopelessness with their position in the prison more than a potential drive for change. The exception to this was a strong and pretty much universal anger towards their treatment by, and lack of support from, management. The VSOs firmly stated their belief that no changes would arise from them voicing their experiences to the inspection team. They presented as committed to their work, but were clearly marginalised and lacked the energy seen in the prison officers meeting.

The relationship among prison officers

2.41 The relationship among prison officers is generally strong and supportive. This positive relationship appears to be paying dividends for the prison, with many officers stating the only reason they continued in the job was because of their colleagues. This attitude manifested itself in some tangible ways:

- *The developments of advanced supervision and feedback for probationary officers.* One problem mentioned by a number of experienced and probationary officers spoken to was recruit training that gave them technical knowledge but failed to provide them with operational experience or the skill sets to manage prisoners. To address this, the senior officer group developed an informal system for advanced supervision and feedback. While still in its infancy, probationary staff stated that the feedback was useful and appreciated and that while the process was inherently threatening, the sessions were constructive and well-handled.
- *The expansion of the staff support team.* Over the course of 2005 the number of staff support officers had reduced and the stress on remaining officers was elevated. Arising from a staff driven initiative, the staff support group recently expanded from six members to nine (including non-uniformed and VSO staff.) All new supporters (six of the nine) have undertaken a two day training course, run by PRIME, with a one day follow up planned for February 2006. The staff support officers spoken to were clear about their roles and the boundaries between their activities and other supports such as PRIME.

2.42 Historically the officer group at Bunbury has consisted of a stable group comprised predominantly of local residents. In recent times, with a number of retirements and resignations, this has changed and a significant number of new officers have commenced duties at the prison. In the 18 months prior to the inspection 22 staff had retired (15 officers), resigned (five officers) or been transferred (two staff) and 29 new staff had commenced.²⁷ This represents an approximate staff turnover of 20 per cent. Newly arrived staff generally believed this was a positive phenomenon, bringing energy, new ideas and a more standardised approach to custodial management (that is, standardised with practice at other prisons). One officer who had transferred to Bunbury commented that new staff were challenging some of the more idiosyncratic practices within the prison, which was causing

27 In the calendar years 2004 and 2005 a total of 29 new staff (uniformed and VSO) have either transferred in to Bunbury Regional Prison (18) or commenced at the prison directly from training school (11) (information provided by management at Bunbury Regional Prison).

some friction but for the most part resulting in better, more consistent (both with other prisons but also internally between staff) custodial management.

- 2.43 Officers expressed strong support for their senior officer group, but while they felt supported by them, there was a view that they were not able to bring about necessary meaningful change and so officers were less likely to raise issues with them. This was reinforced by the experience of the senior officer group itself. They saw themselves as disempowered, both by head office and by their local managers. The group stated that they lack the authority to make operational decisions and that their influence in the running of the prison was limited to lobbying management. The group was extremely frustrated. It appeared that in comparison to other regional prisons the senior officer role was underdeveloped and under-utilised. The role of these officers should be examined and articulated and would greatly assist in opening the lines of communication between officers and management.
- 2.44 Bullying, a problem identified in the 2002 inspection, continues to be an issue for a number of staff. The officers in the female staff focus group indicated that bullying sometimes manifests in direct discrimination or by male staff making unnecessary and patronising allowances for their gender. In addition, a number of female staff working in the prison during March informed the Inspection Team that they had not been assessed and no one had contacted them to see if they required assistance or support in relation to bullying. This is particularly concerning given the 2002 inspection report recommendation that management take responsibility for the wellbeing of staff and that better staff support mechanisms be put in place.²⁸ While the prison has encouraged female staff to meet to discuss their issues as a group and has held one training session for a small number of staff on bullying, these efforts have clearly not been sufficient to deal with the underlying issues that are leading to the bullying of staff and the prison needs to do more both in monitoring and dealing with bullying. Management has not adequately acknowledged the issue and its persistence shows that it will not simply disappear. Having said this, bullying of staff in the prison environment is not unique to Bunbury, a fact which indicates that the Department also needs to assess how it addresses bullying in the workplace.
- 2.45 The VSO group also felt that there was a level of 'silent intimidation' and that it was completely pointless putting in a grievance or complaint because at best it would be ignored and at worst more intimidation would follow. Grievance officers reported that very few staff were prepared to enter a grievance for fear of being persecuted. To some extent this attitude was replicated in the uniformed officer group.
- 2.46 The Department's occupational health and safety consultant had also informed the Inspection Team that there were historical and current allegations of bullying, despite counter-bullying sessions being run. It was also identified that there was a reluctance by complainants to formalise the complaints for fear of retribution. This matter was also raised with the Department by this Office as part of the *Directed Review of the Management of*

28 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison – December 2002*, Report No. 16 (June 2003) [6.12]–[6.16] and recommendation 8.

Offenders in Custody which was critical of the Department's management of bullying and cited comments from the Community and Public Sector Union/Civil Service Association that 'leadership based on bullying behaviour seems to have been endorsed as a common practice' and that 'many staff members consider they work in an environment where workplace bullying is a common managerial style'.²⁹ While not specifically pertaining to Bunbury Prison, it is evident from staff that some hold such a view of the prison.

2.47 Others views raised at the meeting that were more prevalent at Bunbury than the Office has experienced elsewhere were:

- Most prison officers appeared supportive of the VSO and identified them (and with them) as an isolated and under-valued group.
- Officers held a more intensely negative view of management.
- The officers' view of their senior officers was more positive than in most prisons.
- There was a greater consensus among groups about most issues.
- There was greater self-reliance among officers than evident in other prisons. (This is understandable in reaction to a traumatic event, but is a poor long-term coping strategy. The Department does not appear to have a process in place to draw staff out of this short-term coping system or show them that it is a realistic option for them to rely more on head office and their own management.)

Vocational Support Officers

2.48 The relationship among VSOs appears strong and supportive, but the relative isolation experienced through working alone in their work location seemed to prevent a more coordinated response to the shared feeling of separateness from the main prison operations. While the general relationship experienced with uniformed officers appeared satisfactory, both the VSOs and prison officers expressed the view that a distance had been developing over time. There is little interaction between most of the prison officers and the VSOs, with only limited contact through prison officers providing security to the industries area. There is no VSO representative at the morning prison debrief meeting and this contributed to the feeling of isolation and an ineffective transfer of information regarding prisoners and activities at the prison.

2.49 Positively, staff support has been recently expanded to including a VSO representative. This initiative may assist in reducing the distance between prison officers and VSOs, but is too early to see the fruits of it for the VSO group. Morale among staff would greatly improve if there was more effort to be more inclusive in meetings and other regular prison activities.

Non-uniformed staff

2.50 The non-uniformed staff at Bunbury generally felt they shared positive relationships with their work colleagues, both those in their immediate area of service delivery as well as others throughout the prison. At the meetings conducted by the inspection team, there

29 OICS, *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody*, Report No. 30 (November 2005) [7.7].

were no criticisms of other non-uniformed staff and the group had few grievances with the prison or their management.

- 2.51 Understandably, the March incident had a significant impact on the education team at the prison and resulted in a majority of the staff preferring to leave. Consequently, the education team at Bunbury at the time of the inspection was relatively new. Despite this large and almost immediate loss of staff, the education centre was only closed for two weeks while some infrastructure changes were made to the area, and classes began operating immediately after this. The education staff must be commended for their commitment to the provision of education services.

RELATIONSHIP WITH MANAGEMENT

- 2.52 The core management group at Bunbury Regional Prison had, until recently, been stable for a number of years. In November 2004 the Superintendent was seconded to a series of senior management roles in head office leaving the Operations Manager acting in the role of superintendent. To fill the management gaps left by the superintendent's secondment, the Security Manager assumed the operations manager role and a senior officer acted in the security manager position. The incidents of 2005 occurred with the substantive Superintendent having been away from the prison for some time and the acting management team in place. At the time of the inspection the substantive Superintendent had recently returned to the prison³⁰ and the Operations Manager (who had been Acting Superintendent throughout 2005) had been temporarily transferred to head office to provide some respite from the stress of the prison. This sets the context for the discussions involving management that were conducted with staff at Bunbury during the inspection.
- 2.53 Many of the group staff meetings (in particular the meeting with uniformed officers) revealed an extremely high level of anger and bitterness directed toward management. As stated at the outset of this chapter, staff will often make negative comments about management at inspection meetings, but the feelings expressed at Bunbury far exceeded anything the inspection team had previously experienced. The core of this anger was not directly related to the March incident; however, this incident brought other ongoing issues and concerns to the fore. The core issues raised by officers were bullying, poor appreciation of their issues, poor communication from management, mixed views on the utility of the morning debriefs, lack of access to management,³¹ and lack of a meaningful response to issues raised with management.
- 2.54 The depth of negative feeling was apparently the result of the cumulative effect of management actions over time. Staff cited a number of specific incidents, occurring over a long period, where they felt either abused or not supported. The most often recalled incident was management's response to the trauma experienced by officers involved in an incident in February 2005 following a serious self-harm incident by a prisoner in March

30 In September 2005.

31 It is interesting to note that prisoners also commented negatively about access to management, many stating they rarely see a member of management in the prison.

2005 which resulted in officers being exposed to health risks through contact with the prisoner's blood. The staff involved reported that they did not feel appropriately supported immediately following the incident and as they waited for the results of medical screening tests. Such examples exacerbate staff's reactions to major incidents like that in March and the staff member suicide in August.

- 2.55 The level of resignation about their situation was reflected by the belief that sharing this information with the inspection team was pointless because their experience taught them that nothing would change. As a result, staff are reluctant to identify improvements strategies and initiate changes to the way they do their work. Staff were not expecting change and appeared unlikely to engage in any change management process unless the Department developed some real (and funded) initiatives. This culture of disempowerment was evident at all levels.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STAFF AND PRISONERS

- 2.56 Prisoners generally view their relationship with most staff as positive and in particular the relationship with VSOs was highly regarded. Results from the pre-inspection prisoner survey indicate that 97 per cent of respondents got on 'very well', 'well' or 'ok' with VSOs and 92 per cent stated the same for the relationship with prison officers. This is a marked improvement from the survey conducted prior to the 2002 inspection when only 29 per cent of respondents said they had a good relationship with uniformed staff.
- 2.57 Prisoners were also asked to assess the impact of the March incident on the relationship between prisoners and staff. In reference to VSOs, 24 per cent of prisoners said it had actually improved the relationship and 59 per cent said it had no impact at all. Prisoners provided similar responses with regard to uniformed officers, with 22 per cent indicating an improvement and 59 per cent no change. Prisoners reported that officers had initially disengaged to some extent, were more strongly focused on security issues and less approachable; but this had disappeared in all but a few officers and in many cases the relationship had even improved. From comments made by staff and prisoners, this improvement appears based on the common anger and revulsion felt regarding the March incident and the respect for the staff member who was the victim of the attack.
- 2.58 The response regarding prisoners' relationship with management was slightly less positive. Only six per cent stated that prisoners got on 'very well' with management, 21 per cent 'well' and 54 per cent 'ok', leaving 19 per cent stating that they got on 'not at all'. The comments in the survey regarding the relationship (from those who rated the relationship both good and bad) was that prisoners never saw management, they rarely entered the prison and only spoke to prisoners if they were in trouble.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 2.59 The occupational health and safety (OH&S) process is common in all prisons in Western Australia and involves:

- notification of potential hazard or risk by a staff member entering a report into the prison's hazard register;
- investigation by one of the prison's OH&S representatives;
- a recommendation by the OH&S group as to the veracity of the hazard;
- a ruling by management; and
- action if required.

The OH&S group, which consists of staff OH&S representatives and the prison's Business Manager, are also meant to meet every two months to monitor this process and discuss any differences of opinion. During the inspection, it was apparent that the process at Bunbury Prison had broken down at many levels, primarily because of a lack of commitment by staff and management.

- 2.60 The first stage of notification of potential risk can happen directly from the Department's head office OH&S coordinator (who regularly visits prisons), through one of the prison's own OH&S representatives or, more commonly, through staff entering the risk into the prison's hazard register. The hazard register should be easily accessible to all staff to enter potential hazards without fear of retribution. At Bunbury it took the inspection team some time to locate the register, which was eventually found locked inside the Business Manager's office.³² The register contained few entries, none of which were recent. In discussions with staff many were unaware of the existence of the register, and those that were aware of it did not know where it was located or indicated that they were hesitant to expressly identify themselves to management as a complainant. It was also expressed that the system was not working anyway and so it was a waste of time to report hazards. As a consequence, hazards tend only to be reported by OH&S representatives and generally only after an incident has occurred.
- 2.61 At the investigation and recommendation stages, the inspection identified a lack of resources and monitoring. While possibly only a short-term aberration, this is indicative of the prison's lack of commitment to the OH&S process. On each daily roster there is an allocation (referred to as a line on the roster) for OH&S so representatives can attend to their investigative duties. In reality, because of staff absences, the day shift is frequently under-staffed and when units are low on officers or are required for security related duties, 'non-essential lines' such as OH&S are cancelled and the officer is redirected to other duties. At the time of the inspection this appears to have become routine.
- 2.62 Management acknowledged that this was occurring, but not to the extent indicated by staff. Management expressed surprise that it was discussed with the inspection team. They also expressed concern, since in their opinion the OH&S representative should refuse to be routinely re-tasked because it undermines their investigative role. This was certainly the result as some fundamental safety issues were not being investigated or were being addressed in a haphazard way. This has led to considerable frustration among the OH&S representatives and appears to have flowed on to the recommendation stage where there were numerous examples of the OH&S representatives not following or circumventing the proper process.

32 The Business Manager was on leave at the time.

- 2.63 Despite being scheduled to occur every two months, the OH&S meetings at Bunbury Prison are held infrequently, with only two meetings of the OH&S group having taken place in 2005.³³ The Department's head office OH&S consultant did undertake two reviews of the prison in 2005 and provided the prison with lists of identified hazards; however, these lists were not provided to local OH&S representatives and consequently they have not been able to lobby for or monitor safety improvements. This lack of transparency is a problem that should not happen in a prison committed to identifying and dealing with safety concerns.
- 2.64 Further examples of problems in the OH&S process occur at the action stage. While at the local level it appears that where management has agreed to act on a safety issue it has acted (if at times more slowly than the OH&S representatives would have liked), their response to more comprehensive Departmental assessments was questionable. At the time of writing this Report, the prison had not notified the Department's OH&S coordinator of any action against the hazards identified earlier in the year, with many still unaddressed at the time of the inspection.
- 2.65 Interestingly, hazard reporting does not appear to be tied into the maintenance or capital works planning for the prison and many issues that arose as a result of the March incident appear to be viewed by management and staff as security issues as opposed to safety issues. Consequently, they have not been considered as part of a holistic response to OH&S. There must be a concerted effort to following the OH&S process as designed to ensure the safety of staff and prisoners.

MANAGING INJURIES

- 2.66 The Department has a poor track record in injury management, which was highlighted in this Office's Directed Review.³⁴ In 2003 a report on stress claims undertaken by RiskCover showed that just over 33 per cent of all lost time injury was due to 'mental disorder'. It stated that that one of the most important contributing factors to the claims being protracted was a delay in access to psychological counselling and vocational rehabilitation intervention. This has serious implications for the mode of support offered by the Department, particularly in a demoralised and disempowered worksite such as Bunbury Regional Prison.
- 2.67 Local prison management felt that they had insufficient control of the management of injured staff and the entire injury management and rehabilitation process. Interviews with management indicted that there was a commitment to active case management but that these efforts had been somewhat thwarted by head office. It is difficult for Bunbury Prison management to access even the simplest leave information and while there are corporate guidelines for managing injured workers, there still seems to be a lack of understanding of who is responsible for what and where accountability lies.

33 In response to a draft of this Report, the Department stated that meetings are often informal with only one of the OH&S representatives attending. There were no minutes of these meetings to indicate what was discussed or the resolution of any issues.

34 OICS, *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody*, Report No. 30 (November 2005) [7.172]–[7.174].

- 2.68 Statistics were obtained from the Department's OH&S consultant that support the view that safety systems and practices at Bunbury Prison are inadequate. One of the measures – workers' compensation claims as a percentage of total accidents/incidents reported per calendar year – shows that the percentage of workers compensation claims has risen at Bunbury in relation to the total number of accidents reported. This could be due to an increase in workers' compensation claims or a reduction in accident reporting. In examining the raw data, it seems to be a bit of both. The percentage has been steadily climbing since 2003 and as at the end of October 2005 it was 69 per cent, which is the second highest percentage of all prisons in Western Australia.
- 2.69 Other OH&S indicators are also worrying. Statistics relating to percentage of hazards recommendations adopted show Bunbury's implementation rate to be 50 per cent, whereas the average for all prisons is 71.5 per cent. The percentage of accident reports completed within two weeks is similar in Bunbury as for all the prisons, but at 43 per cent this figure is too low.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 2.70 Every Thursday morning prisoners remained locked in cell to allow for prison officer training. Staff stated (and management conceded) that this was insufficient to meet the training needs of officers, particularly in relation to non-security related subjects. Most officers described the training as simplistic, repetitive and having poorly defined outcomes and many questioned the quality and utility of the training.
- 2.71 Initial recruit training also received criticism from officers, with the gap between what is taught at the orientation training and the reality of prison work perceived to be too large. This has resource implications for the prison because new recruits (a relatively large proportion of current officers at Bunbury Prison) require a significant investment of time from the more-experienced officers. Perhaps more concerning, however, is a trend of probationary officers being placed in positions of considerable responsibility without adequate monitoring or support.
- 2.72 The VSOs group appears to suffer even more from lack of training than their prison officer counterparts. There is no routine involvement of VSOs in the Thursday morning training, many have not had OH&S related training and none have received recent trade training. Even when there is some access to training, it tends to be aimed towards prison officers and does not necessarily take into account the particular circumstances in which VSOs operate. The administrative staff also seem to have had little training and skills development in recent years with most training appearing to have been ad hoc and on-the-job.
- 2.73 Conversely, the education staff seemed to fare relatively well with regard to access to training and development. This is handled centrally, through their head office branch. While they are somewhat disadvantaged by their regional location compared with their metropolitan counterparts, the education staff at Bunbury felt that they were adequately catered for.

2.74 In examining the raw data in relation to training, it is difficult to assess the quality and relevance of training being delivered at Bunbury. It does however appear that most of the modules being delivered relate predominantly to the traditional security-related topics required as a result of OH&S orders. There seems to be little, if any, general skills training (based on data provided dating back to September 2004) and it seems that of the 102 staff documented in the training data, 34 did not receive any training at all during the period. It would seem, therefore, that the training recommendation from the 2002 inspection report has not been sufficiently addressed.³⁵ It should be noted that the training situation at Bunbury is generally no worse than at most other prisons in terms of its efforts in training and development, but the situation is completely unacceptable in terms of investing in and retaining staff.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- 2.75 There is no evidence of routine performance appraisals being conducted at any level in the prison for many years. It seems there is little done to formally set performance expectations or to provide feedback; although, as noted earlier, the senior officers have recently started an informal monthly performance feedback process for new recruits. This initiative was motivated by the probationary officers asking for more regular and useful feedback from senior staff. While this idea is only in the early stages of implementation, it seems an extremely positive step that should be actively encouraged and supported.
- 2.76 Despite the VSOs' work being oriented toward production, there has been no effort to engage VSO's in the development of agreed performance and output expectations and measurements in an inclusive way.
- 2.77 The administrative staff also do not have formal performance reviews, even though they are public service award staff. The group meeting revealed that there are very few staff meetings so general communication is ad hoc, and there seems to be no mechanisms for inclusive group forward-planning.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

- 2.78 The highly competitive job market for people with trade skills has caused significant problems for recruitment of VSOs. Recruiting to the education centre has also been challenging. Not surprisingly, the March incident has compounded the problem that exists largely because of a lack of pay parity between educators in the prison system and those employed under the Education Award (however the inspection team understands that there are efforts being made at a departmental level to address this).
- 2.79 Another problem experienced by Bunbury – and one that applies across all prisons – is the difficulty of attracting senior officers to assistant superintendent roles, especially in an acting capacity. The senior officer recently appointed Acting Assistant Superintendent at Bunbury

35 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison – December 2002*, Report No. 16 (June 2003) recommendation 2.

Prison has suffered a reduced pay packet. Cessation of the allowance payable for 12-hour shifts accounts for this to a large extent, but departmental human resources did not support the prison's endeavours to pay him at a higher increment point to redress the balance. Similarly, the classification level for the Assistant Superintendent Security (level five) is lower than in other prisons and this is a real disincentive for applicants to this key position.

2.80 At the time of the inspection there were 29 Aboriginal prisoners at Bunbury Regional Prison, which represent approximately 15 per cent of the total prisoner population. There were two Aboriginal employees, which is not proportional to the Aboriginal prisoner representation. This is indicative of Aboriginal employment statistics in all prisons in this state and the Office's Directed Review Report outlines a number of recommendations to address this problem.³⁶

SUMMARY

2.81 The March incident raised many issues for staff at Bunbury Regional Prison, some of which were long-standing issues that were brought to the surface by that traumatic event. Overwhelmingly evident during the inspection was that Bunbury Regional Prison, and for that matter every prison in Western Australia, requires a local human resources plan to ensure the planned, equitable and consistent treatment and management of the prison's main asset: its staff.

2.82 Despite the anger and the large number of issues identified, Bunbury has always been (and continues to be) considered a relative high-performing prison. As a consequence many of the poor human resources practices have probably not come to light to any significant extent. In trying to understand why the prison has performed well in spite of poor staff management practices, a number of cultural issues have no doubt contributed including:

- The strength of camaraderie among the staff, and in particular the prison officer group. A number of officers commented that the only reason that kept coming to work was because of their sense of commitment to their colleagues.
- The majority of staff members appear committed to their work and what they are trying to achieve. The wellbeing of prisoners seems important to most staff and the positive relationships that have resulted between the staff and prisoner group have assisted greatly in the smooth running of the prison.
- People want to work in Bunbury Prison. It is a sought-after prison, both because of its location and its reputation. The most recent transfer list as at July 2005 shows that despite the March incident 26 officers had sought to transfer to Bunbury and no officer wished to transfer from Bunbury to another other prison.
- The antagonism towards head office actually serves to unite the general staff population with management and at times gives the prison management a convenient point of blame for the lack of good people management practices.

36 OICS, *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody*, Report No. 30 (November 2005) [7.71]–[7.74].

While it may seem inconsistent to acknowledge good performance and even service delivery improvements and at the same time find a workforce that is angry and traumatised, it is not actually contradictory at all. In an environment where strong camaraderie exists among staff the natural reaction can be to buckle down, support your workmates and therefore improve in some areas of performance.

- 2.83 Bunbury Prison management have tried to do their best in the situation, but the Department has asked too much of the management, who themselves were deeply affected by the events of 2005. Unfortunately, the current state of affairs regarding staff at Bunbury is not sustainable. As outlined above, issues have come to the surface and staff morale has suffered significantly as a consequence. In the broader context of overall reform of the Department, there needs to be significant changes within Bunbury Prison in relation to staff management. Without making the investment, the prison is at risk of losing many more staff prematurely and, importantly, putting itself at risk regarding its basic obligations in relation to duty of care.

PHOTOS OF BUNBURY REGIONAL PRISON



The cabinet shop provides a good opportunity for prisoners to participate in an area of employment in which they can develop skills that will assist in securing work upon their release. Prisoners assist in the construction of furniture under a contract that generates income for the Department and contributes towards the offsetting of the costs of imprisonment to the community.



Visits in the main medium-security prison most often occur in what is called the 'outside visits area', which is actually enclosed by Perspex-type sheeting. The area has long been an issue of complaint for prisoners and visitors due to the uncomfortable furniture and setting, and lack of privacy the configuration offers. Since the time of the Inspection new furniture has been introduced to assist in providing more privacy and comfort.



A view of the gatehouse of Bunbury Regional Prison from the inside. The gatehouse is long overdue for replacement and capital works funding has been approved for the control room, with a scheduled project start date of May 2006. In concert with the upgrade of facilities, it would be an opportune time to reassess the duties of the control room officer, to ensure the duties focus on the core purpose of the posting: to prevent escapes and respond to emergencies.



The gymnasium at Bunbury Regional Prison is due for refurbishment and will house the new medical centre for the prison, due for completion in October 2006. At the time of the inspection medical facilities were inadequate. Medical centre staff had been consulted in the new design process and this should hopefully result in an improved health facility that will further improve prisoner health services. Prisoners from C block, who once used the facility, use a replacement undercover area within the block (see next photograph).

PHOTOS OF BUNBURY REGIONAL PRISON



This new undercover facility was constructed in the quadrangle of C block to provide a protected recreation for prisoners that previously used the gymnasium. In general, hours of access to active recreation were reasonable, but prisoners in the main prison were dissatisfied with the range of options available to them. Prisoners in minimum-security were even more restricted as they lacked a reasonable outdoors recreation space to participate in active sports.



C block is the standard accommodation area for the prison and was part of the original construction of Bunbury Regional Prison. Due to prisoner population pressure, bunk beds have been placed in 10 cells in C block. The long-term accommodation plan is for C block and the maximum-security section to be demolished and new accommodation constructed; however, additional land will be required for this to occur and has not secured Departmental approval.



Security features for the secure section of the prison begin outside the perimeter with an external detection system, which includes some use of pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) and fixed cameras. It has long been acknowledged by the prison that the eastern fence line is vulnerable to the transfer of contraband and the provision of better PTZ camera coverage must be actioned to provide better observation.

Chapter 3

THE IMPACT ON PRISONER ACCESS TO SERVICES: THE RESILIENCE OF BUNBURY REGIONAL PRISON

3.1 While the 2005 inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison focused on the response of the Department to the events of that year and the recovery of staff, the importance of the appropriate delivery of services to prisoners could not be ignored. As a previously well-performing prison a possible fallout of the trauma experienced by staff was slippage in service delivery. It was therefore important as a part of the inspection to examine the resilience of the prison in this context. Key questions asked of prisoners in relation to access to services included:

- Has access to certain services been limited as a result of the incidents?
- Have any services been eliminated as a result of the incidents?
- Has access to services suffered as a result of security measures or staff attitudes?
- What has been the impact on staff and prisoner relationships in relation to each area of service delivery?
- Has the high turnover of staff experienced after the events impacted on access to services?
- Has there been any impact on the quality of the services?

RECEPTION AND ORIENTATION

3.2 Bunbury Prison tends to receive the majority of its new arrivals on one day of the week (Wednesday) and consequently the centre can become quite crowded and busy in a short space of time. Despite this somewhat chaotic environment, the reception process operated smoothly. The process is relatively standard to most medium-security facilities involving initial interviews/assessments, strip-searching, issue of prison kits/reception packs and signing of forms. Medical centre staff will also see prisoners on the day of arrival, or early the next day in the case of late arrivals.

3.3 During the inspection process both staff and prisoners commented that the reception process had been inconsistent in the past year, with some prisoners feeling they had been given more thorough information about the process and the prison than others. The inspection could find no evidence that this inconsistency in information was related to the incidents of 2005. Staff attributed some the problems to the increased number of duties required in the area with the same number of staff, especially during the main intake day. A workload assessment should be undertaken to assess the adequacy of staffing requirements in the area. Importantly, reception staff had acknowledged the inconsistency and at the time of the inspection were evaluating the process and making changes to improve practices. On a positive note, despite the problems the vast majority of prisoners surveyed (86%) indicated that they were treated with respect by the reception staff.

3.4 Peer support prisoners now play a much more active role in orientation at Bunbury than was found in the 2002 inspection. Every new arrival is seen by a peer support prisoner on the first evening of their arrival to assist the prisoner and conduct the official orientation tour (previously undertaken by a reception officer). Only 60 per cent of prisoners surveyed

identified that they had participated in a formal orientation process, however only 10 per cent stated that they had received no support at all from any source. It may be that prisoners did not identify the contact with peer support as an 'official' orientation, hence the relatively low response. Prisoners were critical of the written orientation information provided, stating it was of limited use and difficult to read. Peer support prisoners are working on updating the material available, which may assist in resolving this problem.

VISITS AND FAMILY CONTACT

- 3.5 At the time of the 2002 inspection the visits regime at Bunbury was the most contentious issue for prisoners and was targeted in the prisoner survey as one of the worst things about the prison. While the quantity of visits was not a problem, the quality of environment and processes and procedures within the regime were an issue for both prisoners and their visitors.³⁷ The inspection resulted in a recommendation that the Department 'review the facilities, policies and procedures for the operation of visits' with the desired outcome to be 'a more positive visiting environment that encourages the development and maintenance of positive relationships'.³⁸
- 3.6 The 2005 inspection had found that while some issues had been addressed the main problems with the visits environment remained. Throughout the three years between inspections, prison management had stated to this Office that it was waiting for the Department to issue its 'family friendly visits policy' document before making any decisions about how to proceed with its visits area. This document did not appear until immediately before the 2005 inspection and proved not to be useful to the prison in determining its direction. As a result very little progress had been made. The visits area inside the main prison had retained its uncomfortable and uninviting layout; there was no play area and very limited toys for children; no tea and coffee making facilities were available in the main inside visits area; observation visibility by staff was poor; and concerns from prisoners about the mix of prisoners in visits sessions remained.
- 3.7 The prison must take action to remedy the problems surrounding the visits environment and it appeared at the time of the inspection that there were plans to do so. New visits furniture was being manufactured in prison industries that was consistent with furniture at other prisons in Western Australia. This should allow for more privacy and better separation of prisoners from each other. A crèche has been included in the plan and better toys for children should form part of this initiative. Tea and coffee facilities accompanied by appropriate rules to ensure the safety of visitors (as found in most other prisons) are required,³⁹ along with better facilities for staff including a raised observation platform to assist in monitoring visits behaviour. The possibility of allocating seating to prisoners and their visitors should also be examined to facilitate safety and security.

37 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison – December 2002*, Report No. 16 (June 2003) ch 4.

38 Ibid., recommendation 7.

39 Since the time of the Inspection such facilities have been made available in the inside visits area.

- 3.8 While the categorisation of prisoners for visit purposes has been improved since the time of the last inspection, there remains a perception among prisoners that inappropriate prisoners (namely those with convictions of offences against children) are being wrongly permitted into visits sessions that are attended by children. Some staff interviewed during the inspection also seemed uncertain about the categories and which prisoners had limitations upon their visits. It is important that the prison provide regular refresher training for staff and also that prisoners are educated regarding the system to minimise tensions between them. The new furniture and seating configuration along with a policy of allocating seating may also allow for the subtle control of prisoner/child contact.
- 3.9 The introduction of a permanent passive alert drug detection (PADD) dog at the prison in September 2005 has led to another infrastructure problem – an inadequate number of non-contact visit rooms. A positive indication from the PADD dog automatically results in a non-contact visit being offered, if the visitor first consents to a pat down search. With only two rooms available visits have to be severely shortened to allow more people to access the facilities or visitors are turned away.
- 3.10 The visits facilities in the minimum-security section are split between an indoor and outdoor area. The outdoor facility is pleasant, allowing for visits to take place in relative privacy and for children to play. The indoor area, however, is dark and crowded with a few old toys for children to play with. Visits are generally always conducted outside unless bad weather prevents it. With the limited space available it would seem that very few improvements could be made to the indoor visits area while the prison waits for the new minimum-security facility to be finished.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND WORK

- 3.11 Following the March incident the education centre closed for two weeks before recommencing a limited range of educational services to prisoners. Understandably, a large proportion of the workforce in the centre chose not to return to work or remained on some form of leave and it was extremely difficult to fill the positions from the local (Bunbury area) workforce. It was not until August 2005 that all positions were filled, and at the time of the inspection none of the education positions were filled on a permanent basis. While it is understandable that those on leave must be given time to decide their futures, it is essential that positions begin to be filled on a permanent basis to allow the centre to move forward with some certainty.
- 3.12 Another repercussion of the loss of staff was the knowledge and systems that disappeared with them. Some of the systems in place that drove the operation of the centre had not been formally documented and the acting staff in the centre spent the months after the incident rebuilding the education programs and documenting those systems. The inspection found that the new team had done a very good job in very trying circumstances and prisoners were similarly appreciative of the hard work and results they had achieved.

- 3.13 Education centre staff reported that they were operating well on a daily basis, but still felt the emotional impact of the incident and have become much more security conscious in the work environment. They stated that all security concerns raised with local management have been listened to and actioned to their satisfaction including the relocation of some classrooms, relocation of staff working areas so they are closer together, better tracking of who is in the centre, tracking of equipment in the centre and better staff training. Staff were also appreciative of the response of their head office management which was immediate and supportive.
- 3.14 Prisoners at Bunbury generally have access to a good range of constructive activity. At the time of the inspection 45 per cent of the total prisoner population at Bunbury were accessing education and vocational training programs through the education centre.⁴⁰ Programs available ranged from basic adult education to higher education studies and trade traineeships. There were also enough work positions available at the prison for all willing prisoners to have employment. Unlike many other prisons most of these work opportunities are not cleaning-related or unit bound⁴¹ and provide the prisoners with opportunities for more useful skill development. As in many other areas, minimum-security prisoners feel their access to a variety of employment is unfairly limited by the ban on them entering the main prison. Many prisoners indicated they had rejected the option of moving outside the main wall because they would have to give up work, education or training. This is not an acceptable situation and the prison must ensure that a good range of constructive activity is accessible by these prisoners, especially in light of the new minimum-security facility being constructed.
- 3.15 Despite the events of 2005 the inspection found that good progress had been made since 2002 toward the better integration of education, work and skilling, with the number of traineeships being undertaken at a good level and vocational officers better supporting the traineeships than was found previously. Between January 2004 and November 2005 17 prisoners had completed traineeships and 29 prisoners were enrolled as a trainee at the time of the inspection. This work should be continued with the exploration of expanding the traineeships available to other areas of work.
- 3.16 Prisoners reported that the March incident had not impacted upon their ability to access education services. While they reported (and it was observed during the inspection) that physical access to the education centre had become more regulated, this was recognised as a positive and understandable measure following the incident. Prisoners were empathetic toward the staff and acknowledged the need for change to enable education workers to feel safe in the environment.

40 Sixty-five prisoners on a part-time basis and 22 prisoners on a full-time basis.

41 For example as at 1 October 2005 only seven prisoners were employed within C block, only one prisoner was employed in the cleaning party and 10 were employed as self-care workers.

HEALTH SERVICES

- 3.17 The medical centre is open daily from 7.30 am to 7.30 pm staffed by nurses with a doctor on-site two days a week. Prisoners request to attend the centre through their unit and are generally seen by a nurse the same day. Prisoners will be referred for a doctor's appointment if assessed by a nurse as necessary. Required annual checkups are well behind schedule and this must be addressed.⁴² At the time of the inspection medical facilities were inadequate, as was the case in 2002. A new medical centre had been commenced however, and was due for completion in October 2006. A separate medical facility is planned for the new minimum-security area.⁴³ Medical centre staff have been consulted in the new design process and this should hopefully result in an improved health facility that will further improve prisoner health services.
- 3.18 Medical centre staff stated that the March incident had had significant impact on their work. Two medical centre staff left the prison following the incident and many of those who have remained still do not feel safe. Those who were on duty on the night of the incident reported that they did not receive support on the night or immediately following from their head office Health Service managers; although they had been counselled by PRIME the following day. To the credit of medical centre staff this does not appear to have impacted on their delivery of services to prisoners. Prisoners reported there had been no impact on their access to medical services as a result of the March incident and the relationship with medical centre staff had remained the same. Only 18 per cent of prisoners expressed any concern about general health services at the prison.
- 3.19 Prisoners continue to be transferred to Casuarina Prison in Perth to access specialist medical services. The result is that some prisoners refuse to be transferred to the maximum-security prison leaving health issues to deteriorate without appropriate treatment or diagnosis. Neither prison management nor the medical centre staff were aware of any departmental initiative to contract local area specialists to provide the services to prevent the need for such transfers. The wider provision of specialist services will be important if Bunbury is to truly function as a regional prison.
- 3.20 At the time of the inspection the waiting list for dental appointments was approximately 42 months – an unacceptable timeframe. Emergency appointments usually occur within one to two weeks, with prisoners being prescribed antibiotics and painkillers in the interim. A dental clinic space has been provided for in the plans for the new medical centre and it is imperative that a service provider be sourced to improve access to this service.
- 3.21 Concerning was the large number of prisoners at Bunbury with a mental health issue – 47 as of 30 November 2005 (about 25% of the total population). Approximately half of the prison population was prescribed some form of psychiatric medication (including anti-depressants). Despite this, there is no dedicated mental health nurse at the prison and medical centre staff

42 Since the Inspection the annual prisoner health checks have been bought up to date.

43 See discussion regarding the new minimum-security facility below.

have not received any specific mental health training. A visiting psychiatrist attends fortnightly, but there is no other formal process to call out a psychiatrist for mental health emergencies if required. The Department must prioritise the assessment and provision of required mental health services urgently.

- 3.22 Bunbury had one full-time Prison Counselling Service (PCS) counsellor and a second counsellor on-site two days a week. The main role of PCS is crisis intervention; however, within the prison there was a largely unmet demand for welfare and advocacy services and many prisoners seemed to believe that PCS should fulfil this role. PCS stated it would be helpful if they could refer such prisoners to other agencies, but there was a lack of alternatives available. This gap in services should be examined and addressed by the Department.

ASSESSMENT AND CASE MANAGEMENT

- 3.23 Both prisoners and staff indicated throughout the course of the inspection that the events of 2005 had impacted to some extent on the assessment and case management of prisoners at Bunbury Prison. Positively, the prisoner survey indicated that 77 per cent of prisoners were aware that they had an Individual Management Plan (IMP). There was a significant discrepancy in responses between 'local' prisoners and those who had their IMPs completed elsewhere. One-third of local prisoner respondents stated they did not have an IMP compared to just six per cent of non-locals, indicating an issue with the local production of assessments and plans.
- 3.24 Over 88 per cent of prisoners surveyed identified that they had a case manager, but 47 per cent of these said they had never met them, 42 per cent said they had met them once or twice and 11 per cent said they regularly met their case manager. Bunbury management identified the recent high turnover of staff as one explanation for this problem and staff involved in the case management process acknowledged that not all prisoners had a case manager. Another issue identified by some staff is the lack of quality and consistency in documentation supplied by case managers and others who contribute to the reports on prisoners. The problem has become more pronounced since the incidents in 2005 as the focus of staff has been disrupted. The prison must make a concentrated effort for case management to be re-energised and the appropriate contacts made on a regular basis.
- 3.25 One of the most serious issues for both prisoners and staff is the inability of the Department to provide a sufficient number of programs within the required timeframes. A number of programs had been cancelled at Bunbury over the past twelve months (mostly by head office) and this had created a backlog of prisoners trying to access programs before their parole eligibility. This is a longstanding issue not unique to Bunbury but one that must be resolved by the Department.

ACCOMMODATION, FOOD AND RECREATION

- 3.26 As with many prisons throughout the state, Bunbury has resorted to some double-bunking in order to accommodate prisoners. Bunk beds have been placed in 10 cells in C block and one cell in each self-care unit has also been allocated a bunk. Prisoners reported some tension regarding the allocation to the double cells. An example was the doubling up of one Aboriginal prisoner who was a non-smoker with a relative who smoked without being consulted. The Inspector raised his concern about the lack of documented processes and criteria associated with decision-making for double-bunking with the then Director General of the Department in February 2005.⁴⁴ While it is not necessary to create a cumbersome bureaucratic process, the absence of one creates a risk that can be simply avoided. Crowding had also resulted in mainstream prisoners being accommodated in the maximum-security section of the prison. The long-term accommodation plan is for C block and the maximum-security section to be demolished and new accommodation constructed; however, additional land will be required for this to occur.
- 3.27 The food provided to prisoners in the main section of Bunbury is of a good standard and generally better than that available in most other prisons in the state. On the whole, prisoners were satisfied with the meals received, but prisoners in the minimum-security section had significantly more complaints about food quality. Because food is prepared in the main kitchen and then taken by trolley to the minimum-security section, food temperature is a concern. The prison must ensure that meals are delivered as soon as possible after they have been placed in the insulated trolley. This problem may be eliminated temporarily when the main kitchen is relocated to the minimum-security section to allow the main kitchen to be refurbished (a long overdue project). While this will increase activity and employment available to minimum-security prisoners it will nonetheless impact negatively on current kitchen workers because medium-security prisoners will not be allowed to work in the area during the period of relocation. This reflects a current problem of prisoners who have qualified to move to the outside section refusing to do so as they would have to stop working in the kitchen inside the main prison if they did so. The prison must balance the security issues with the genuine training and skilling needs of prisoners in making such broad sweeping decisions.
- 3.28 At the time of the inspection the position of recreation/library officer was vacant, and as a result a prisoner organised most prisoner sporting activities. Hours of access to active recreation were reasonable, but prisoners in the main prison were dissatisfied with the range of options available to them, in particular the restriction on playing football during the cricket season. While there were a number of reasons provided by management for this position, prisoners had not been given the opportunity to prove they could follow any rules laid down if some access was permitted.⁴⁵ Options for active recreation were even more limited in the minimum-security section, especially since prisoners accommodated in this area are no longer

44 Inspector of Custodial Services, 'Cell Sharing Risk Assessment Processes', letter to the Director General of the Department of Justice (24 February 2005). While the letter resulted from a visit to Bunbury Regional Prison, the Inspector emphasised it was an issue for all prisons in Western Australia.

45 For a discussion of recreation access in the minimum-security section see [3.38]–[3.41] below.

permitted to enter the main prison to participate in prison competitions. This left only a small outdoor activity area and restricted activities due to the proximity to car parks. Progression to minimum-security is supposed to be a reward for prisoners' good behaviour, but the lack of equity in this area acts as a disincentive. Only six per cent of prisoners residing in the minimum-security section indicated good access to recreation compared to 72 per cent in the main prison. Management must explore alternative ways of providing access to better active recreational activities for these prisoners.

PRE-RELEASE PREPARATION

- 3.29 Many prisoners stated throughout the inspection their perception that the March incident, along with other actions by individual prisoners, had affected their opportunity for parole or other release preparation options outside the prison. They saw themselves as victims of political risk, media perceptions and the actions of others. The resocialisation of lifers or those serving terms at the 'Governor's pleasure' has halted and the length of time it is taking to resolve these issues is contributing to a feeling of hopelessness among these prisoners. This position risks the creation of a group of prisoners who may feel they have no hope for release and therefore nothing to lose.
- 3.30 Only 54 per cent of prisoner survey respondents stated they had access to the required resources to prepare them for release. The most common issue was the requirement of having to transfer to another prison to access programs. An interview conducted with a group of prisoners who were all within eight weeks of release revealed that there was no central and coordinated point of contact for information regarding their release and a consensus that the case management system was not working effectively to provide this sort of resource.
- 3.31 There is no community corrections officer (CCO) on site, another factor that was seriously hampering prisoners' re-entry. While a CCO from the main office in Bunbury attends the prison 'as required', the number of prisoners needing information and support is more than the resource available, especially life sentence prisoners who require a high degree of support when nearing possible release. With the increasing number of minimum-security beds with the construction of the new minimum facility it will be important for the Department to reassess the needs of prisoners and provide the appropriate resource.
- 3.32 The March incident had significant impact on the pre-release programs operating at the prison. As the programs were predominantly delivered by outside agencies or volunteers, security and safety concerns resulted in them deciding to cease delivery. This left a significant gap in pre-release services and no replacement programs were provided. A direct effect of this was the pressure on the PCS to provide more welfare-based advice to prisoners.⁴⁶ Shortly before the inspection the South-West Accommodation Service had recommenced servicing the prison, and the return of other pre-release services have been negotiated sometime in the beginning of 2006. It is hoped this will help satisfy the needs of prisoners with regard to pre-release services, and the prison must monitor this.

46 See above [3.22].

SERVICES FOR ABORIGINAL PRISONERS

- 3.33 Compared with other medium-security prisons in Western Australia, Bunbury has a relatively small Aboriginal prisoner population. On the first day of the inspection 29 prisoners out of a total of 184 were Aboriginal (approximately 15%). Of these 29 prisoners all but one were from the Perth metropolitan area or the South-West. The single prisoner who was out of country was from the Kimberley, but stated he was satisfied with being accommodated at Bunbury.
- 3.34 The 2002 inspection found that while there was no overt racism at the prison, Aboriginal prisoners were not accessing certain services. The main areas in which this was an issue was in progression to self-care accommodation and access to more diverse employment opportunities.⁴⁷ It resulted in a recommendation that strategies be developed to overcome the structural barriers in place to improve equity of access. The 2005 inspection found that there had been some good progress in addressing this recommendation with regard to accommodation access but only limited improvement in access to a wider range of work placements. At the time of the 2005 inspection six Aboriginal prisoners were residing in self-care, compared with only two in 2002. While Aboriginal prisoners remain under-represented in self-care as a proportion of the total prisoner population, the Aboriginal prisoner focus group and interviews with individual prisoners indicate a general satisfaction with access to the area. Younger Aboriginal prisoners stated their reason for not wanting to reside in self-care related to the higher number of sex offenders generally accommodated there and a desire not to mix with them.
- 3.35 High Aboriginal prisoner representation in horticulture and the grounds party reflected the findings of the 2002 inspection and little progress seems to have been made in encouraging these prisoners to try other employment opportunities. What has improved, however, is the higher level of traineeships now attached to horticulture and Aboriginal prisoners' active participation in these. Similarly, Aboriginal prisoners are accessing education services on a broader basis, including the recently developed Gaining Access to Training and Education (GATE) program that engages (often) reluctant prisoners in education to gain year 10 equivalency and a Certificate 1 in business.
- 3.36 Aboriginal specific services are integrated well into the prison and prisoners are afforded good access. The Aboriginal Visitors' Scheme (AVS) attends three days per week and reported having good relationships with prisoners, staff and management. About one-third of Aboriginal prisoners who responded to the pre-inspection survey indicated that they accessed the AVS and found the scheme useful. The Prisoner Support Officer (PSO) was the subject of particularly positive comment in both the survey and the Aboriginal prisoner focus group and was attributed with the perceived gradual improvement in conditions for Aboriginal prisoners. It was disappointing to find in 2005 that Aboriginal health workers from the South West Aboriginal Medical Service (SWAMS) were no longer attending the prison; however, negotiations had recently commenced for their return, and it is hoped a positive outcome can be achieved as soon as possible.

47 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison – December 2002*, Report No. 16 (June 2003) [3.52]–[3.59].

- 3.37 Bunbury generally performs well in providing services to Aboriginal prisoners and there was no evidence of the events of 2005 impacting negatively on this. Services and awareness of the needs of Aboriginal prisoners have improved since the last inspection, although there is scope for more improvement. Further initiatives to improve work opportunities should be explored and, as examined in Chapter Two of this Report, staff training in cultural awareness must be made a higher priority.

MINIMUM-SECURITY

- 3.38 Not long before the 2002 inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison the Department had closed the minimum-security section as part of its downsizing of the prison estate in the face of lower prisoner populations. Minimum-security prisoners had been moved inside the main prison and were subject to the same regimes and policies as medium-security prisoners. The inspection found that these prisoners had been significantly disadvantaged by the move and that it had also eroded the ability of the prison to operate as a truly regional prison in limiting its scope. The situation resulted in a recommendation that an assessment be made of the needs of minimum-security prisoners, that Section 94 work and recreation programs be reinvigorated and that a business case be developed with the aim of securing sufficient resources the comprehensive provision of services for minimum-security prisoners.
- 3.39 Many things had changed at Bunbury in relation to minimum-security prisoners in the past three years. The facility outside the main prison had been reopened. Capital works had been approved and plans significantly progressed for a larger minimum-security section to be constructed that will provide a wider and more complete range of services dedicated to those prisoners. In addition, this Office's recommendation concerning development of Section 94 programs had been actioned to an acceptable level, with prisoners undertaking good work in the community at the time of the inspection. It is hoped this will continue and expand even further in the near future as the minimum-security population grows with the new facilities.
- 3.40 Because of security concerns about the smuggling of contraband into the prison, when the minimum-security section reopened the prison began a policy of banning minimum-security prisoners from entering the main prison, except for medical appointments and other extraordinary circumstances. This has had a significant adverse impact on the access and quality of services provided to minimum-security prisoners. The sections above have already referenced issues relating to food, recreation, employment and traineeships. Similarly, prisoners only have access to education workers in the times they are rostered to attend the outside area.
- 3.41 The progression to minimum-security status is supposed to form part of earned incentives for acceptable behaviour combined with the need for prisoners to be in an environment more conducive to preparation for release. The situation found at Bunbury during the inspection was that prisoners were actively passing up the minimum-security option due to the restrictions on access to services. This must be addressed immediately and cannot wait until new minimum-security section is completed and services are expanded. While the need

to restrict access to services in the main prison may need to remain, prison management must devise other alternatives that can act as reward and to devise procedures that will not prevent prisoners' access to work and training opportunities.

CONCLUSIONS

- 3.42 Despite the very difficult circumstances experienced by the prison in 2005, its performance in terms of the delivery of services to prisoners has been incredibly resilient. This chapter has highlighted a number of areas where delivery has improved since the 2002 inspection, in particular Section 94 activities, services to Aboriginal prisoners, food and linkage of education and training. Services for minimum-security prisoners, visits, case management, programs and re-entry, however, are areas that require that some improvement and have been the subject of recommendations.
- 3.43 Importantly, the prisoner/staff relationships do not appear to have been prejudiced, and this, along with the strong commitment of staff to their work, was what kept the prison operating on such a steady course despite the traumatic events. Despite the generally good performance of the prison, without immediate action regarding the staffing issues raised in Chapter Two of this Report, the resilience of the prison cannot be expected to continue.

Chapter 4

SECURITY AND SAFETY

- 4.1 Security and safety in prison consists of a balance between the provision of the necessary physical requirements to provide internal security and to prevent escapes for the protection of the public, and the existence of positive relationships between staff and prisoners which provide the dynamic security that will bring a well-ordered, controlled and safe environment within the prison.
- 4.2 Bunbury Regional Prison has all the fundamentals in place to meet the objective of a secure and safe prison, both within the secure perimeter and outside in the minimum-security accommodation area. While the physical security features and procedural requirements that are ordinarily found in a medium-security facility exist in Bunbury, it is the prison's interactive dynamic security that represents its best security and safety asset.

PHYSICAL AND PROCEDURAL SECURITY

- 4.3 Security features for the secure section of the prison begin outside the perimeter with an external detection system, which includes some use of pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) and fixed cameras and an infrared detection system protecting the area surrounding the gatehouse. The perimeter fence is a single four metre high steel link mesh fence with four coils of barrier razor wire bringing the total height to five metres. Within the prison the maximum-security section is secured behind a series of grill gates.
- 4.4 A wire mesh fence with barbed wire surrounds the minimum-security section outside the main fence with a regular gate for access with a padlock. Entry and exit control to the internal areas of the section are by a glass door into the building. As discussed in the previous chapter, minimum-security prisoners are now prohibited from entering the main prison (except for medical purposes) as a security and contraband control measure.
- 4.5 The inspection raised some issues regarding the perimeter security. It has long been acknowledged by the prison, and was commented upon in the 2002 inspection report, that the eastern fence line is vulnerable to the transfer of contraband. At the time of the last inspection the issue became somewhat negated by the closing of the minimum-security section, however, now it is reopened the provision of better PTZ camera coverage must be actioned to provide observation of this vulnerable location. Secondly, there has been a high level of false alarms from the D fence system, which has resulted in the Security Manager assuming responsibility for repair and maintenance. As will be discussed further below, this is inappropriate to the security manager role. The inspection team was told that there are plans to change the electronic early defence system to address this issue, but in the meantime this maintenance task should be reassigned.
- 4.6 The Bunbury Regional Prison gatehouse has been unchanged since the commissioning of the prison and is in need of refurbishment. Capital works funding has been approved for the control room, with a scheduled project start date of May 2006. It is important that planning for the remodel is thorough and consultative to ensure it meets security needs while addressing the practical operational needs of staff. Similar work has recently been undertaken at Rangeview Juvenile Remand Centre and Acacia Prison has undertaken planning for a

control room project with an external consultant. Bunbury would benefit from reviewing the process and scoping plans for these other facilities as well as taking on board lessons learned from the upgrades. In concert with the upgrade of facilities, it would be an opportune time to reassess the duties of the control room officer, to ensure the duties focus on the core purpose of the posting: to prevent escapes and respond to emergencies.

- 4.7 The prison had conducted 2100 cell searches in 2005 up until the time of the inspection, which is at a satisfactory level in terms of a system to assist in making the prison a safe and secure environment for staff, prisoners and the public. While the current procedure for tool checks is adequate, it could be improved. The security office should have access to a central inventory of tool lists and conduct spot random checks to ensure safe usage and storage.
- 4.8 Security reviews completed since the March incident have focused on security in the education centre and other areas frequented by non-custodial staff.⁴⁸ This has been done across the whole prison system. The reports do not seem to address areas of concern that were expressly raised with the inspection team by staff during the inspection, in particular the kitchen and areas within minimum-security that are accessed by external service providers.
- 4.9 Staff were cynical regarding a number of security changes made in response to the March incident and considered many to be tokenistic. In particular, the reliance on the issue of 'screamer' personal alarms to all non-custodial staff and visitors to the prison was viewed as a quick fix that ran the risk of complacency in those who carry them. Other problems with the devices are that they are easily activated accidentally (and so there is a risk of the alarm being ignored) and that they are extremely difficult to hear when activated in some areas of the prison. On two occasions when the inspection team activated alarms it appeared that no one heard them. While there is a commitment to install electronic alarms in the prison, in the meantime reliance on the screamers is certainly inappropriate.

DYNAMIC SECURITY

- 4.10 Feedback from staff and prisoners indicated that the relationship between the two groups is generally very positive and interaction observed during the time of the inspection reflected this. This good working relationship has a positive impact on dynamic safety at the prison and in particular the feeling of safety amongst both staff and prisoners. Most prisoners feel safe at Bunbury Regional Prison, with the pre-inspection survey showing that 87 per cent of prisoners feel safe all of the time (53%) or most of the time (34%). Comparing the 2002 pre-inspection survey results to those gathered in 2005 showed that on the whole violence was viewed as being less prevalent in prison.
- 4.11 The strong anti-bullying regime has always been a key factor at Bunbury that has enabled prisoners to be accommodated in a relatively safe environment. The prison's policy has always been a strong one of zero-tolerance, and this is followed through with action. It is now a

48 Prisons Division, Department of Justice, *Safety Audit of Areas within Prisons where Non-custodial staff Interact with Prisoners*, version 1.1 (June 2005); and *Education and Vocational Training Unit Security Review*, draft (April 2005).

well-known fact throughout the prison system that Bunbury does not tolerate bullying and as a prisoner if you cannot live in that environment, you should not transfer there. It has now come to the point that it is an expectation amongst prisoners that you are 'left to do your own time' and they do not want others there that will disrupt the status quo. Comments made in the pre-inspection prisoner survey reflect this, with a typical response being that bullying and standovers were not tolerated by staff and the majority of prisoners. This is despite the fact that there is animosity felt towards sex offenders (and in particular those who have committed offences against children). The balance is a delicate one that will require the maintenance of good staff-prisoner relationships and strong dynamic security.

- 4.12 The positive relationship between staff and prisoners should, however, have resulted in better quality and higher quantity of intelligence than is evident at Bunbury Prison. There were only 62 intelligence reports submitted to the Security Manager between 1 January 2005 and 14 December 2005. Of those that were submitted, a significant number related to occurrences or incidents rather than to actual intelligence information. The Security Manager's role is essential in this regard and the burden of tasks placed on this position and the overall negative relationships between staff and management may be negatively impacting on the intelligence gathering function at Bunbury. It is vital that this area of operations improve, especially given the changing population mix at the prison (from less sex offenders to more violent offenders).

ROLE OF THE SECURITY MANAGER

- 4.13 Security operations have been distracted by process work that needs to be done by others; that is, the security manager should manage those tasks but not actively complete them. Everyday operational activities were consuming the position to such an extent that the manager is unable to focus on compliance and prevented from interacting with staff and prisoners. An assessment of the role and its key functions must be undertaken and duties outside of this must become the responsibilities of other staff overseen by the Security Manager. This may also partly address the issue raised by staff (and in particular senior officers) that they feel disempowered and unable to make operational decisions. By delegating some functions and authority the senior group will be given more responsibility and ownership of operations, and this should flow through to other staff.
- 4.14 Another issue related to this position is the inadequacy of the classification assigned to it by the Department. Currently classed as a level five, it does not reflect the importance of the role in the prison environment and discourages senior officers to act in the position. This is not only an issue at Bunbury Prison, but it was very obvious to the inspection team at this location how inadequate the classification was. Once the role and duties of the Security Manager have been reassessed and articulated, this can then act as the basis of a business case to head office for the reclassification of this central management role.
- 4.15 Linked into the role of the Security Manager is that of the prosecutions officer. Bunbury currently has three officers who undertake this role, but only when time permits. This results in some delays to prosecutions and causes staff to lack confidence in the system and

consequently informal sanctions are overused. At the time of the inspection the time between a prisoner being charged and the occurrence of a hearing was anything up to eight weeks. This is unacceptable. A dedicated prosecuting officer could undertake all functions associated with charges as well as monitoring loss of privileges (LOP) and urine tests, but could also possibly assist in other security-related functions currently being undertaken by the manager (that do not conflict with the officer's role as a prosecutor).

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- 4.16 The Office has long been concerned about the response to fires, and in particular cell fires, at all prisons in Western Australia. Incidents at a number of prisons over the past year have reignited this concern. Approximately two years after the Fire and Emergency Services assisted the Department in reviewing prison-based fire rescue and evacuation capability in prisons, the systems remain unsatisfactory. During the Inspection the team was informed that Bunbury Prison would be establishing the new systems over the next few months and that they were due for completion in January 2007. The Office will monitor this progress.
- 4.17 As is usual during the inspection process, a desktop exercise was conducted to assess the prison's capacity to respond to an emergency situation. It was expected, given the events of the preceding 12 months, that Bunbury would have a robust and practised process in place. The scenario for the exercise involved a serious assault by one prisoner against another in the maximum-security section of the prison. The response of the Security Manager was satisfactory to display that the code red system could draw adequate staff and equipment for the required action. Staff did raise some concerns, however, about the quality of equipment provided in the use of such events. It is essential that equipment specifically designed for the tasks intended is available, that the equipment is regularly checked and that it is replaced according to an appropriate schedule.
- 4.18 Regular scenario training is fundamental to maintain safety awareness, develop emergency response skills and to identify areas for improvement. While there had been some exercises performed in the year preceding the inspection, this needed to be a much more regular occurrence. The inspection also found there to be some lack of training for staff with regard to response team participation, no nominated positions to the response team and a lack of planning as to what the standard of performance is that the prison wishes to reach and how to attain it. With the better articulation of the role of Security Manager, this last aspect of emergency management should significantly improve.

Chapter 5

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

- 5.1 Bunbury Regional Prison was found to be a strong performing prison. This was despite the many staffing and human resource problems plainly evident. If these are not addressed as a matter of priority the good performance found during this inspection will inevitably erode and service delivery will suffer. Most importantly the prison must establish, with the concerted assistance of the Department, a comprehensive human resources plan that will address the longstanding staffing issues and will set the facility on a course for improvement into the future with a staff that is committed to its work and its management team. This should assist in continuing the recovery process that has not progressed far enough, nor been planned enough to date.
- 5.2 Despite the problems, the prison had addressed a number of issues raised in the 2002 inspection report and is looking towards its future. In the past three years it has refocused its direction, which is reflected in its official 'statement of purpose'. Whereas previously it emphasised providing a safe environment for prisoners to address offending behaviours (and particularly through the sex offender treatment program) it has begun to address its role as a regional prison. While still aiming to provide a safe environment the Bunbury Regional Prison also recognises that 'our role as a Regional Prison includes the role of holding maximum-security prisoners short term for court and visits purposes. Secondarily to hold prisoners close to family and friends for visits'. It is now important for the prison to take this even further, with future planning for the true regionalisation of the prison through the permanent accommodation of maximum-security prisoners and women and the expansion of treatment programs to enable all prisoners to address offending behaviour needs without transfer.⁴⁹
- 5.3 In part to facilitate this, the prison has developed a 20-year master plan that it believes will meet the needs of the region. Nothing developed in this plan is incompatible with the analysis completed by this Office in the Directed Review, although some aspects (such as the accommodation of women) do not extend quite as far as this Office envisages. The next 10 years should be a time of change for Bunbury Regional Prison in terms of staff, infrastructure and services. The key is careful planning, comprehensive assessment of needs and a truly consultative and inclusive process to achieve the prison's goals.

49 See OICS, *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody*, Report No. 30 (November 2005) 171 and 310 for a comprehensive discussion of the future prison needs for the South-West region of Western Australia.

Chapter 6

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That a human resources master plan for Bunbury Regional Prison be developed and a change management process be implemented to address among other issues:
 - bullying;
 - improved communication between local management and staff;
 - local recruitment of a more diverse (females and Aboriginal) prison officer group;
 - OH&S management plans linked to risk and the functioning of the OH&S process;
 - staff training needs; and
 - performance management.
 2. That the Department develop clear policies and procedures for the management of staff during critical incidents and guidelines for the management of staff post incident. This should include direction to local prison and head office management.
 3. That the Department instigate research into the individual and systemic coping mechanisms used in prisons and their impact on custodial management and, specifically for Bunbury Prison, that the Department seek expert advice as to the coping mechanisms and develop a transition plan, with consideration to the safety issues raised by staff and this Office, to ensure the continuing good functioning of the prison.
 4. That the Department review the processes and systems for the decision-making relating to the double-bunking of prisoners in Western Australia with the view to the creation of a simple but accountable documented system.
 5. That the prison review and implement changes to its visits facilities, policies and procedures with a view to providing an environment more conducive to the maintenance of family relationships and more friendly to children, as well as achieving better safety for visitors and securing desired security outcomes.
 6. That the Department improve health services through:
 - a) the re-establishment of a formal relationship with relevant external providers specifically for Aboriginal prisoners; and
 - b) the investigation of opportunities for the provision of specialist health services from the local community to eliminate the need for the transfer of prisoners to the metropolitan area to receive treatment.
 7. That the prison management develop a strategy for the rejuvenation of the case management process at Bunbury.
 8. That the prison develop and implement a strategy for the improvement of pre-release programs delivered to prisoners at Bunbury Regional Prison.
 9. That an assessment be made of the services and incentives provided to minimum-security prisoners at Bunbury Regional Prison and that strategies be developed and implemented to ensure that prisoners are not disadvantaged by a transfer to the external minimum-security facility at the prison.
 10. That the Department urgently commence a project to redesign and refit the control room at Bunbury Regional Prison.
 11. That the prison better define the role of the Security Manager to ensure that it focuses on the core duties expected of that role and is more consistent with that at other medium-security prisons.
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Appendix 1

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES RESPONSE TO THE 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Response/Risk Rating
<p>1. That a human resources master plan for Bunbury Regional Prison be developed and a change management process implemented to address among other issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• bullying;• improve communication between local management and staff;• local recruitment of a more diverse (females and Aboriginal) prison officer group;• OH&S management plans linked to risk and the functioning of the OH&S process;• staff training needs; and• performance management.	<p>Agree/High</p> <p>Management of Human Resources is a complex area and requires both corporate and prison based planning.</p> <p>At the corporate level, a new position of Workforce Planner has been approved to better understand the attraction, recruitment and retention of our workforce. Similarly, a consultant has been engaged to assess and recommend a co-ordinated approach to training. An additional Occupational, Safety and Health Officer is to be appointed to develop and implement a strategy for proactively managing staff health and welfare.</p> <p>At the prison level, ongoing work is being conducted to enhance communication, Occupational Safety and Health, training and performance management.</p> <p>In part, the level of improvement in this area will be dependent upon supplementary funding. It is pleasing to report the prison will have a dedicated trainer within the next 12 months.</p>
<p>2. That the Department develop clear policies and procedures for the management of staff during critical incidents and guidelines for the management of staff post incident. This should include direction to local prison and Head Office management.</p>	<p>Agree/High</p> <p>A consultative group will be established. The Staff Support Psychologist has undertaken to manage this process and facilitate the development of clear policies and procedures as outlined in the recommendation.</p>

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES RESPONSE TO THE 2006
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Response/Risk Rating
3. That the Department instigate research into the individual and systemic coping mechanisms used in their prisons and their impact on custodial management and specifically for Bunbury Prison, the Department seek expert advice as to the coping mechanisms and develop a transition plan, with consideration to the safety issues raised by staff and this Office, to ensure the ongoing continuation of the good functioning of the prison.	Agree/High There are a number of aspects to this recommendation and so some investigation will be required to determine how the recommendation might be fully actioned. The Staff Support Psychologist and Manager, Employee Welfare have undertaken to develop the plan by which this may occur.
4. That the Department review the processes and systems for the decision-making relating to the double-bunking of prisoners in Western Australia with the view to the creation of a simple but accountable documented system.	Agree/Moderate A Multiple Cell Occupancy Risk Assessment is being developed. During the consultation process a number of difficulties were identified that may limit its application across the State, and in open prisons. Its use is to be further discussed at the Superintendent's conference and options developed to overcome these difficulties.
5. The prison review and implement changes to its visits facilities, policies and procedures with a view to providing an environment more conducive to the maintenance of family relationships and more friendly to children, as well as achieving better safety for visitors and securing desired security outcomes.	Agree / Low The prison has reviewed the visits facilities and procedures since the inspection and Phase 1 is nearing completion. This includes heating/cooling to the enclosed secure visit area, provision of hot drinks, children's play area and new seating. Phase 2 is subject to a business plan to improve the climate control in the external area. The outcome will depend upon engineering reports and appropriate funding. Phase 3 is a total redesign of the area to allow additional non-contact cubicles, privilege visit area and security monitoring. Detailed plans for this will depend upon reports emanating from Phase 2.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES RESPONSE TO THE 2006
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Response/Risk Rating
<p>6. That the Department improve health services through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) the re-establishment of a formal relationship with relevant external providers specifically for Aboriginal prisoners; andb) the investigation of opportunities for the provision of specialist health services from the local community to eliminate the need for the transfer of prisoners to the metropolitan area to receive treatment.	<p>Agree/Low</p> <p>Local links with community and regional health providers are continually being sought. The local health providers are subject to a lack of resources (ie doctors/dentists and specialists) which results in prisoner health competing with the community demands.</p> <p>In addition the current inadequate health centre is not conducive for visiting health specialists. The new health centre due to completed by Sep 07 should alleviate this.</p> <p>Recent discussions with SWAMS have proved worthwhile and will be followed up un due course. Public health waiting lists are a recognised problem in the greater Bunbury area.</p>
<p>7. That the prison management develop a strategy for the rejuvenation of the case management process at Bunbury.</p>	<p>Agree/Moderate</p> <p>The issue of case management was a key focus of the recent “Mahoney” Inquiry and a proposal to review, enhance, and better resource case management is currently the subject of a funding proposal to Government. A system-wide “reinvigoration” of case management would be likely to result from such a review should the funding submission be successful.</p>
<p>8. That the prison develops and implements a strategy for the improvement of pre-release programs delivered to prisoners at Bunbury Regional Prison.</p>	<p>Agree/High</p> <p>The Manager, Service Agreements will ensure that meetings are held with the Service Provider and the Prison. Superintendent to plan the best possible service provision to prisoners in accordance within the funding and scope of the programs and that the service is reviewed and improved in accordance with the Service Agreements Branch Re-entry Link and TASS Monitoring Framework.</p>

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES RESPONSE TO THE 2006
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Response/Risk Rating
9. That an assessment be made of the services and incentives provided to minimum-security prisoners at Bunbury Regional Prison and that strategies be developed and implemented to ensure that prisoners are not disadvantaged by a transfer to the external minimum-security facility at the prison.	Agree/Low An assessment of incentives to minimum-security prisoners has already been conducted and lessons learned. This has assisted in the design of the new minimum-security unit which should be completed in July 2007. As opportunities arise, additional improvements for the existing facility that do not require supplementing funding are evaluated and incorporated
10. That the Department urgently commence a project to re-design and refit the control room at Bunbury Regional Prison.	Agree/High The redesign and refit of the control room had funding approval at the time of the inspection. This has progressed to a detailed tender document that has been put to the market. Subject to a successful tenderer, the conversion will be complete by September 2006.
11. The prison should better define the role of the Security Manager at the prison to ensure that it focuses more on the core duties expected of that role and is more consistent with that at other medium-security prisons.	Agree/High A consultant has been engaged to recommend options for prison management structures to support emerging business activity in prisons. The prison has made a bid for a Senior Officer Security/Standard position to manage the workload associated with a medium security prison. The result of these initiatives will significantly impact on the role of the Manager Security and will be adjusted accordingly.

Appendix 2

INSPECTION TEAM

Professor Richard Harding	Inspector of Custodial Services
Mr Robert Stacey	Deputy Inspector of Custodial Services
Ms Dace Tomsons	A / Manager Inspections and Research
Ms Kati Kraszlan	Manager Inspections and Research
Ms Natalie Gibson	Senior Inspections and Research Officer
Mr John Acres	Senior Inspections and Research Officer
Ms Fiona Paskulich	Inspections and Research Officer
Mrs Diane Broadby	Manager Community Relations
Mr Joseph Wallam	Community Liaison Officer
Ms Fiona McLeod	Expert Advisor (Human Resources Management)

Appendix 3

SCHEDULE OF KEY DATES

Notice of Inspection	2 September 2005
On-site Phase	11 December 2005 – 16 December 2005
Circulation of Exit Debrief Notes	16 December 2005
Draft Report sent to the Department of Corrective Services	3 April 2006
Response from the Department of Corrective Services	12 May 2006
Declaration of Prepared Report	25 May 2006



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