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OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES

REPORT OF AN ANNOUNCED INSPECTION
OF ROEBOURNE REGIONAL PRISON



Report of an Announced Inspection
of Roebourne Regional Prison

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The Inspector's Overview

THE PERPETUAL STRUGGLE TO REMAIN VIABLE CONTINUES AT ROEBOURNE REGIONAL PRISON, WITH SOME SIGNS OF SUCCESS

Roebourne Regional Prison has always been one of our problem prisons. The performance that we identified at the first inspection in April 2002 was worrying enough for us to announce that we would bring the next inspection forward by 18 months, to November 2003. Although the subsequent inspection was carried out in November 2006 as part of the normal three-yearly cycle, the Prison had nevertheless been kept under close scrutiny with extra and more intensive liaison visits by Inspectorate staff and there had been several discussions with both the Department and the Minister about its performance.

The underlying explanation for its problems has several components. First, the location is wrong. The catchment area for Pilbara prisoners revolves more around the Hedland area than Karratha/Roebourne/Wickham. To compound matters, the prison itself is in an exposed area where summer temperatures are pulverising, and the concrete and steel mode of construction makes absolutely no concession to climatic imperatives. Living conditions for prisoners and working conditions for staff are difficult. It is the wrong prison in the wrong place; and if we were doing it all again there is no way that it would pass the most elementary planning criteria.

It has never been easy to staff it, either with custodial officers or the various civilian grades. In the last decade, with the explosion of mining development in the Pilbara and the general labour shortage, this problem has been exacerbated. Roebourne has had to cope with insufficient staffing levels for many years, with consequential expectations that staff will work overtime and the inevitable consequence of greater absenteeism through stress and illness. The spiralling cost of housing, both rental and purchased, has put people on Public Service levels of salary under unprecedented pressure. Add to these factors the overcrowding that has permeated the whole prison system, including Roebourne, plus the fact that the population mix has become more demanding with more medium- and maximum-security prisoners, and it is little surprise that the Prison has struggled.

Whilst there were many admirable ways in which particular aspects of the Prison regime had improved – and these have been acknowledged in both the Exit Debrief and this Report – the bottom line was that, at the time of the inspection, the Prison was in a fragile state. In a sense, it had reached the point where it depended upon the goodwill of the prisoner population to function effectively. In that regard, management and staff had drifted into a perilous state of mind. Frequently, the point was made to us that the Prison can still be managed despite all the service deficits because the prisoner group is compliant, acceptant of their situation, look after each other, know how to keep out of trouble and, even we were told, understand the pressure that staff have to endure. This state of mind failed to take account of the changing nature of the Aboriginal population, with at least a dozen different language groups as well as many Kimberley prisoners who do not necessarily share the values of those from the broad Pilbara region. There were in fact tangible signs of prisoner-to-staff and prisoner-to-prisoner antagonism.

Our immediate response to the inspection was to notify the Minister and the Department formally, in writing, of the risk the Prison posed as we came into the long, hot summer season and the Wet. We recommended that the Department supplement the staff urgently with some experienced staff from other prisons and also that the population must not be permitted to increase beyond the 174 it held at the time of the inspection (and preferably should be reduced).

THE PERPETUAL STRUGGLE TO REMAIN VIABLE CONTINUES AT
ROEBOURNE REGIONAL PRISON, WITH SOME SIGNS OF SUCCESS

It is gratifying to put on the record that each of these strategies was adopted. The Prison got through the summer period without trouble. Of course, as with all preventive strategies, one can never say with absolute certainty whether the strategy headed off the risk or whether the risk would not have eventuated anyhow. But certainly the short-term outcome was welcome – for prisoners, staff, and the Department.

That is the short-term. The long-term involves two main things: developing and implementing a Pilbara Custodial and Correctional Management Strategy that includes scaling down or closure of Roebourne Regional Prison and the construction of an additional or replacement facility in a more appropriate location, and in the meantime keeping the existing Prison functioning as well as it can. As to the first matter, the strong likelihood is that a Pilbara strategy will have to await completion of the West Kimberley development (at Derby), the Eastern Goldfields extensions in various stages, expansion of capacity at Greenough and agreement as to the need for development in the East Kimberley.

As to the second point, at least the Pilbara issues are at last on the radar of Head Office. During the inspection, I directly approached the Government Regional Officers Housing Authority about the cost and availability of housing and argued in the Exit Debrief that staff housing should be heavily subsidised. The latter argument has now been reflected in the EBA that was subsequently signed, to the point where there will be a 100 per cent subsidy. This arrangement has also spread northwards, to the Kimberley. It is a belated but most welcome recognition that the Government employing agencies must move into the real world of costs in boom locations rather than remain in their virtual world of metropolitan area costs.

Since the inspection, staff from this Office have continued to visit Roebourne for regular liaison visits. The Prison is now holding its own satisfactorily, and there is some basis for guarded optimism – though never forgetting how quickly matters can deteriorate in the prison business generally and in remote locations particularly.

I mentioned that there were many improvements. The stand-out was Millstream Work Camp. It was functioning very well, a model of reintegration and re-entry. The Decca work camp, though temporarily diverted by some environmental factors, is also an excellent initiative. Regional corrections, particularly in areas where the prisoners are predominantly Aboriginal, must draw even more upon this model of community reintegration and re-entry, and the Department must put more resources into this approach to prisoner management.

Richard Harding
Inspector of Custodial Services
31st August 2007.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is the third report of an inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison and it is a matter of deep concern to this Office that, despite the findings and recommendations contained in its previous inspection reports, the prison is still far from being in good shape. In his exit debrief¹ at the conclusion of this inspection, the Inspector observed that the prison was extremely fragile and that the occurrence of an unanticipated incident could render the prison vulnerable to crisis.
- 1.2 Six mutually reinforcing factors appear to have contributed to the prison's predicament: staff shortages; overcrowding; substandard infrastructure; climatic factors; paucity of services; and the absence of an Aboriginal prison perspective.
- 1.3 It is particularly concerning that despite previous inspection reports drawing attention to the poor performance and impoverished nature of Roebourne Regional Prison, the Department of Corrective Services (the Department) has continued to allow the prison to operate without the resources and support it needs to address these longstanding deficiencies.
- 1.4 This report is structured differently to previous inspection reports on Roebourne Regional Prison and does not attempt to detail all aspects of the prison's operations, many of which were unchanged from previous inspections. Rather, this report focuses on the issues of concern identified above, along with an assessment of the extent of successful implementation of recommendations made in relation to previous inspections of Roebourne Regional Prison in 2002 and 2003.

AN ABORIGINAL PRISON

- 1.5 In the Office's 2000–2001 Annual Report, the Inspector defined an 'Aboriginal prison' as any prison where 75 per cent or more of the prison population was Aboriginal. He observed that aspects of the Western Australian prison system were structurally racist because conditions existing in these Aboriginal prisons would not be tolerated if non-Aboriginal prisoners were the predominant prisoner group.² Roebourne Regional Prison is one of Western Australia's Aboriginal prisons and at the time of the inspection in November 2006 some 90 per cent of the prisoner population was Aboriginal.

PREVIOUS INSPECTION FINDINGS

- 1.6 The first inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison in April 2002 (Report 14) found that the treatment of Aboriginal prisoners was so far below acceptable standards that the Department was placed on notice that the next inspection of the prison would be brought forward from the scheduled three years to 18 months.³
- 1.7 The report made 13 recommendations covering many areas of the prison's operations including the need to improve conditions for women prisoners, young prisoners, remand prisoners, foreign nationals, and long-term and life sentence prisoners; the excess of security

1 Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS), *Exit Debrief: Roebourne Regional Prison* (1st December 2006).

2 OICS, *Annual Report 2000–2001* (2001) 17.

3 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 14 (April 2002) 4, 6–7.

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arrangements for minimum-security prisoners, including early lock-up times; the need to clarify the use of special-purpose cells; the need to review the ventilation and air-cooling needs of the prison; the need for improved health and education services; the need to review a number of procedures to better encourage family visits; the need to make cognitive skills programs culturally appropriate to the target population; the further development of Section 94 activities whereby prisoners undertake activities and work outside the prison; and a range of improvements to the management of staff.

- 1.8 In addition to these matters, particular reference was made to the need for a more strategic Aboriginal focus for the prison. It was recommended that particular attention be given to issues that impact specifically upon Aboriginal prisoners, including:
- funeral attendance applications;
 - availability of traditional food;
 - dietary issues relevant to health status;
 - improved communication by way of enhanced language resources and modified applications procedures;
 - development of a business case and a framework for subsidising travel costs for visitors from remote regions;
 - equitable access to work and skilling opportunities;
 - application of departmental and local property policies;
 - access to Aboriginal Legal Service personnel;
 - clarification and improvement of the role of the Prisoner Support Officer; and
 - such other matters indicative of inequitable treatment as identified by the report or of which the Department is otherwise aware.⁴
- 1.9 The follow-up inspection occurred in November 2003 and while some progress had been made, the overall level of improvement was disappointing. The report of the second inspection (Report 24) found that of the 13 recommendations made by this Office, the implementation of 10 had been 'less than acceptable', two were 'acceptable' and the implementation of just one had been 'more than acceptable'.
- 1.10 Consequently, Report 24 was concerned that more should have been done to address the significant deficiencies highlighted in Report 14. In particular, the report found that those initiatives that had been introduced at Roebourne Regional Prison to improve services for Aboriginal prisoners were piecemeal and showed limited understanding of Aboriginal issues.⁵
- 1.11 Report 24 again pointed to the complexities of a prison service serving the needs of the Pilbara, noting that:

Roebourne Prison is a regional prison, an Aboriginal prison and a Pilbara prison. It accommodates prisoners from multiple skin groups, diverse communities, families, languages and cultural traditions. It is a complex place requiring flexibility, adaptability,

4 Ibid., 101–104.

5 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 24 (October 2004) 17.

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responsiveness at the local level and clear strategic direction when planning and implementing custodial management.⁶

Based upon this second inspection, Report 24 made a further 22 recommendations with which the Department subsequently agreed.

- 1.12 A full score card of the implementation of these 22 recommendations is shown in Appendix 2 of this report. In summary, the current inspection found that the Roebourne Regional Prison management had made a number of improvements by implementation of a 'change management' initiative: prisoners generally had more activities; the kitchen had made Aboriginal bush foods a regular menu item; the management team had been supplemented; and reception had been improved. The Department had approved funds for improvements to the education and health centres and these were working well. A minor works program had been commenced to upgrade the prisoners' showers and provide shade for the basketball court. Importantly, the Department had also introduced measures to address staffing deficits.
- 1.13 But in reality, not all of these strategies had worked as well as was needed and there had been a significant failure to anticipate the strong growth in prisoner numbers and the impact of the resources boom on the prison, particularly on the resulting shortage of staff. The prison's vulnerability was such that the Inspector issued a Notice of Risk to the Department and the Minister on 11 December 2006.
- 1.14 This failure to comprehensively address the longstanding deficiencies and emerging needs of Roebourne Regional Prison is consistent with the historic disregard the Department has shown to this prison and other regional prisons. It may also reflect the general lack of Aboriginal input into the Department and the failure of those senior in the Department to champion issues facing Aboriginal prisoners. Adding to this, Roebourne Regional Prison has no Aboriginal staff in its management group, despite its very high Aboriginal population.
- 1.15 In his exit debrief the Inspector again highlighted the need for both a coherent philosophy for Aboriginal prisoners wherever they are held, and a coherent philosophy for the state's Aboriginal prisons. The first of these (a philosophy for managing Aboriginal prisoners) exists on paper,⁷ but is still to be operationally realised. However, the continued absence of a coherent departmental philosophy for regimes in Aboriginal prisons is unacceptable and should be immediately addressed.

Recommendation 1

That the Department of Corrective Services update and implement its philosophy and strategies for managing Aboriginal prisoners wherever they are held.

6 Ibid., 14.

7 It is acknowledged that the Prisons Division Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Services 2002–2005 provides the basis for a coherent philosophy for managing Aboriginal prisoners but the document appears to have little operational relevance. For example, 'Objective 1 to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal adults in prison' has demonstrably failed. Objective 2 'to ensure the Prisons Division is responsive to the specific needs of Aboriginal women prisoners' discusses the need for an audit of regional women prisoner needs and a strategy developed to address them, but does not provide a strategy.

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Recommendation 2

That the Department of Corrective Services commence the process of developing an integrated philosophy for the management of Aboriginal prisons.

Chapter 2

ONGOING STAFF SHORTAGES

- 2.1 Roebourne Regional Prison has been operating with low staff levels for an extended period. Since at least 2002 the Department has known of the risks to the security of the prison associated with staffing shortages.⁸ Although the Department's responses to previous inspection reports contained commitments to take action to address the staffing issues, it has conspicuously failed to realise those commitments.⁹
- 2.2 A departmental review team visited the prison in January 2005¹⁰ and reported that the prison was operating on five overtime shifts a day excluding leave. The prison requires a roster of 23 prison officers a day to operate and to have the capacity to contain and control an incident. Analysis of staff rosters by the departmental review team found that each week prison officers at Roebourne Regional Prison completed more than 445 hours of overtime: the equivalent of 37 12-hour shifts. On average 3.7 officers each day were absent from work on sick leave and the prison was often unable to fill the staff positions on the roster. Some prison officers reported that they had worked 15 consecutive shifts.
- 2.3 During this inspection some prison officers said they did not feel safe at work as a result of the under-staffing. We observed that the prison staff roster was 12 officers short and two officers had worked back-to-back shifts. The prison had a population of 180 prisoners, but had a custodial staffing level appropriate for a population of only 120 prisoners. We found no policies or guidelines to define a safe level of staff overtime. These work practices represent a serious failure of the Department and local prison management to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment.
- 2.4 Information provided by the prison during the inspection showed that only four of the 10 senior officer positions were filled substantively and 10 first class officer positions were vacant. Prison officers said that they required leadership from experienced senior officers to effectively manage prisoners and identify security risks. Sixty per cent of prison officers who completed the 2006 staff survey¹¹ had been employed in the Department for six years or less and 20 per cent of the respondents had been employed as a prison officer for less than one year. (During a liaison visit to the prison in January 2007 we observed that the Department had responded to the risk notice issued by the Inspector. Senior prison officers had been seconded to the prison and staff spoke positively of the change.)
- 2.5 Prison officers also reported a low level of confidence in their skills to manage most areas of the prison, although, the majority felt competent in general communication and people skills.¹²
- 2.6 Ad hoc decision-making by staff had contributed to avoidable conflict and confusion between management and custodial staff. Local guidelines were needed to encourage consistency in decision-making and other practices.

8 The Department's employee options survey also highlighted these issues: Department of Justice, *Employee Options Survey 2002* (May 2003).

9 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 14 (April 2002) 109; OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 24 (October 2004) 58.

10 Department of Corrective Services, *Roebourne Regional Prison Review Version 9.3*.

11 Prior to the onsite phase of this inspection this Office distributed two questionnaires, one for staff and one for prisoners, to collect information to measure the quality of prison life.

12 OICS, *Staff Questionnaire: Roebourne Regional Prison* (November 2006).

ONGOING STAFF SHORTAGES

- 2.7 Interviews demonstrated that staff generally wanted to perform well in their jobs and overall had a healthy prisoner focus. Nonetheless, both staff and prisoners commented that the impact of critically low staffing levels, poor resources and overcrowding was manifesting in increased staff stress levels and impaired relations with prisoners. Our onsite observations confirmed these assessments. Importantly, we observed that locking prisoners in their cells or units in response to low staffing levels was considered an action of last resort.
- 2.8 Recruitment in the Pilbara region has proved difficult because of the availability of jobs in the mining sector which often have more attractive wages and conditions. Further complicating the recruitment of staff, the resources boom has significantly reduced the availability of houses for rent or purchase in the region. Local prison management expressed concern that it may not be able to house many of its future workforce. Resolution of this issue is beyond the capacity of the local prison and head office support is clearly required.
- 2.9 All staff employed at the prison have been allocated a regional allowance to partially offset the higher cost of living in the region. They can also salary sacrifice residential use of fuel by 50 per cent and take advantage of Department-subsidised home loans.¹³ In addition, employer-provided accommodation is exempt from fringe benefits tax. However, the average rental for even a poorly maintained three-bedroom house in the Pilbara is twice that of a rental property in metropolitan Perth. The accommodation incentives introduced by the Department have had only limited success because they do not represent real financial advantage for a prospective employee relocating to the Pilbara.¹⁴
- 2.10 Prison officers who had recently transferred to the prison reported feeling misled by the Department about their employment conditions and this had become a major source of discord and disruption in the prison. To address this level of dissatisfaction the Department had made it easier for prison officers to transfer out of the prison.
- 2.11 Twenty-two staff had transferred out of the prison by the time of the inspection and another 11 staff were waitlisted for transfer. Tension in the prison had reduced as a result; however, existing staff were required to work extra shifts to enable the prison to continue to operate.

Recommendation 3

That the Department of Corrective Services take immediate action to increase the level of custodial and non-custodial staffing at Roebourne Regional Prison with a view to ensuring that the prison is optimally staffed comparable to other similar prisons.

Recommendation 4

That the Department of Corrective Services investigate further incentives to offset the scarcity and high cost of accommodating staff in the region.

13 The Department also subsidises interest on staff home loan repayments up to 50 per cent to the value of \$175 per week.

14 This Office was advised that the Western Australian Prison Officers Union do not support further employee incentives for Roebourne Regional Prison.

ONGOING STAFF SHORTAGES

2.12 The business manager position is critical to the prison developing a strong business plan and a more professional approach to developing a business case for new initiatives and new ways of operating. However, the position at Roebourne Regional Prison is only classified level 5 – a level lower than the same position in other medium-security prisons. We could find no justification for this. While this is not strictly speaking a staff shortage issue, it will need to be addressed to assist the prison to attract and retain good staff.

Recommendation 5

That a review be completed of the workload and classification level of the Business Manager and Security Manager positions at Roebourne Regional Prison.

Chapter 3

STAFF TRAINING

- 3.1 There has been a widespread decline in staff training across many prisons for some years. Consequently, increased training and career development was a core recommendation of this Office's *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody*.¹⁵ Increased training and career development was also articulated in the state government's commitment¹⁶ to provide all employees with opportunities to gain skills relevant to their positions. The Department had allocated a prison-based trainer to Roebourne Regional Prison and this position had been filled for a short period until the incumbent transferred to another prison. At the time of the inspection there was no prison-based trainer and this had significantly reduced staff training opportunities at the prison.

Recommendation 6

That the Department of Corrective Services expedite the filling of a Senior Officer Trainer position at Roebourne Regional Prison.

- 3.2 The level of training provided to staff at Roebourne Regional Prison was among the lowest of Western Australian prisons. Among many deficits, the majority of staff had not received training in using breathing apparatus, drafting Individual Management Plans (IMPs) and the Assessment and Integrated Prisoners Management Regime (AIPR).¹⁷
- 3.3 However, on a more positive note, staff training in Aboriginal cultural awareness had improved in the prison since the last inspection. In 2006, the prison developed a local Aboriginal cultural awareness training resource and by this inspection approximately 50 per cent of the custodial staff had received cultural awareness training.¹⁸ Significantly the number of reported incidents of a racial nature had decreased. In his exit debrief the Inspector congratulated management and staff in the prison for their commitment to increasing staff awareness of Aboriginal issues. The development of this local resource should serve as a catalyst for the Department to develop appropriate training resources to inform all prison officers of issues significant to Aboriginal prisoners across the prisons estate.

Recommendation 7

That the Department of Corrective Services assess the cultural awareness training delivered at Roebourne Regional Prison for its relevance to broader cultural awareness training programs across all services.

Recommendation 8

That Roebourne Regional Prison offer targeted training to staff to address skills deficits in the prison officer group funded separately from the existing prison budget.

15 OICS, *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody*, Report No. 30 (November 2005) 281–82.

16 *People Making a Difference: The Public Sector – Strategic Directions* (Perth: Government of Western Australia, November 2004).

17 OICS, Staff Questionnaire: Roebourne Regional Prison (November 2006).

18 Roebourne Regional Prison, *Improved Understanding – Creating Change: Awareness of Cultural, Historical and Social Issues in relation to Aboriginal People* (November 2006).

Chapter 4

OVERCROWDING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- 4.1 Roebourne Regional Prison was originally built to hold 116 prisoners with an additional eight prisoners at its work camp. At the time of the inspection it held in excess of 180 prisoners – 50 per cent above its design capacity.
- 4.2 More than 12 prisoners shared a cell designed for six and prisoners slept on mattresses on cell floors throughout the prison. This high level of overcrowding was exacerbated by the extreme climatic conditions.¹⁹ The Bureau of Meteorology describes the region as a tropical and semi-desert climate with temperatures ranging from 4° C to over 49° C. The average annual rainfall for Roebourne is 313.2mm. This Office was advised that in the cyclone and wet season some areas of the prison are subject to flooding, including cell floors. The resulting problem of wet mattresses poses a number of health-related risks for prisoners, as well as affecting prisoners' ability to sleep. Sleep deprivation can result in moodiness and irritability, impaired judgment and fatigue among prisoners, which makes the task of maintaining good order more difficult.
- 4.3 The lack of climatic controls in cells during the hotter months of the year engenders widespread lethargy and irritability. Despite the existence of breeze-ways attached to prison buildings, the heat is retained by the building fabric and some prisoners reported it to be extreme. The night-time temperature sometimes remains as high as 33° C, thus offering little relief for prisoners in overcrowded cells. Sleep deprivation in combination with these hot conditions can exacerbate aggressive and risk-taking behaviour. The impact of climatic factors is further explored in the following chapter.
- 4.4 High population levels across the state's custodial facilities have limited the Department's capacity to alleviate the overcrowding in Roebourne Regional Prison by transferring prisoners to other regional prisons.

Recommendation 9

That the Department of Corrective Services immediately take action to cease the use of mattresses on the floor during periods of overcrowding.

- 4.5 The education centre and the medical centre had been upgraded since the second inspection and these areas were found to be operating effectively. Not surprisingly, the operational areas of the prison that performed poorly in this inspection were those that had aged infrastructure. The Department has previously assessed the infrastructure of the prison as not being 'consistent with contemporary standards for the delivery of prison services' and 'near the end of their economic life'.²⁰
- 4.6 Apart from the education and medical centres, the infrastructure deficits identified in Report 24²¹ were again identified as deficits in this inspection. These included:

19 The issue of climatic conditions is reported on in detail later in this report but it is necessary to briefly describe the impact of the climate in combination with overcrowding.

20 Department of Justice, Prison Services Executive, *Prisons Division Building and Infrastructure Program 2004–05 to 2007–08*, (undated) 13.

21 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 24 (October 2004) 44.

- no incentive accommodation structures to manage prisoners via progression;
 - lack of appropriately equipped and functional workshops and industry areas;
 - limited indoor or shaded recreation areas;
 - lack of reasonable staff facilities;
 - insufficient number of cells to accommodate muster levels;
 - no accommodation facilities to enable family skin groups to cohabituate without sharing cells;
 - insufficient shaded areas to provided protection and respite for prisoners from the extreme heat;
 - poor visits facilities;
 - poor quality living conditions for female prisoners; and
 - no area specifically for minimum-security level prisoners.
- 4.7. In Report 30²² this Office advised the Department that it considered Roebourne Regional Prison ‘unfit for purpose’ and that it should be replaced by 2015. The Department’s Strategic Assets Plan 2007–2008 also identified 2015 for the expansion or replacement of Roebourne Regional Prison. Ideally the prison should be replaced immediately; however, there are other priorities in the system that are more urgent (including replacing the regional prisons in the Kimberley and the Goldfields) and the Inspectorate recognises that the consequences of many decades of neglect of regional prisons cannot be reversed at the same time.
- 4.8. The proposed replacement of the prison in 2015 will inevitably temper the extent of modifications and upgrades to the prison and in the meantime it will be necessary to maintain the prison as a fit-for-purpose institution as far as practicable. In particular, consideration should be given to better climate control of key parts of the infrastructure so as to ensure that the extremes of heat are ameliorated. This issue is further explored in the following section.
- 4.9. In looking to 2015, the Department should plan for the infrastructure to align the role and function of a new Pilbara regional prison to the needs of the region. The siting of the new prison needs to be informed by wide consultation similar to that undertaken for the Kimberley Custodial Plan.

Recommendation 10

That the Department of Corrective Services when planning for a new Pilbara regional prison establish a community reference group and that this group be involved in determining the best location for the new prison.

22 OICS, *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody*, Report No. 30 (November 2005) 173.

Chapter 5

CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

- 5.1 The Pilbara Region has a tropical and semi-desert climate and is one of the hottest and most humid climates in Western Australia.²³ During the week of the inspection the temperature remained above 36° C and members of the inspection team experienced considerable discomfort working in the heat and humidity. It is likely that many prisoners experience the same discomfort and that some may be particularly susceptible to the heat (especially those prisoners with a pre-existing heart or circulatory condition, skin disease or obesity). Both prisoners and staff appeared taxed by working in the heat and high humidity: much more so than observed in prisons further south.
- 5.2 Both of the previous inspection reports²⁴ reported that the climate had a significant negative impact on prisoners and that the existing prison climate control system did not sufficiently mitigate this. This Office called on the Department to conduct a review of the climate control needs of the prison. It was intended that the review should establish acceptable climatic standards within the prison and identify the modifications and resources required to achieve the standards. At the time of the inspection the Department had not conducted such a review and had not significantly reduced the extremes of temperature in the prison, other than in staff offices.
- 5.3 The inspection team found that the triangular-shaped yards at the prison were impoverished environments that had limited plant life. Walkways in front of the cells were reasonably broad and shaded for part of the day and provided some relief for prisoners from the heat of the direct sun. For prisoners held in the minimum-security yard, shade-sails provided at least some shaded seating around the BBQs and a few of the Casuarina trees had reached sufficient height to provide some shade, both reducing the radiant heat.
- 5.4 For prisoners in the medium-security yards however, there was no shaded seating and only small plants were being grown. The yard was divided into two by a wall and enclosed by an overhead grill that stored and radiated heat into the yard below. No equipment had been installed in the yard to generate air movement to assist heat loss and reduce discomfort.²⁵ Cells and other areas inside the units were found to have similar temperatures to those outside.
- 5.5 We placed a temperature-recording device in a six-bed cell on the afternoon of 27 November 2006. It recorded 36° C at 5.20 pm: the Bureau of Meteorology reading on the same day at 3.00 pm was 38.1° C. While the Bureau of Meteorology recorded temperature in Roebourne dropped overnight to 23.4° C, the temperature recorded in the cell never dropped below 31° C.
- 5.6 The Department had investigated refrigerated air-conditioning for prison cells and indicated that this approach was too costly. However, climate control does not necessarily require refrigerated air-conditioning. This Office has recently developed a Code of Inspections Standards for Adult Custodial Facilities and recommends that:

[T]here should be an adequate ventilation system ensuring circulated fresh air flow to all occupied areas of the prison. There should be an effective climate control system allowing

23 Department of Justice, *WA Prisons Role and Function Profile* (May 2003).

24 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 14 (April 2002) 30; OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 24 (October 2004) 22–23.

25 However, since the inspection, shade has been installed over the basketball court area.

CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

temperature and humidity to be mechanically raised or lowered to acceptable comfort levels. A temperature range should be set (that reflects winter and summer seasonal temperature variations) in consultation with the local community of prisoners and staff.²⁶

Recommendation 11

That climatic controls (such as shade, or fans where appropriate) are installed in recreation areas, along with suitable climatic controls to reduce air temperatures and increase air circulation in prisoner day rooms, work areas and cells at Roebourne Regional Prison.

- 5.7 At the time of the inspection the state government was about to introduce daylight saving, yet the Roebourne Regional Prison management had not reviewed the structure of the prisoners' day to better match the prison timetable to the cooler times of day. Daylight saving occurs in the hottest season and without modification to prison timetable this would mean that prisoners were locked into their cells an hour earlier, in the hotter part of the day. We believe that such a review of the prison day should be undertaken as part of a broad strategy to reduce the impact of the extreme climate on the prison. It is acknowledged that any change to the prison day would necessitate a change to staffing rosters. Consequently, the Department should include the union in any discussions to facilitate improved working and recreation options for prisoners (and staff) appropriate to the climate.

Recommendation 12

That Roebourne Regional Prison management undertake a review of the impact of daylight saving on the prison timetable, with a particular view to minimising any increased heat stress on prisoners when locked in cells.

- 5.8 Director General's Rule 18 defines minimum-security prisoners as those prisoners who require a low level of supervision within the prison and can be reasonably trusted in open conditions. At the time of the inspection, the prison held 61 minimum-security prisoners – approximately 30 per cent of its prisoner population. Yet, regardless of individual security classifications, all prisoners were locked in their cells at 7.00 pm.
- 5.9 The Inspectorate believes that minimum-security prisoners at Roebourne Regional Prison are disadvantaged by this lock-down regime, especially when compared to minimum-security prisoners in most other Western Australian prisons. In the Eastern Goldfields for example, minimum-security prisoners are locked in cells considerably later than medium- and maximum-security prisoners. The lock-down regime at Roebourne appears to be based on operational convenience, rather than on providing an appropriate regime for minimum-security prisoners.

Recommendation 13

That Roebourne Regional Prison implement later lock-down security procedures for minimum-security prisoners that reflect lock-down practices for minimum-security prisoners in other Western Australian prisons.

26 OICS, *Code of Inspection Standards for Adult Custodial Services* (2007) 25.

Chapter 6

PAUCITY OF SERVICES FOR PRISONERS

- 6.1 While acknowledging the high standard of counselling and risk assessment services provided at Roebourne Regional Prison, the Prison Counselling Service comprised just 1.3 full-time equivalent staff (FTE). This represents significant under-resourcing when compared to other Western Australian prisons with a similar population.
- 6.2 The inspection team found that only a few programs addressing offending behaviour had been offered to male prisoners and no programs had been offered to female prisoners. In his exit debrief to the prison management immediately following this inspection, the Inspector noted that ‘Aboriginal prisons and the regions had been under-resourced for decades’.²⁷ With specific regard to the paucity of prison counselling resources at Roebourne the Inspector was of the view that ‘the Department is not ... meeting its responsibilities in allowing this to occur’.²⁸
- 6.3 The inspection team observed that the prisoner population had changed since previous inspections and that there were more violent offenders being held at Roebourne Regional Prison. This meant that offender program intervention was in greater demand than in previous years. It was unrealistic to expect that 1.3 FTE staff in the Prison Counselling Service could offer programs as well as provide counselling and Prisoner Risk Assessment Group services to a complex and needy prisoner population in excess of 160.

Recommendation 14

That the Department of Corrective Services, as a matter of priority, increase the resource levels of the Prison Counselling Service at Roebourne Regional Prison to service the needs of the prisoner population.

- 6.4 The prisoner population at Roebourne Regional Prison should have access to a range of culturally appropriate programs including programs to address cognitive skills development; domestic violence issues; and anger and substance abuse issues. But because of the lack of capacity within the prison to sustain the provision of such programs, prisoners are often released back into the community without completing programs that had been prescribed as part of their IMPs.

Recommendation 15

That the Department of Corrective Services audit the needs of the prisoner population with a view to introducing at Roebourne Regional Prison the range and frequency of offender programs appropriate to the prisoner population’s needs.

- 6.5 Health services in the prison were in great demand, predominantly because of the high population of Aboriginal prisoners who often arrive at the prison in poor health. Dental and optical care assessments were under-resourced and Prison Addictive Services Team (PAST)

27 OICS, *Exit Debrief: Roebourne Regional Prison* (November 2006).

28 Ibid.

support was not available onsite at the prison. Prisoners with acute mental health conditions and other disabilities were required to be transferred to a metropolitan prison where their care or treatment could be managed.

- 6.6 At the time of this inspection the staffing level of health services was considered adequate. However, the staffing position was nonetheless vulnerable because of the lack of qualified relief staff in the Pilbara region.
- 6.7 At the time of this inspection the staffing level of health services was considered adequate. However, the staffing position was nonetheless vulnerable because of the lack of qualified relief staff in the Pilbara region.

Recommendation 16

That the Department of Corrective Services undertake a review of the need for onsite PAST support for prisoners at Roebourne Regional Prison.

- 6.8 The Prisoner Support Officer (PSO) was managed from Perth. Prior to the inspection the incumbent was on secondment in Perth and an acting PSO was appointed to the prison. We were advised that during this period there was a high level of disruption to the prisoner peer support group program. To strengthen and revitalise the prisoner peer support group the Prison Counselling Service delivered Gatekeeper training to prisoners. Despite coordination difficulties, we found there was increased acceptance of the role of the prisoner peer support group by prison staff.
- 6.9 The prisoner peer support group was functioning well and playing a valuable role in supporting new and vulnerable prisoners. Peer support prisoners were newly trained and easily identifiable in their new yellow t-shirts. The group had established a roster for their work in orientation, reception and other areas, had good processes for recording contacts and held regular meetings. However, the group lacked the basic infrastructure (such as computer resources) necessary to the effective delivery of their services and the prison had prevented them from entering the maximum-security wing to provide support to prisoners.

Recommendation 17

That Roebourne Regional Prison provide greater support to the Prison Support Officer and increased resources to enhance the quality of support prisoner peer support group provide to prisoners.

- 6.10 The Aboriginal Visitor Scheme had two people visiting the prison, but the visits had become sporadic as a result of illness. The Aboriginal Visitor Service was able to contact remote communities and transient families to keep prisoners informed of family matters. The relationship between the Aboriginal Visitor Service and local prison management was at times strained.

Recommendation 18

That Roebourne Regional Prison provide greater support to the activities of the Aboriginal Visitor Scheme.

Chapter 7

WOMEN PRISONERS

- 7.1 At the time of the inspection Roebourne Regional Prison held nine women prisoners, eight of whom were Aboriginal. The lack of services for women prisoners was evident across most of the prison's operations.
- 7.2 In 2002 this Office recommended that the Department address the underlying deficiencies for women prisoners including the quality of accommodation and access to education, employment, recreation, Section 94 activities and treatment programs.²⁹
- 7.3 The Department's response to the recommendation was encouraging, indicating progress toward implementing the recommendation. The Department stated that all of the women's cells were to have refrigerated air conditioning installed; a shade cloth screen would be installed between the female and male units for privacy; a senior education officer would be employed to create a women's area within the education centre; and women's needs would be taken into account as part of the prison's employment review. Further, the Department reported that it had taken action on a number of issues relating to education, recreation and employment. It was stated that women were participating in bobcat and welding courses; women were offered the same recreational facilities as males; a number of employment places would be made available to women in the Section 94 program; and a programs officer position had been created and advertised to assist with the delivery of programs to both male and female prisoners.
- 7.4 However the second inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison found that the Department's progress in implementing the recommendation was less than acceptable.³⁰ Consequently, Report 24 recommended that the Department review the conditions of imprisonment and the services provided to women prisoners at Roebourne Regional Prison in light of its Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Services 2002–2005 and the Women's Custodial Services Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Services.³¹
- 7.5 The Department's response to this recommendation stated that some issues had been addressed and others would be reviewed. However, the current inspection has revealed that conditions of imprisonment and services for women in Roebourne Regional Prison remain poor. In its *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody* this Office stated that in Roebourne Regional Prison 'the current provision for female prisoners is appalling and it is recommended that urgent and immediate action be taken to develop a minimum-security female release centre to ease this situation and [provide] a venue for the transfer of appropriate life skills'.³²

Recommendation 19

That the Department of Corrective Services fund Roebourne Regional Prison to deliver offender programs and education services to women prisoners at a standard comparable to Bandyup Women's Prison.

29 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 14 (April 2002) 105.
30 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 24 (October 2004) 61.
31 *Ibid.*, 54.
32 OICS, *Directed Review of the Management of Offenders in Custody*, Report Number 30 (November 2005) 173.

- 7.6 Members of the inspection team observed that women had been confined to their unit for long periods of time each day. The unit common areas had no climate controls so prisoners tended to congregate in uncovered recreation areas. There was limited exercise equipment and limited access to passive recreation activities in the unit. The women also had restricted access to planned recreational activities.

Recommendation 20

That the Department of Corrective Services implement strategies to raise the standard of accommodation at Roebourne Regional Prison to a standard comparable to Bandyup Women's Prison.

- 7.7 Following the second inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison the Department appointed a women's support officer to assist women prisoners with management and coordination, service delivery, consultation and liaison. However, because the women's support officer was a part-time position, there was no capacity for further development of services.

Recommendation 21

That the Department of Corrective Services review the position of the Women's Support Officer at Roebourne Regional Prison and increase the position from 0.4 FTE to one FTE.

- 7.8 Female prisoners had told education centre staff that their cultural laws precluded them from being in the same classroom or participating in activities with male prisoners from the same skin group. Complex kinship rules dictate who an Aboriginal person may interact with. It is not uncommon therefore for Aboriginal prisoners to face different directions or communicate through another person to avoid breaching these rules. The inspection team found that Aboriginal kinship rules were not sufficiently understood or catered for in the routine operational procedures at Roebourne Regional Prison. Recommendation 7 highlights the need for training of prison officers to help them to better appreciate Aboriginal cultural practices so that prisoner management can be improved and unnecessary breach of cultural laws can be avoided.
- 7.9 The women's clothing appeared to provide protection from exposure to direct sunlight; although, the prisoners complained that the fabric was not appropriate for the extreme temperatures of the region. The practice of recycling women's underwear observed at the last inspection had, however, ceased.
- 7.10 The inspection team found that there was no procedure which enabled prisoners to inform their families in advance of their transfer to another prison. Often women were advised on the day of their transfer and as a consequence did not have the opportunity to notify family before being transferred.
- 7.11 According to female prisoners at Roebourne Regional Prison it was not common practice for the women to be informed about the balance of their gratuity accounts. Therefore, some women were unable to discover how much money they had available to spend at the canteen. There was also limited knowledge among the women of the availability of inter-prison telephone calls or how to apply for them.

WOMEN PRISONERS

Recommendation 22

That Roebourne Regional Prison review existing processes and improve the practice of disseminating information to prisoners, in particular about gratuities, inter-prison telephone calls and the grievance process.

Chapter 8

MILLSTREAM WORK CAMP AND THE DECCA STATION PROJECT

MILLSTREAM WORK CAMP

- 8.1 The Millstream Work Camp is a success story for Roebourne Regional Prison; however, it struggles with inadequate resources. Report 24 recommended that the Department enhance the scope of the Section 94 activities and increase the number of prisoners participating in work outside the prison. Since that report the Department increased the accommodation capacity of the work camp from eight to 12 prisoners. Although, at the time of this inspection, only eight prisoners were employed at the work camp.
- 8.2 The prison did not have an off-road vehicle with seating capacity to transport the 12 prisoners usually located at the work camp to and from various activities. The prison had submitted a business case to the Department to purchase an off-road vehicle for this purpose, but the purchase was not approved. It is the Inspectorate's opinion that the absence of simple assets such as this compromises the proper functioning of the work camp.

Recommendation 23

That the Department of Corrective Services give immediate priority to Roebourne Regional Prison to fund an off-road vehicle with the capacity to transport at least 12 prisoners and one prison officer.

- 8.3 The prisoners at Millstream were generally employed in purposeful activity. At the time of the inspection the eight prisoners worked between seven and eight hours per day and the prison valued the work at between \$826 and \$944 per day.³³
- 8.4 There appeared to be ample opportunities for expanding this valuable community work. The inspection team was advised that CALM planned to extend tourism within the national park where the work camp was located and this was expected to provide additional work opportunities for the prisoners.
- 8.5 Work camp prisoners, many of whom were from remote communities, cooked for themselves including traditional Aboriginal foods. Although prisoners had an allocated sleeping unit they were approved to sleep outdoors. A more flexible approach to the management of the prisoners at the work camp was appropriate given that the majority of the prisoners were from remote communities with specific cultural needs and customs and that they presented low risk given their approval for section 94 participation.
- 8.6 Three officers worked at the work camp on a rotational basis of seven out of 21 days. The officers changed shift every Friday and the replacement officer was responsible for transporting new prisoners to the work camp. The replacement officer also took the food provisions, prisoner canteen and/or town spends, library books requested by prisoners, education materials and mail to the camp.
- 8.7 A telephone had been installed and prisoners were allocated a \$20 phone card each week. Access to a telephone helped to minimise the isolation prisoners experienced when working at the camp. Prisoners could also make three free phone calls, but they were not allowed to receive incoming calls.

33 Prison reparation is valued at \$14.75 multiplied by the number of prisoners and the number of hours worked.

MILLSTREAM WORK CAMP AND THE DECCA STATION PROJECT

- 8.8 Millstream Work Camp did not facilitate onsite visits for prisoners. To participate in a social visit the prisoner was transported from the work camp to the prison on Friday with the returning officer. The prisoner then stayed at the prison for the week and was transported back to the work camp on the following Friday. Prisoners were paid a reduced gratuity level for the time they stayed at the prison. Prisoners said it was a difficult adjustment to return to the prison for a week and this had discouraged some prisoners from having social visits.

Recommendation 24

That Roebourne Regional Prison immediately cease the practice of reducing the gratuity level of prisoners employed at the work camp while the prisoner is at the prison to have a social visit.

Recommendation 25

That the Roebourne Regional Prison develop and submit to the Department of Corrective Services a business case to offer visits for prisoners employed at the Millstream Work Camp.

Recommendation 26

That the use of work camps at Roebourne Regional Prison be expanded as a pre-release program for a larger proportion of the prison population. To achieve this objective it will be necessary for the Department of Corrective Services to finance and develop the concept of work camps beyond its current forms to include a range of innovative pre-release centres and out-stations. A range of improved incentives for prisoners will be required.

DECCA STATION PROJECT

- 8.9 Decca Station is located on a disused signals and communication station approximately 20 kilometres from the prison. The site is powered, has sewerage connected and mains water supplied. The Decca Station Project is an excellent initiative developed at the regional level and built in consultation with the local communities and industries. It was therefore developed with an understanding of the skills required in the Pilbara region. It was initially funded with \$111,000 from the Reducing Aboriginal Imprisonment Fund, \$418,000 from Pilbara Iron, two years' funding for a project/vocational officer from the Federal Department of Employment and Work Relations and \$30,000 for a vehicle lease from the Department of Corrective Services. At the time of this inspection there was no commitment to recurrent funding for the project.
- 8.10 Work commenced on the project in January 2006 when prisoners refurbished the existing demountables and work sheds to make them suitable as accommodation units and training venues. During the refurbishment prisoners gained experience in the use of heavy machinery and completed training programs including occupational safety and health, forklift, chainsaw, bobcat, welding, fencing, first aid and horticulture.³⁴
- 8.11 The prison did not plan to use Decca Station immediately as a full-time work camp. We were advised by prison management that their intention was to use it initially as a training

34 Department of Corrective Services, *Educational and Vocational Prisoner Training at Roebourne Regional Prison* (2006).

facility with capacity for male and female prisoners to stay overnight. The safety of female prisoners must be ensured before this plan can be put into action.

- 8.12 At the time of this inspection Decca Station was closed because of asbestos discovered on the site. Tests had been carried out during the inspection to determine the extent of the contamination of the site. Preliminary results had indicated that the contamination was not widespread. We have since been advised by the Superintendent that the asbestos had been removed from the site, that the Department had approved Decca Station for use and that training of prisoners had recommenced.

Recommendation 27

That the Department of Corrective Services give a commitment to provide Roebourne Regional Prison with the required level of recurrent funding to support the operation of the Decca Station as an ongoing training facility.

Recommendation 28

That Roebourne Regional Prison develop a training plan for Decca Station to be implemented within the next three years.

Chapter 9

SOCIAL VISITS

- 9.1 Roebourne Regional Prison is the most socially isolated prison in Western Australia. From 1 July 2006 to 30 September 2006, prisoners at Roebourne Regional Prison had received an average of 0.88 visits per prisoner per month. The state average of visits per prisoner per month for that period was 2.71, while Broome Regional Prison had the highest average of 6.33 visits per prisoner per month.
- 9.2 According to Roebourne Regional Prison the total number of prisoner-initiated telephone calls made each month was 17,500 or an average of 118 phone calls per prisoner per month. From these data it is apparent that Roebourne prisoners primarily use the telephone to maintain contact with family and friends.
- 9.3 Members of the inspection team observed social visits on Sunday 26 November 2006. The visits session was two hours in duration and 18 visits had been booked with prisoners for that day. Officers commented that the number of bookings was quite high.
- 9.4 The process for receiving visitors and processing them through the visits facility was flexible. The level of flexibility observed was appropriate given the long distances most visitors travelled to visit a prisoner. Visitors normally book their visits prior to arriving at the prison; however, the prison usually permitted visits where the visitor had not booked a visit. Visits were also permitted even when a visitor had arrived at the prison after the official start time of the visit session.
- 9.5 Visitors told staff of this Office that the prison officers in the visits centre were very considerate. A young mother reported being allowed to have her visit in a smaller room with more effective air-conditioning in consideration that her baby had accompanied her on the visit and it was a very hot day.

THE PHYSICAL STRUCTURE OF THE VISITS AREA

- 9.6 In Report 14 the Inspector recommended that ‘the Department should encourage visits by such measures as reviewing its strip-search policies and improving facilities for visitors and accompanying children’.³⁵
- 9.7 The Department’s response was that:
- Random strip-searching of visitors no longer occurs in line with recent Department policy changes across the state. In addition to reviewing the possibility of providing access to an outdoor area for visitors, facilities for visitors will be reviewed.³⁶
- 9.8 The second round inspection of Roebourne in 2004 found that while some effort had been made to address the low number of prisoners receiving visits, insufficient action had been taken, in particular with regards to visit facilities. Report 24 therefore recommended ‘that the visits facilities at Roebourne Prison be reviewed and efforts made to improve facilities and that mechanisms for increasing prisoners’ access to visits be explored’.³⁷

35 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 14 (April 2002) 108.

36 Ibid.

37 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison*, Report No. 24 (October 2004) 56.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Roebourne Regional Prison is located approximately 10 km from Roebourne.



The work sheds at Millstream Work Camp.



Five prisoners share a cell designed to accommodate three. A lack of beds requires two prisoners to sleep on mattresses on the floor.



PHOTOGRAPHS



The women's section at the prison has seen a number of improvements since the last inspection, including providing a more pleasant common yard within the unit.



The outdoor visits area is shaded primarily by trees.



Much of the prison infrastructure is run down to the point that it can only be replaced. This shower stall is a case in point.

SOCIAL VISITS

- 9.9 A small visitor facility is available outside the prison, but despite earlier promises by the Department to review its use, it has never been staffed either by the prison, or a funded agency to provide family visitor support services. An outdoor area has improved the amenity of the visits centre to some degree, but the air-conditioning in the main room is both noisy and ineffective.

Recommendation 29

It is again recommended that the visits facilities at Roebourne Regional Prison be reviewed and efforts made to improve facilities including mechanisms for increasing prisoners' access to visits.

SECURITY IN THE VISITS AREA

- 9.10 The security arrangements for monitoring visits at the prison were appropriate and consistent with the *Prisons Regulations 1982* (WA). The maximum-security rated prisoners were placed in one of the three separate visit areas situated off the main visit room. Medium- and minimum-security rated prisoners could choose to either sit inside the visit room or in the outside covered area. Prisoners were pat-searched before entering the visits centre and were required to place their ID cards in a wooden holder prior to greeting their visitor and commencing the visit. Prisoners could take unopened canteen purchases into the visits centre, but they were not permitted take anything away from the visits area at the end of the visit.
- 9.11 Three cameras monitored the various sections of the visits centre. Although prison staff described the cameras as being of good quality, the images shown on the monitors were not sharp. The monitors were located in the control room and when a fence alarm was activated one of the monitors in the visits area automatically switched to view the breach of the fence. Ideally the monitors should be located in the visits centre and used solely for the purpose of monitoring visits activities.
- 9.12 The strip-search facility was located in the gatehouse. Prison visitors were strip-searched on an infrequent basis and usually in response to security intelligence to prevent trafficking of contraband into the prison. We were advised that there was often not enough female prison offers to conduct strip-searches of female visitors. In these instances, a female staff member, usually from administration, would conduct the strip-search with the door slightly ajar to allow the prison officer standing at the door to observe the staff member conducting the search. The prison officer positioned at the door could not see the visitor being strip-searched. A baby monitor was placed in the search room so the prison officer positioned at the door could hear all verbal interactions within the room.
- 9.13 The strip-search process for visitors at Roebourne Regional Prison was robust and conducted professionally following the correct search procedures.

38 Ibid 25-26.

SOCIAL VISITS

OTHER METHODS TO SUPPORT PRISONERS MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH FAMILY

- 9.14 Prisoners told staff of this Office that they were visited infrequently because their families could not afford the cost of travel and accommodation. One-third of the prisoner population at Roebourne Regional Prison came from the Kimberley region and the remaining prisoners were from the Pilbara region: an area larger than the State of Victoria.
- 9.15 CDEP South Hedland, a re-entry provider, was funded by the Department for a three-month trial early in 2006 to provide a fortnightly visitor bus service from South Hedland. Although the service was not funded after the trial period, CDEP agreed to provide a monthly bus service from South Hedland and Karratha to the prison as part of its re-entry service to prisoners.

Recommendation 30

That the Department of Corrective Services approve a recurrent budget allocation to Roebourne Regional Prison to provide a weekly visitor bus service between the prison, South Hedland and Karratha.

Recommendation 31

That Roebourne Regional Prison examine the options of providing short-stay accommodation for visitors travelling long distances to visit a prisoner.

- 9.16 Prisoners used the telephone to communicate with family and community members. There was no call subsidy for 'out-of-country' prisoners, and many prisoners at Roebourne paid \$3.20 per 10-minute call.³⁹ Prisoners at Roebourne Regional Prison are disadvantaged in comparison to out-of-country prisoners accommodated in metropolitan prisons, who receive a telephone call subsidy. Prisoners said that because their families and friends often travelled they used mobile telephones in preference to a fixed telephone line. They also said they had difficulty getting approval from the prison to call mobile telephone numbers. This is a departmental policy developed for legitimate security reasons. However, the inability of prisoners to connect with family caused them hardship.

Recommendation 32

That the Department of Corrective Services immediately review the telephone call subsidy for out-of-country prisoners in Roebourne Regional Prison to ensure they receive telephone subsidies comparable to those received by out-of-country prisoners in metropolitan prisons.

- 9.17 The Inspectorate was advised that approximately 70 video link social visits were undertaken over the previous 12-month period at Roebourne Regional Prison. It is acknowledged that video visits are limited by the lack of receiving equipment in many regional and remote communities. At the time of the current inspection the prison indicated an intention to assist prisoners to make 'video letters' on DVDs to send to families and communities. This initiative is to be congratulated. This type of workshop would also help to increase prisoner

39 Use of VOIP bridging systems could achieve significantly reduced call rates, with requiring subsidisation.

SOCIAL VISITS

awareness of the availability of video visits; however, prisoners said that the \$4 charge imposed by the Department for use of the video service deterred them from using the service.

Recommendation 33

That the Department of Corrective Services immediately remove the \$4 fee charged to prisoners at the Roebourne Regional Prison for use of video visit facilities.

Recommendation 34

That Roebourne Regional Prison develop improved processes to promote and assist prisoners to use the video visit system.

Chapter 10

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- 10.1 The inspection team found that the education centre at Roebourne Regional Prison was well run and used by both male and female prisoners. It offered a range of programs with a strong focus on art, general education, basic literacy and computing. Prisoners interviewed by inspections staff were generally positive and the atmosphere in several classes was relaxed, but purposeful. There was evidence of student commitment: they produced a lot of work and appeared to enjoy their classes.
- 10.2 Most prisoners using the education centre were male. One female prisoner reported being comfortable even on the days when few females attended. Other female prisoners said that more females would come if there were a larger group of women who attended the centre more routinely and suggested sewing classes to attract more women. At least one male student also requested that the education centre offer sewing classes.
- 10.3 Most students were Aboriginal and from geographical areas where there was limited education or training for adults. To access basic vocational training or adult education, these people had to generally move to larger population centres where the cost of living was not sustainable. More specialised courses were usually only available in Perth, entailing great dislocation of family and community responsibilities. As a result, for many prisoners, their time in prison was their only access to formal learning opportunities. Thus the education centre provided a significant opportunity to positively intervene in improving life chances for the prisoners and their dependants.
- 10.4 The classrooms were of a reasonable size, well lit and suited to the purposes for which they were used. A major clean up had been undertaken prior to the inspection and the centre was spotless, giving an overall impression of a pleasant environment. The facility was also air-conditioned, which allowed students to concentrate on learning tasks.
- 10.5 Our analysis of computer access suggested that most prisoners had some access to the computing facilities. Staff reported that the computer laboratory was suitable for group instruction and the computers had the same version of software which made classes easier to deliver. There was some debate among centre staff about the usefulness of computer training when many prisoners would return to areas that had limited access to communications technology. Certainly it could be argued that such training will prepare people from remote communities for when such technology does become available to them. Staff were interested in conducting research into the use of information and communications technology in the more remote areas of the region. They planned to use the research to inform the planning of meaningful IT courses for prisoners.
- 10.6 Although the classrooms were found to be suitable, the education centre had severe limitations in other areas. Prison management could significantly improve the centre by providing an office space for staff where they can mark student work or hold work-related meetings. On the day our education expert visited the education facility, the computer class was cancelled to allow her to meet with the senior education officer in the computer classroom. The education centre also needs an administrative area for reception, initial assessment of new students, for phone calls (including those of a confidential nature) and all other routine administrative functions.

- 10.7 Staff had suggested that the prison locate a demountable building or other structure adjacent to the centre. A demountable would create a sheltered outdoor area for learning activities and provide an appropriate space for administration. The Department's Educational and Vocational Teaching Unit had prepared a capital works submission to provide for additional training space, staff offices and storage.

Recommendation 35

That the Roebourne Regional Prison, in consultation with the Department of Corrective Services, develop and implement strategies to increase the access to additional functional space for the education centre.

- 10.8 The Education Centre lacked access to running water and a sink for clean up activities following art classes. We were advised that prisoners used the taps in the quadrangle to wash their paintbrushes. Unfortunately, this practice had caused conflict with prison management because paint had discoloured the pathways.

Recommendation 36

That the management of Roebourne Regional Prison consult with its education centre staff to resolve the centre's access to running water.

- 10.9 The outdoor areas of the education centre were almost unusable because of the extreme climate. Activities undertaken in the external areas were also visible to other prisoners and this was considered by staff to be educationally counter-productive.

Recommendation 37

That Roebourne Regional Prison implement strategies to provide shade and shelter for prisoners using the external areas of the education centre.

- 10.10 The space for industry activities and related courses was found to be extremely limited. There was no classroom space attached to the workshop and limited equipment in the workshop for training purposes. We were advised that staff had identified alternative training spaces, but there is clearly a need for substantial departmental investment in facilities and equipment to create a training environment in the prison comparable to other correctional facilities in Western Australia. This had a flow on effect to the type of skilling and training being delivered, with students complaining to the inspection team about the lack of access to practical industry-related training and skills they could use on release to the community.
- 10.11 The education centre had difficulty in recruiting experienced and qualified staff. The employment conditions offered by the prison were simply not competitive with those offered by the mining sector. As discussed earlier, the resources boom had caused significant increases in salary levels across all fields of employment and contributed to a substantial rise in the cost of housing. In 2006 the Department agreed to pay education centre staff equivalent salaries to the TAFE sector. However, since TAFE was also experiencing difficulty in attracting staff, this initiative had not improved Roebourne Regional Prison's access to qualified staff.

- 10.12 The senior education officer was the only person adequately qualified in the education centre. The prison could continue to offer training and assessment as a Registered Training Organisation while it employed at least one person with a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA40104) and subject to that person providing direct supervision to unqualified tutors.⁴⁰ One other staff member held the Certificate IV which was the minimum qualification for working in the vocational education and training sector. However, this staff member was in fact under-qualified to teach (as she does) the Certificate in General Education for Adults because she does not hold tertiary teaching qualifications. In the past the prison had accessed appropriately qualified staff from the Pilbara TAFE College. However they were also experiencing difficulties in recruiting staff and lacked the capacity to service the needs of the prison.
- 10.13 The education centre had been advised that as of March 2007 there would be no budget available for tutors until the next financial year. We were advised that any suspension of funding would compromise course delivery at the centre for 12 months or more. Many of the local tutors were part-time and said they would seek employment elsewhere if funding for education services ceased. The lack of permanency was a further disincentive for tutors.
- 10.14 Recruiting new tutors will be difficult for the prison in the current climate and there may be no functioning courses for new tutors to learn on the job from more-experienced staff. Delivery of courses by TAFE staff is likely to be minimal and prisoners' access to education and training will suffer as a consequence.

Recommendation 38

That if there is a moratorium on the delivery of education programs at any time during 2007, the Department of Corrective Services exempt Roebourne Regional Prison and programs continue uninterrupted.

- 10.15 The wider prison staffing issues had an impact on the operation of the centre. When a prison officer was not available for supervision, classes were cancelled. Tutors reported that this had happened on 14 days in the last financial year.
- 10.16 Staff in the education centre did not participate in professional development in 2006. They also did not participate in compulsory moderation meetings for the Certificates in General Education for Adults (CGEA) held in the region. Staff were isolated from any input that would expand their skills base. The senior education officer provided in-house training: a desirable practice to supplement formal training. However, in-house training does not remove the responsibility from the Department as a Registered Training Organisation to provide formal staff development.

40 In accordance with Standard 7 of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF), training could be delivered by a person who does not a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment provided they work under the direct supervision of a person who has completed a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and has demonstrated vocational competencies at least to the level of those being taught.

Recommendation 39

That the Department of Corrective Services support staff employed in the education centre at Roebourne Regional Prison to participate in relevant opportunities for professional development in accordance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations.

TRAINING

10.17 At the time of the inspection no vocational support officer (VSO) employed at Roebourne Regional Prison had completed a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. The VSOs had facilitated individual learning and work-based learning with the prisoners, but we were advised that the prison had difficulty in accessing the services of local TAFE staff to assess the competency of the prisoners. As a result the VSOs used the senior education officer to complete the assessment of prisoners in the competency-based training units. The use of the senior education officer for this purpose increased her workload unnecessarily.

10.18 The VSOs said they had requested permission from local management to complete the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, but that the requests had not been supported. The capacity of Decca Station to operate at its full potential was reduced while the VSOs had not completed a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

Recommendation 40

That Roebourne Regional Prison review the overall training requirements of the Vocational Support Officers at the prison and support them to complete the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA40104).

10.19 The VSOs spoke of their lack of input into the prison's budgetary planning process. It was unreasonable to expect the VSOs to plan quality training for the prisoners, including the purchase of materials, without knowing their budget allocation.

Recommendation 41

That Roebourne Regional Prison review and enhance the resources and internal budget arrangement for the Vocational Support Officers.

Appendix 1

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Risk Rating/Response
1. That the Department of Corrective Services update and implement its philosophy and strategies for managing Aboriginal prisoners wherever they are held.	Supported, subject to funding/Acceptable The Department will shortly review the Aboriginal Strategic Plan and within that process will factor in recent work on the development of a philosophy for the management of Aboriginal prisoners. Initiatives arising from the review of the strategic plan will be implemented subject to funding.
2. That the Department of Corrective Services commence the process of developing an integrated philosophy for the management of Aboriginal prisons.	Supported, subject to funding/Acceptable Regional prisons with predominantly Aboriginal populations have developed philosophies for through the change management process for the management of Aboriginal prisoners. A statewide philosophy for the management of Aboriginal prisons is currently in draft form.
3. That the Department of Corrective Services take immediate action to increase the level of custodial and non-custodial staffing at Roebourne Regional Prison with a view to ensuring that the prison is optimally staffed comparable to other similar prisons.	Supported/High The Department has initiated action to address the shortage of staffing in Roebourne Regional Prison by seconding 10 staff (for a period of three months) to the prison. This was initiated late 2006 and has occurred twice since the beginning of 2007. The Department will continue to consider options for increasing the staffing levels of the prison. A review of Senior Management and Administrative Support has been completed and is currently under consideration.
4. That the Department of Corrective Services investigate further incentives to offset the scarcity and high cost of accommodating staff in the region.	Supported in principle/High The Department has determined that all staff working in the Pilbara Region will receive free government rental accommodation. The Department will continue to work with the Department of Housing and Works to improve the standards and number of houses available for accommodation within the Region.
5. That a review be completed of the workload and classification level of the Business Manager and Security Manager positions at Roebourne Regional Prison.	Supported/Acceptable A comprehensive review of all senior management and administrative support positions within prisons has been completed and is currently under consideration.

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Risk Rating/Response
<p>6. That the Department of Corrective Services expedite the filling of a Senior Officer Trainer position at Roebourne Regional Prison.</p>	<p>Supported/Acceptable A Training Officer position will be advertised later in 2007.</p>
<p>7. That the Department of Corrective Services assess the cultural awareness training delivered at Roebourne Regional Prison for its relevance to broader cultural awareness training programs across all services.</p>	<p>Supported, subject to funding/Low The Department currently delivers cultural awareness training to all prison officers and vocational and support officers through the Entry Level Training Program and the Essential Training Program; regionally specific training is also conducted to meet identified training needs. The current contract for the provision of cultural awareness training expires in June 07 and the ability to deliver regionally specific training will be a requirement of the new contract.</p>
<p>8. That Roebourne Regional Prison offer targeted training to staff to address skills deficits in the prison officer group funded separately from the existing prison budget.</p>	<p>Supported in part/Low Roebourne Regional Prison is unable to fund items separately from its existing budget. A Training Officer position will be advertised later in 2007 and when filled will address the training needs of the Prison Officer group.</p>
<p>9. That the Department of Corrective Services immediately take action to cease the use of mattresses on the floor during periods of overcrowding.</p>	<p>Not supported/Acceptable The prison does not routinely utilise mattresses on the floor. Roebourne Regional Prison is a transit point for prisoners moving from the north and the south of the state. On occasions this has required the use of additional mattresses to accommodate these prisoners overnight. This temporary inconvenience has been weighed against the impact on space and ambience of living conditions of prisoners if additional bunks were to be added to existing cells. It is considered preferable to utilise additional mattresses for these extraordinary occasions rather than impacting on cell space on a daily basis.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Risk Rating/Response
<p>10. That the Department of Corrective Services when planning for a new Pilbara regional prison establish a community reference group and that this group be involved in determining the best location for the new prison.</p>	<p>Supported in part/Low The decision will ultimately rest with Government.</p>
<p>11. That climatic controls (such as shade, or fans where appropriate) are installed in recreation areas, along with suitable climatic controls to reduce air temperatures and increase air circulation in prisoner day rooms, work areas and cells at Roebourne Regional Prison.</p>	<p>Supported in part/Acceptable All cells and dayrooms have ceiling fans. The maximum security and women's unit cells, library and dining room are all air-conditioned.</p> <p>Shade sails are scheduled to be installed in the yard wings to reduce temperatures in living areas and day rooms. The Department has explored the cost of air-conditioning all cells. In addition to being prohibitively expensive, this is not fully supported by all prisoners.</p>
<p>12. That Roebourne Regional Prison management undertake a review of the impact of daylight saving on the prison timetable, with a particular view to minimising any increased heat stress on prisoners when locked in cell.</p>	<p>Supported in part/Acceptable The Change Management Team at Roebourne Regional Prison conducted an analysis of cell temperatures over two weeks during December 2006. Temperatures within Units 1 & 2 between the hours of 6.00 pm and 8.00 pm varied (on average) by less than one degree. This indicates that changing the prison timetable would achieve very little in the way of relief for prisoners.</p>
<p>13. That Roebourne Regional Prison implement later lock-down security procedures for minimum-security prisoners that reflect lock-down practices for minimum-security prisoners in other Western Australian prisons.</p>	<p>Supported in principle/Acceptable The prison is supportive of the introduction of a late lock-up for all minimum-security prisoners. There is a need for constructive activity supported by appropriate staffing levels associated with a late lock-up. The current levels of staffing do not allow for this. The prison will continue to review its capacity to introduce a late lockup and this remains an objective in the prison's Business Plan.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Risk Rating/Response
<p>14. That the Department of Corrective Services as a matter of priority increase the resource levels of the Prison Counselling Service at Roebourne Regional Prison to service the needs of the prisoner population.</p>	<p>Supported subject to funding/Low The Offender Services Directorate has distributed resources to all facilities commensurate with the expected activities and the full budget allocation. To increase the resource levels will mean decreasing resources at other facilities resulting in reducing service provision.</p>
<p>15. That the Department of Corrective Services audit the needs of the prisoner population with a view to introducing at Roebourne Prison the range and frequency of offender programs appropriate to the population's needs.</p>	<p>Not supported/Low The Offender Services Directorate continues to contribute to the assessment process for prisoners as required. This process provides the determination of high risk/high need prisoners and makes every effort to provide the recommended treatment interventions within existing resources. It is acknowledge that in many instances prisoners with assessed treatment intervention needs may be transferred to other facilities to engage in the appropriate treatment option. The Department is progressing other system wide options that will enable it to better define the assessed demand for treatment program intervention against the actual supply.</p>
<p>16. That the Department of Corrective Services undertake a review of the need for onsite PAST support for prisoners at Roebourne Regional Prison.</p>	<p>Supported subject to funding/High Health Services has sought funding for an increase to Alcohol and Drug Addiction (AOD) services across the state. This has been unsuccessful to date. Health services are examining available resources; however, recruiting appropriately qualified clinicians (ie. AOD Mental Health Specialist) is difficult in regional areas.</p>
<p>17. That Roebourne Regional Prison provide greater support to the Prison Support Officer and increased resources to enhance the quality of support prisoner peer support group provide to prisoners.</p>	<p>Supported in part/Acceptable The Prison is fully supportive of the Prison Support Officer (PSO). There has been a change in the role of the PSO since the inspection and a Service Level Agreement between the superintendent and the PSO is being drafted to reflect the supportive arrangements that are in place.</p> <p>Included in current capital works at the Prison is the provision of an office for the PSO to allow the conduct</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Risk Rating/Response
	<p>of confidential interviews with prisoners.</p> <p>The prison is open to suggestions for improvement by the prisoner peer support group and is unaware of any request from this group that have been unmet.</p>
<p>18. That Roebourne Regional Prison provide greater support to the activities of the Aboriginal Visitor Scheme.</p>	<p>Supported in part/Acceptable</p> <p>The Prison is highly supportive of the activities of the Aboriginal Visitor Scheme (AVS). The AVS will be provided with its own office in the current capital works which will assist them in conducting confidential interviews.</p>
<p>19. That the Department of Corrective Services fund Roebourne Regional Prison to deliver offender programs and education services to women prisoners at a standard comparable to Bandyup Women's Prison.</p>	<p>Supported subject to funding/Low</p> <p>The 2007–2008 budget request addresses the needs of the women at Roebourne. This request will be subject to the current budget allocation.</p>
<p>20. That the Department of Corrective Services implement strategies to raise the standard of accommodation in the women's unit at Roebourne Regional Prison to a standard comparable to Bandyup Women's Prison.</p>	<p>Supported subject to funding/Low</p> <p>Architects have provided drawings and preliminary estimates for an expanded women's precinct that provides for greater outdoor space, separate kitchen, dining and day room facilities with a veranda overlooking open yard. It is envisaged that this expanded area will give women options for socialising and activity. Estimated costs will now be considered at a departmental level against other priorities within limited budget provisions.</p>
<p>21. That the Department of Corrective Services review the position of the Women's Support Officer at Roebourne Regional Prison and increase the position from 0.4 FTE to one FTE.</p>	<p>Supported in part/Acceptable</p> <p>The number of women at Roebourne Regional Prison does not warrant a Level 4 FTE However, considerations have been given to increasing the WSO to 0.6 of a FTE rather than the existing 0.4.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Risk Rating/Response
<p>22. That Roebourne Regional Prison review existing processes and improve the practice of disseminating information to prisoners, in particular about gratuities, inter-prison telephone calls and the grievance process.</p>	<p>Supported/Acceptable A review of existing practices relating to the dissemination of information to prisoners will be conducted by the Superintendent.</p>
<p>23. That the Department of Corrective Services give immediate priority to Roebourne Regional Prison to fund an off-road vehicle with the capacity to transport at least 12 prisoners and one prison officer.</p>	<p>Supported in principle The previous mobile plant budget was significantly reduced in order to build fences at Karnet and Wooroloo Prisons. Funding submissions to increase the mobile plant budget to \$750,000 pa plus \$1M catch-up (to fund items such as this) were in the capital funding submission to government. Funding was not granted and therefore this recommendation will not be implemented in the foreseeable future.</p>
<p>24. That Roebourne Regional Prison immediately cease the practice of reducing the gratuity level of prisoners employed at the work camp while the prisoner is at the prison to have a social visit.⁴¹</p>	<p>Not supported/Acceptable The prison does not reduce the gratuity level of prisoners from work camps when they return for social visits.</p>
<p>25. That the Roebourne Regional Prison develop and submit to the Department of Corrective Services a business case to offer visits for prisoners employed at the Millstream Work Camp.</p>	<p>Partially supported/Low The Superintendent, Roebourne Regional Prison will review the current practice relating to visits for prisoners employed at Millstream Work Camp. The outcome of this review will determine future actions.</p>
<p>26. That the use of work camps at Roebourne Regional Prison be expanded as a pre-release program for a larger proportion of the prison population. To achieve this objective it will be</p>	<p>Supported/Low A Five Year Strategic Plan is currently being developed to address the expanded use of work camps as pre-release facilities and as a viable and desirable placement option for a certain segment of the prison population.</p>

41 The Inspectorate is satisfied on the balance of evidence that this practice occurred but accepts the Department's assurance that it no longer occurs.

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Risk Rating/Response
<p>necessary for the Department of Corrective Services to finance and develop the concept of work camps beyond its current forms to include a range of innovative pre-release centres and out-stations. A range of improved incentives for prisoners will be required.</p>	
<p>27. That the Department of Corrective Services give a commitment to provide Roebourne Regional Prison with the required level of recurrent funding to support the operation of the Decca Station as an ongoing training facility.</p>	<p>Supported subject to funding/Low Currently the federal Department of Employment and Work Relations is funding the Industrial Training Officer for a two-year period, finishing in December 2008. The Department will be required to provide recurrent funding from this date to continue the employment of the Industrial Training Officer and support the ongoing operation of Decca as a training facility. The Decca operation will be reviewed and evaluated in December 2007 and will form the basis for a business case for recurrent funding.</p>
<p>28. That Roebourne Regional Prison develop a training plan for Decca Station to be implemented within the next three years.</p>	<p>Supported in principle/Low A training plan will be developed should Decca Station receive ongoing funding.</p>
<p>29. It is again recommended that the visits facilities at Roebourne Regional Prison be reviewed and efforts made to improve facilities including mechanisms for increasing prisoners' access to visits.</p>	<p>Supported in part/Acceptable The visits area is currently being upgraded to include a children's play area and additional shade sails. Current staff shortages preclude an increase in visiting hours.</p>
<p>30. That the Department of Corrective Services approve a recurrent budget allocation to Roebourne Regional Prison to provide a weekly visitor bus service between the prison, South Hedland and Karratha.</p>	<p>Not supported/Acceptable The prison has attempted to assist family visits through the provision of a bus service from Port Hedland and Roebourne/Karratha/Wickham on several occasions for extended periods. Unfortunately these services were not supported by prisoners' families.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Risk Rating/Response
<p>31. That Roebourne Regional Prison examine the options of providing short-stay accommodation for visitors travelling long distances to visit a prisoner.</p>	<p>Not supported/Acceptable As acknowledged in Recommendation 4, accommodation in the region is scarce and expensive. The Department is currently experiencing difficulty in finding accommodation for staff. It is not feasible for it to provide accommodation for visitors.</p>
<p>32. That the Department of Corrective Services immediately review the telephone call subsidy for out-of-country prisoners in Roebourne Regional Prison to ensure they receive telephone subsidies comparable to those received by out-of-country prisoners in metropolitan prisons.</p>	<p>Supported/Low The telephone call subsidy is currently being reviewed by the Superintendent and will be implemented in accordance with the outcome of the review.</p>
<p>33. That the Department of Corrective Services immediately remove the \$4 fee charged to prisoners at the Roebourne Regional Prison for use of video visit facilities.</p>	<p>Not supported/Acceptable Prisons currently charge a nominal fee for a 15-minute video-visit. This is consistent with the current practice of charging prisoners for their telephone calls. Where a request is made, and/or a need is identified, video-visits can be conducted free of charge at the discretion of the Superintendent. Such instances are assessed on a case-by-case basis. A free service on a blanket basis runs the risk of generating demand that may not be able to be met. It also runs the risk of prisoners attempting to utilise a free video-link in place of a telephone call for which they would be charged.</p> <p>The nominal fee imposed is intended to ensure that the service continues to be readily available to prisoners who are most in need of this service, for instance, prisoners who are not receiving visits or receiving limited visits because their families reside in Aboriginal communities.</p> <p>In addition, new initiatives are being adopted to provide DVD video visits where offenders can produce a DVD and have this posted to family/community.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Risk Rating/Response
	Prisoners are informed of these options by either orientation or peer support processes.
34. That Roebourne Regional Prison develop improved processes to promote and assist prisoners to use the video visit system.	<p>Supported/Acceptable</p> <p>This will be included in the review of current practices relating to the provision of information to prisoners, as identified in the Department's response to Recommendation 22.</p>
35. That the Roebourne Regional Prison, in consultation with the Department of Corrective Services, develop and implement strategies to increase the access to additional functional space for the education centre.	<p>Supported/Acceptable</p> <p>Included in the current capital works being conducted at the prison is a new classroom for the education centre.</p>
36. That the management of Roebourne Regional Prison consult its education centre staff to resolve the centre's access to running water.	<p>Supported/Acceptable</p> <p>The education centre staff have been consulted and agreement reached for a tap to be installed on the exterior of the new demountable.</p>
37. That Roebourne Regional Prison implement strategies to provide shade and shelter for prisoners using the external areas of the education centre.	<p>Supported subject to funding/Acceptable</p> <p>The prison will review the environmental protection needs upon completion of the current capital works project and develop a business case for funding. In the interim, there are under cover tables and chairs outside the industries workshop and the outdoor visits area that are available for use by education staff.</p>
38. That if there is a moratorium on the deliver of education programs at any time during 2007, the Department of Corrective Services exempt Roebourne Regional Prison and programs continue uninterrupted.	<p>Supported/Acceptable</p> <p>The delivery of education programs at Roebourne Regional Prison continued throughout 2006–2007 and was not interrupted. It is not anticipated that services will be disrupted in 2007–2008.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Risk Rating/Response
<p>39. That the Department of Corrective Services support staff employed in the education centre at Roebourne Regional Prison to participate in relevant opportunities for professional development in accordance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations.</p>	<p>Not supported/Acceptable The Education and Vocational Training Unit has evidence of a range of professional development opportunities that were offered to education staff at Roebourne Regional Prison during 2006. These included a state conference, an AQTF peer audit, adult basic education moderation, teleconference professional development and site-specific training.</p>
<p>40. That Roebourne Regional Prison review the overall training requirements of the Vocational Support Officers at the prison and support them to complete the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA40104).</p>	<p>Supported subject to funding/Low Appropriate levels of training will be determined to allow VET requirements to be met.</p>
<p>41. That Roebourne Regional Prison review and enhance the resources and internal budget arrangement for the Vocational Support Officers.</p>	<p>Supported/Low This will be reviewed during the business planning process for 2007–2008.</p>

Appendix 2

SCORECARD ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRESS AGAINST THE 2004 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation Number	By type of Recommendation/Duration	Assessment of the Department's implementations				
		Poor	Less than Acceptable	Acceptable	More than Acceptable	Excellent
1	That security arrangements at the prison take better account of the fact that a substantial proportion of the population is minimum-security.			•		
2	That the classification system for Western Australian prisoners be re-examined in the light of the above comments with a view to reflecting risk more accurately, particularly in relation to the Aboriginal population.	Superseded by the Review of Assessment and Classification				
3	That the Department of Justice and the Roebourne Prison Management examine in detail the capacity of Roebourne Regional Prison to deal effectively with emergencies from internal sources and take such steps by way of training and the provision of equipment to improve that capacity. Negotiations should also be held with local emergency services with a view to agreeing, as far as feasible, reliable MOUs as to the provision of assistance where required.			•		
4	That the Department should clarify its policies in relation to the usage of the special-purposes cells at the prison.			•		
5	That the Department monitor its performance in the custodial management of Aboriginal prisoners at Roebourne Prison in line with the standards and guiding principles set out in its Regional Strategic Plan and Aboriginal Strategic Plan and set out a plan to address those issues identified as sub-standard.		•			
6	That the Department review the conditions of imprisonment and the services provided to females at Roebourne Prison in the light of its Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Services 2002-2005 and Women's Custodial Services Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Services.		•			

SCORECARD ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRESS AGAINST THE
2004 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation Number	By type of Recommendation/Duration	Assessment of the Department's implementations				
		Poor	Less than Acceptable	Acceptable	More than Acceptable	Excellent
7	That attention also be given to the regimes and conditions applicable to the following categories of prisoners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign nationals; • Remand prisoners; • Young prisoners; • Lifers, Governor's Pleasure and long-term prisoners. 			•		
8	That the Department conduct a meaningful review of the climate control needs of prisoners at Roebourne Prison, establish acceptable standards for issues such as cell temperatures, and monitor these. The Department should also establish the current capacity of the prison to meet these standards and therefore the modifications and or additional resources required.		•			
9	That Roebourne Prison Management gives careful consideration to reviewing and considerably improving its induction and orientation processes in line with Policy Directive 18.			•		
10	That Roebourne Prison seriously address its grievance and complaints processes and resources in line with the RFP Standards Framework and the Superintendents' Circular 10/2003		•			
11	That the visits facilities at Roebourne Prison be reviewed and efforts made to improve facilities and that mechanisms for increasing prisoners' access to visits be explored.			•		
12	That the Department develop and implement a plan for case management at Roebourne Prison. This plan to include: The identification and training of prison officers as case managers; The monitoring of the case management provided; and A program schedule, which will ensure timely access to programs for all prisoners meeting entry requirements.		•			

SCORECARD ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRESS AGAINST THE
2004 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation Number	By type of Recommendation/Duration	Assessment of the Department's implementations				
		Poor	Less than Acceptable	Acceptable	More than Acceptable	Excellent
13	That the Department review each of its offender programs delivered to Aboriginal prisoners in regard to: delivery format; content; language; and effectiveness specific to the Aboriginal group receiving the program. The previous recommendation made earlier in this Report, that sufficient programs be provided to meet the needs of the prisoners at Roebourne Prison is also restated.		•			
14	That Roebourne Prison introduce alcohol and drug information during induction, that a competent testing process be put in place, that relevant treatment programs be offered to affected prisoners, and that the Department ensure that all health risk assessments for alcohol be conducted only by suitably qualified and trained staff.			•		
15	That Roebourne Prison continued efforts to enhance the scope of Section 94 activities and the number of prisoners involved.			•		
16	That the Department develop and implement an industries plan for Roebourne Prison that takes into account prisoners' training needs and their employment options on release.		•			
17	That the Department assess and implement the general and Roebourne Prison specific findings of its own review of human resource issues.		•			
18	That the Department review the capacity of Roebourne Prison to fund and implement changes arising from this Report and that the Department suitably support the prison where it is not able to meet its requirements internally.		•			
19	That the Department appoint a Change Manager for Roebourne Prison to work with the Roebourne Prison Management to establish priorities against the Department's action plan arising out of this Report and to assist the prison in implementing its plan.			•		

SCORECARD ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRESS AGAINST THE
2004 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation Number	By type of Recommendation/Duration	Assessment of the Department's implementations				
		Poor	Less than Acceptable	Acceptable	More than Acceptable	Excellent
20	That a comprehensive plan containing clear time lines be developed for Roebourne Prison to address the issues identified in this Report and that the Prison Service Executive take responsibility for the progress of Roebourne Prison against a published action plan.		•			
21	That complementary to an action plan, the Department establish measurable outcome markers and monitor the progress of the prison in moving to deal with the substance of recommendations and the prison's compliance with the Department's rules, policy directives and operation instructions.			•		
22	That the Department devise a comprehensive and integrated long-term strategic view for custodial management within the Pilbara, developed through consultation with the Pilbara communities, Roebourne Prison Management, the Prison Officers' Union, external service providers and other government agencies within the region.		•			

Appendix 3

THE INSPECTION TEAM

Professor Richard Harding	Inspector of Custodial Services
Mr Robert Stacey	Deputy Inspector of Custodial Services
Mr Bill Cullen	Director Operations
Mr Cliff Holdom	Inspections and Research Officer
Mr John Acres	Principal Inspections and Research Officer
Ms Kate Hitchins	Inspections and Research Officer
Ms Fiona Paskulich	Inspections and Research Officer
Mr Joseph Wallam	Community Liaison Officer
Ms Vivien Hubbard	Inspections and Research Officer (seconded from the Department of Corrective Services)
Ms Dace Thomsons	Expert Advisor, Drug and Alcohol Office
Dr Stephen Patchett	Expert Advisor, Forensic Mental Health Service
Ms Cheryl Wilkins	Expert Advisor, Department of Education and Training

Appendix 4

KEY DATES

Formal notification of announced inspection	26 November 2006
Pre-inspection community consultation	10–11 January 2007
Start of on-site phase	11 March 2007
Completion of on-site phase	16 March 2007
Inspection exit debrief	16 March 2007
Draft report sent to the Department of Corrective Services	29 June 2007
Draft report returned by the Department of Corrective Services	10 August 2007
Declaration of prepared report	31 August 2007



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