



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR
OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES

OCTOBER 2015

REPORT OF AN ANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF
WOOROLOO PRISON FARM

101

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accountable public sector.*

Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm

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The Inspector's Overview

WOOROLOO PRISON FARM: A SHARPER SENSE OF PURPOSE AND LESS DISCORD,
BUT STILL A LONG WAY TO GO IF IT IS TO MEETS ITS ASPIRATIONS

This report of an announced inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm ('Wooroloo'), conducted in May 2015, is our fifth public report on the prison. Wooroloo has undergone some fundamental changes over the past decade, and it has not been a smooth journey. This inspection found the prison was taking steps to improve performance and culture, but it remains a 'work in progress'. The Department of Corrective Services (the 'Department') must ensure that the positive momentum is maintained and that its policies and procedures maximise the opportunities presented at the prison.

WOOROLOO'S EVOLUTION

Wooroloo has a fascinating history. The buildings, most of which are heritage-listed, began life in the early Twentieth Century as a sanatorium. It then served as the local hospital before becoming a minimum-security prison farm in the 1970s. Despite never being planned as a prison, it is an excellent site: the buildings are generally very good and its calm environment is very suited for its official role as a minimum-security prison with a focus on preparing people for release.

Wooroloo has now been a prison for over 40 years. It must not live in the past, but it is not possible to understand the challenges it faces without also understanding how it has transformed over the last decade, and the poor management of that transformation from 2007 to 2013.

In 2002 and 2006, this Office concluded that Wooroloo was one of the state's best prisons. At the time it was a small open prison housing 160–200 prisoners. It had a clear sense of direction, and enjoyed a reputation for effective offender management, good preparation for release, and strong community connections. In 2006, my predecessor Professor Richard Harding called it the best prison in the state.

Between 2006 and 2009, Wooroloo changed both physically and culturally. A much more secure perimeter fence was constructed, and the prison expanded rapidly, so it now has a designated total capacity of 362.

Changes of such magnitude clearly required consistent and proactive local management, combined with appropriate head office support and oversight. Unfortunately, both were lacking for most of the period from 2007 to 2013. In 2009, we found that Wooroloo's sense of direction, performance and morale had declined. The prison was clearly 'on the cusp', and our recommendations aimed to address the issues and to maximise its potential.

The Department accepted all our 2009 recommendations. In fact, it claimed to be already well-aware of the issues. However, it did not take sustained remedial action. Not surprisingly, Wooroloo continued to drift, and in many respects it declined further.

In 2012, Wooroloo was still doing a decent job in some areas, but it still had no clear philosophy and was being dragged down by discord and disharmony. Staff as a whole were frustrated and disillusioned; the senior officer group, so critical to the good operation of any prison, was divided; and despite the efforts of some individuals in their time there, prison management turnover had stymied progress. The prison had not been taking a clear and consistent approach to managing either its staff or its prisoners, and staff/prisoner relationships had deteriorated.

In short, in 2012, Wooroloo was falling well short of its potential and known issues had been left to drift for too long. It needed revitalising.

WOOROLOO 2015

Turning the Corner

This inspection found that Wooroloo has lifted since 2012 in terms of its sense of direction, staff morale, and consistency and accountability in management. However, considerable work remains to be done in all those areas, and there are several other areas of weakness or missed opportunity.

Staff morale has improved, and there is far less division. Some staff were unhappy with aspects of the ‘firm’ management style being adopted at the prison but complaints about inconsistency, favouritism and unfair process had almost entirely gone, and few complaints of major substance emerged. The issue was primarily one of style and this can be addressed with will on all sides. Management were also working hard to ensure the prison stayed within budget.

Staff/prisoner relations had also improved, probably a direct result of improvements in staff morale. As a result, relational security, including intelligence-gathering, was working quite well. However, we found some issues with procedural security. For example, the control room was sometimes being left unsecured and empty, creating a number of risks. Control rooms, even in the relaxed environment of Wooroloo, must be secure and staffed at all times. The Department has assured us that this is now the case.

The prison itself was generally in excellent shape. The grounds were very well-maintained and the heritage-listed ‘recreation hall’ had been well-renovated. At a site such as this, however, there will always be a great deal of ongoing maintenance, such as painting and clearing of gutters. These present obvious opportunities for prisoner training and employment at the prison – opportunities that were simply not being maximised.

Maximising Opportunities and Effectiveness

Wooroloo has therefore ‘turned a corner’ in terms of some of the fundamental building blocks for the future. However, a great deal remains to be done if it is to meet the Department’s corporate goal of reducing recidivism and its own aspiration to be ‘Australia’s leading re-entry prison’.

There are two key elements to continuing progress. First, the prison, with support from head office, must build up those areas where progress has already been made, and must develop and embed positive management/staff relations. Secondly, the Department must ensure that the prison is adequately funded and that centrally-mandated policies take account of Wooroloo’s role, and maximise its effectiveness as a re-entry prison.

This inspection found that budget constraints were impacting on a number of areas, notably education and training. However, the more pervasive problem was the impact of tighter centralised policies on Wooroloo’s capacity to do what it has a proven long term ability to do. The tighter policies had been implemented primarily as a result of a spate of escapes in 2013 and 2014.

It was understandable that there would be a tightening of policies after these escapes, but it is important to place some context around the issue.ⁱ First and foremost, the number of people who have escaped from any correctional location over the past six years is low. Secondly, the number of escapes from medium- or maximum-security locations is extremely low. Thirdly, Wooroloo is a minimum-security re-entry prison. Before prisoners can go there, they have been in Departmental custody for some time, have undergone risk assessments, and have needed to ‘earn’ their minimum-security status through good prison conduct. The vast majority of them ‘do the right thing’ when they get to minimum-security. They respond to the trust that is placed in them, and want to use the opportunity to improve their chances of being law-abiding citizens on release.

The system must not judge the vast majority of minimum-security prisoners by the irresponsible and unacceptable actions of a few. It must also not compromise its ability to achieve the goal of improving public safety by reducing recidivism. At Wooroloo, the tightened policies were having an unnecessarily negative impact in many areas, including the following:

- The prison workshops are located outside the perimeter fence. This short-sighted cost-saving measure dating back to the construction of the fence in 2008, has had detrimental long term costs. In 2014, tightened approval processes for prisoners to work in the workshops had further reduced the amount of work being done in the workshops, the capacity to attract external contracts, and the delivery of training that would assist prisoners to obtain employment on release.
- The assessment processes for prisoners to undertake out of prison activities under section 95 of the *Prisons Act* had become more convoluted and time-consuming, leading to undue delays.
- Even though prisoners going to Wooroloo are well-known to the system before they get there, they were only being assessed for section 95 after they got there.
- Prisoners who were allowed out of the prison to undertake employment, home leaves or other activities were required to be shackled and escorted by two officers if they needed medical treatment outside the prison. This is both unnecessary and expensive.
- Wooroloo’s official name is the Wooroloo Prison Farm, but 10 prisoners at most are allocated work places at the farm. During our inspection, there were days when only one prisoner was actually there.

Obviously, the Department must prioritise community safety. However, correctional services are, at their core, about people management and risk management. Departmental policies must therefore be balanced, taking account of the different roles of different facilities and the long-term goal of reducing crime.

i Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS), *Escapes and attempted escapes from corrections in Western Australia* (February 2015).

MAINTAINING MOMENTUM AND THE RISKS OF COMPLACENCY

Wooroloo has certainly moved ahead in some respects from where it was in 2012, but there are some continuing issues of concern and numerous improvement opportunities.

I am pleased to report that the Department has supported all 13 of our recommendations for improvement, and I look forward to reviewing progress in the future. However, I am concerned at the equivocal and non-committal nature of the support. The Department has stated that ‘no further action is required’ in relation to 11 of the recommendations. Although some recommendations, such as the one relating to tightening up the control room procedures, involve a simple fix, the majority do require further action and continuing oversight.

Wooroloo’s own history – charted above – is testament to the problems that occur when recommendations are supported on paper but not backed by action, or when complacency creeps in. The same is true of other sites, including Bandyup Women’s Prison and Banksia Hill Juvenile Detention Centre. Wooroloo is a ‘work in progress’, and the recommendations were made because action is required.

The prison system is also edging towards an era of ‘contestability’, of stricter performance measures, and of different service delivery models. In this environment, Wooroloo and other minimum-security prisons must be agile, responsive and innovative, and the Department should not be satisfied with the status quo. It needs to more clearly identify its expectations of each prison, including Wooroloo, resource the prisons in line with those expectations, set outcome-based measures, provide facilities the flexibility to achieve outcomes, and evaluate and report publicly on those results. This is what is expected of private sector operators at prisons such as Wandoo and Acacia. The same should apply to the publicly operated prisons.

Neil Morgan

8 October 2015

Fact Page

NAME OF FACILITY

Wooroloo Prison Farm

ROLE OF FACILITY

Wooroloo is a minimum-security prison for adult males.

LOCATION

55 kilometres north-east of Perth.

The traditional owners of the land are the Noongar people.

BRIEF HISTORY

First opened in 1914 as a sanatorium for people with leprosy and tuberculosis, Wooroloo was converted to a minimum-security prison farm in 1972 when the Department of Corrective Services took over the site.

PREVIOUS INSPECTION

25–30 March 2012

ORIGINAL DESIGN CAPACITY

323

OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

362

NUMBER OF PRISONERS HELD AT TIME OF INSPECTION

289ⁱⁱ

DESCRIPTION OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS

Unit	Description	Capacity	No. (11/05/2015)
1	Semi-self-care	63	63
2A	Standard accommodation	25	23
2B	Self-care	24	24
2C	Semi-self-care	40	33
3	Standard accommodation: 8 semi-self-care cells for men aged over 50 and 8 semi-self-care cells for Aboriginal men	110	63
4A	Standard accommodation: 8 semi-self-care cells for men aged over 50	76	59
4B	Self-care	11	11
4C	Self-care	11	11
4D	Self-care	2	2
TOTAL		362	289

ii Total Offender Management System (TOMS), *Wooroloo Prison Farm: Count History – Facility, 11/05/2015 as at 23:21* (accessed 18 June 2015).

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF WOOROLOO PRISON FARM

HISTORY AND INSPECTION CONTEXT

- 1.1 First opened in 1914 as a sanatorium for people with leprosy and tuberculosis, Wooroloo was converted to a minimum-security prison farm in 1972. Prisoners at Wooroloo Prison Farm (hereafter ‘Wooroloo’) usually finish their sentences there, so the prison has a key role in helping them transition back into the community. As a minimum-security facility, Wooroloo can offer prisoners more self-determination than higher security prisons, which can enhance rehabilitation and reintegration.



Photo 1: The administration building – a piece of history.

- 1.2 The May 2015 inspection of Wooroloo was the fifth inspection by the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (the ‘Office’). Our previous inspections of Wooroloo found the prison working well at first, but then deteriorating in performance¹:
- In 2002 we found the prison was performing well and providing good services to prisoners in the areas of case management, visits, education, offender programs and employment.
 - In 2006 the prison had built on its strengths and was performing highly, with the Inspector commenting that Wooroloo was ‘the best adult male prison in the state’.

¹ Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS), *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 17 (July 2003); OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 39 (January 2007) iii; OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 61 (September 2009); OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 80 (August 2012).

- By 2009 we found that the prison’s performance had declined, with poor relationships between prisoners and prison officers. The prison was facing a range of problems such as staff shortages, an unstable management team, a larger prisoner population, and a new perimeter fence. The facility was not performing well as a re-entry prison.
- In 2012 our concerns about Wooroloo increased. Many of the issues we saw in 2009 remained, while additional problems around staff communication and a lack of meaningful employment for prisoners had also developed.

2015 INSPECTION FINDINGS

- 1.3 In this inspection we found that, after a concerted effort, Wooroloo had started to resolve some of the main problems affecting its performance. Wooroloo had created a new vision for itself as ‘Australia’s leading re-entry prison’.² Prison management had run a cultural change project and we found the staff to be a more cohesive group. Officer and prisoner relationships had improved, and lower population numbers had eased demand for opportunities and services such as employment and healthcare.
- 1.4 Wooroloo was still early in the change process. The impact of change is not always easy to see at this stage, and the recidivism rate for prisoners released from Wooroloo has remained relatively steady. The percentage of sentenced prisoners who had been released from Wooroloo, but who returned to prison within two years, was 27.7 per cent for people returning to prison in 2013 and 2014. This is a very similar result to three years previously, when the recidivism rate was 27.5 per cent.³
- 1.5 Wooroloo still needs to make more changes if it is to realise its new vision and reduce its recidivism rate. Internally, management will need to communicate more sensitively with staff to see them engage with and invest in the prison’s new direction. Externally, the Department will need to take a good look at how some of its new policies unduly limit prisoners’ access to reintegration opportunities outside the prison fence. Wooroloo will need to overcome these problems before it can tackle the biggest challenge of all – finding innovative ways to enhance reintegration and rehabilitation.
- 1.6 Wooroloo will also need to find ways to demonstrate its progress along the way. While performance accountability should be a priority for every public service, it is becoming increasingly important for prisons. The government has shown growing interest in contestability, where the private and public sectors compete for the chance to deliver custodial services. For example, the Department has recently called for expressions of interest to manage and operate the new Women’s Remand and Reintegration Facility, which currently under construction.⁴

2 Department of Corrective Services (DCS), *Wooroloo Prison Farm Vision [and] Mission* (2015).

3 Data extracted from the Department’s Total Offender Management Solution system and analysed by this office. Our calculation excludes prisoners on fine-default-only-sentences and those who return to prison due to a suspended early release order, but includes prisoners who return to prison due to a cancelled early release order.

4 DCS, *Invitation to Submit an Expression of Interest for the Management and Operation of the Women’s Remand and Reintegration Facility* (June 2015).

INSPECTION METHODOLOGY

- 1.7 This inspection followed our standard inspection methodology:
- We surveyed prisoners and staff in March 2015, before the on-site phase of the inspection. We received survey responses from 89 of 319 prisoners and from 75 of approximately 156 staff.
 - We met with a range of organisations that provide services to the prison in March 2015.
 - Our on-site inspection of Wooroloo occurred between 10 and 14 May 2015. We met with management, staff and prisoners, and observed the facilities and activities at the prison. We also reviewed data, policies and reports related to the prison and the Department.
 - We gave preliminary feedback on our findings to both prisoner and staff groups on 20 June 2015.
- 1.8 We chose six themes for our inspection, based on our liaison activity leading up the inspection. The themes for our inspection were:
- strategic management, staffing and staff culture
 - reintegration
 - relational or dynamic security
 - programs and parole
 - support for Aboriginal prisoners
 - farming and industries
- 1.9 Wooroloo hosts a 20-bed work camp near Dowerin in the Wheatbelt. As this Office has only recently tabled an inspection report on work camps in Western Australia, we did not include the Wheatbelt work camp in this inspection of Wooroloo.⁵

5 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Work Camps in Western Australia*, Report No. 95 (April 2015).

Chapter 2

CHANGES UNDER WAY AT WOOROLOO

- 2.1 In 2015, we found Wooroloo in a stronger position than we had seen it in many years. The prison had begun to address many of the issues we identified in our previous inspections. Senior management was more stable, there was greater accountability for meeting basic standards, and the prison had decided on a strategic vision for its future. Wooroloo had initiated a cultural change project and prison staff were generally a happier group. Staff training was a particular strength.
- 2.2 A lot of the changes happening at Wooroloo were only in the early stages, and had not yet led to obvious improvements in the prison's performance. Because improvements are not immediately apparent, keeping staff invested and engaged is critical. The prison can do this by improving its communications, and focusing on problem areas like workers' compensation, staff grievance processes and performance management.
- 2.3 It will also be critical for the prison and the Department to work together to better balance safety and security with prisoner rehabilitation. Over the past three years, the Department has introduced new rules to increase security at minimum-security prisons. Unfortunately at Wooroloo, these rules have limited, and to some extent hindered, the re-entry opportunities available to prisoners. It is difficult to see how either Wooroloo or the Department will achieve their goals to increase rehabilitation and reduce recidivism if this balance is not corrected.

WOOROLOO NOW

Senior Management Team

- 2.4 For the majority of the past decade, Wooroloo has suffered from a lack of stability in its senior management team. The 2012 inspection report observed:
- This has been extremely damaging for the prison ... After so many years of instability, the importance of establishing a permanent senior management team cannot be overstated.⁶
- 2.5 Positively, at the time of the 2012 inspection, three of the five senior management positions at Wooroloo had permanent occupants. The first recommendation in the 2012 inspection report highlighted the need to make substantive appointments to the remaining vacant positions on the senior management team.⁷
- 2.6 This recommendation was supported by the Department and the vacancies were filled. However, the substantive Superintendent subsequently took two lengthy periods of leave. At the time of the 2015 inspection, he had not yet returned from his second period of leave, so again, Wooroloo was subjected to a procession of different senior managers. The Superintendent's position changed hands four times between 2012 and 2015. In addition, the Assistant Superintendent Security had been on secondment elsewhere since October 2013.
- 2.7 The senior management team was shuffled around to cover the absences. Ultimately, this again meant that all but one position on the senior management team was filled by a temporary acting occupant. Fortunately, the impact was mitigated by the fact that all of

6 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 80 (August 2012) 6.

7 Ibid.

the actors were from senior or middle management at Wooroloo, which meant that at least some consistency had been maintained.

- 2.8 Notably, the senior management team had remained unchanged, with the same Acting Superintendent, since the start of 2014. To their credit, they had taken this opportunity to initiate a change process at Wooroloo and address some key needs of the prison such as strategic direction and staff culture. Often acting leaders have a tendency to manage conservatively, without a true sense of ‘ownership’, and are hesitant to initiate substantial change. However, the inspection found this not to be the case with Wooroloo’s current acting management.

Management and Staff Relations

- 2.9 One of the most persistent issues at Wooroloo had been an increasingly negative staff culture. Divisions and disagreements between custodial staff were allowed to fester for years. In 2006, the inspection report noted:

One of the main issues of concern for staff was a level of conflict between certain groups of staff that, in the view of many, had not been appropriately addressed by management.⁸

- 2.10 The same issue existed in 2009, and by 2012, the issues were still unresolved. The custodial staffing group had become a serious concern for the Office and it was frustrating that known issues were not being tackled.
- 2.11 Positively, in 2015, there was evidence of a happier and more positive workplace culture. Most staff acknowledged this shift, even though they may have had concerns about some aspects of their work. Officers returning from extended periods of leave or from working in another prison recognised a much improved culture at Wooroloo. Officers arriving from other prisons (having heard stories about the poor staff culture at Wooroloo) found that it was more positive than they had been led to believe.
- 2.12 In particular, the division that had previously existed between prison officers and senior officers was largely gone. Officers reported that they were now happy to work under any senior officer in the prison. Senior officers for their part presented as a more unified team, and the inconsistent application of rules that had caused such frustration for staff and prisoners in 2012 was not a significant problem in 2015.
- 2.13 Although the staff culture needs ongoing attention, the improvement we saw at our inspection is a significant achievement. There have been a number of contributing factors including staff turnover, more regular management training for senior officers, and better awareness of anti-bullying strategies.

8 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 39 (January 2007) 35.

- 2.14 In addition, the senior management team at Wooroloo had initiated a change process in August 2014 to develop a set of values for the prison and drive cultural change. As part of this, the senior management team had:
- engaged an external consultant
 - convened focus groups from all areas of the prison
 - produced a list of actions
 - scheduled meetings with focus group members to drive actions and monitor progress
- 2.15 Members of the senior management team were convinced that the change process had already made a positive difference. However, operational staff tended to be more sceptical. They were generally unwilling to attribute positive developments to the change process (although most who felt this way had not been personally involved in the focus groups). Resistance is a common response to any organisational change. The senior management team was acutely aware that staff were unlikely to accept the change process unless they saw ongoing action and tangible results. As such, it is vital that the change process continues.

Staff Training

- 2.16 At the previous inspection, staff training was a concern at Wooroloo, primarily because there was no regular training session for staff. Staff availability was extremely limited and this meant that the training officer was arranging training sessions on an ad hoc basis and delivering the same training module over and over again to small groups of officers. We observed that this was a poor use of resources and did not send the message that training is an important part of staff development.⁹
- 2.17 This problem was resolved in 2013 when the Department mandated a scheduled weekly half-day training session for all prisons in Western Australia. Wooroloo now holds a weekly training session on Thursday mornings and the number of officers receiving training has increased substantially. The satellite training officer was organised and proactive, and maintained comprehensive records of training delivered. Staff throughout the prison were very satisfied with the training provided on-site and the training officer felt well-supported by the prison and the Corrective Services Training Academy. This had developed from an area of weakness to an area of strength for Wooroloo.
- 2.18 Access to training outside the prison at the Corrective Services Academy or any other external provider was virtually non-existent because of restrictions on overtime, which meant staff were not released for external training. In the 2012 inspection, the Office identified a specific need for training for senior officers and made a recommendation to this effect.¹⁰ This recommendation was actioned in the second half of 2012 but during the 2015 inspection senior officers still felt they needed more training on managing staff. Ideally, this sort of training would be provided on a regular basis, both for the benefit of new senior officers and to consolidate the learning of continuing senior officers.

⁹ OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 80 (August 2012) 9.

¹⁰ Ibid.

WOOROLOO'S FUTURE OUTLOOK

Strategic Direction

- 2.19 During the 2006 inspection, Wooroloo's strategic role within the wider prison system was well-defined and recognised at local management and head office level. This was closely linked to the prison's strong performance at that inspection.
- 2.20 The then Inspector observed:
- [M]anagement has clear understanding of their processes and their objectives. Wooroloo is a re-entry or releasing prison, and everything about the regime indicates that this is the case.¹¹
- 2.21 Conversely, in 2009, a significant deterioration in performance was linked to the fact that 'Wooroloo seemed to have lost focus on its key purpose of preparing prisoners for release'.¹² The problem persisted in 2012 with the inspection report stating:
- There had been a loss of focus on the prison's role as a re-entry prison with both staff and prisoners suggesting that the minimum-security philosophy had been diluted.¹³
- 2.22 The Office noted the 'lack of a cohesive set of planning documents that articulate Wooroloo's unique challenges, opportunities and direction' and recommended development of 'a strategic plan for Wooroloo Prison Farm outlining the prison's vision, role, priorities, culture and values'.¹⁴
- 2.23 In 2015, the Office was pleased to find significant progress in this area. As part of the change process initiated by the senior management team, Wooroloo had developed a new vision and mission statement. The prison's vision is to be 'Australia's leading re-entry prison' and its mission is to 'contribute to a safer community' through:
- innovative reintegration and rehabilitation services to prisoners
 - a positive, safe working environment based on teamwork
 - reparation and community engagement
- 2.24 The prison also had a *Strategic Business Plan 2014–2015* that identified a number of deliverables aligned with the Department's *Strategic Plan 2015–2018*.
- 2.25 This was a very positive development that provided the prison with the strategic direction that it had lacked for several years. At the time of the inspection, however, these documents were very new and remained remote to operational staff who could not see any impact on their day-to-day work. Staff generally had a cynical view of the aspiration for Wooroloo to be 'Australia's leading re-entry prison', particularly as they thought that budget restrictions meant they could not provide a top quality service to prisoners.

11 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 39 (January 2007) iii.

12 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 61 (September 2009) 10.

13 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 80 (August 2012) 10.

14 Ibid.

CHALLENGES GOING FORWARD

2.26 While its vision may seem aspirational, there is no reason that Wooroloo, with commitment and innovative thinking, should not be the best re-entry prison in Australia. We found that there are a number of challenges Wooroloo will need to address in the short-term to see real progress towards its vision.

Communication

2.27 Wooroloo's senior management team had been driving an increased focus on compliance and accountability. They had brought shift-swapping practices back in line with policy, industrial agreements and operational need. The prison was also trying to keep expenses within its budget by increasing the levels of approval needed for purchases and reducing overtime. These changes were somewhat unpopular with staff and contributed to a negative attitude towards management at Wooroloo. Ultimately, however, the prison was in a stronger position having made these changes. Policy compliance and financial accountability protect both staff and the public interest.

2.28 Staff also made specific complaints to us about negative interactions with individual members of the senior management team. There was a perception of micro-management of prison operations, and of an abruptness and negativity on the part of some managers. However, in spite of this, most staff conceded that the relationship with management had generally improved, and none complained of managers displaying favouritism (a distinct change from earlier years).

2.29 Any organisational change is challenging and likely to generate conflict between staff and management. Looking forward, it will be important for the senior management team at Wooroloo to pay closer attention to the way it communicates with staff, and to handle all personal interactions with diplomacy and empathy.

Staff Grievances

2.30 There is no grievance officer at Wooroloo, though staff were able to access the contact details of grievance officers at other prisons through the Department's intranet. The pre-inspection staff survey indicated some loss of faith in the grievance system, with only 44 per cent of respondents feeling that staff are able to express and resolve work related grievances compared with the previous result of 60 per cent.

Performance Management System

2.31 The performance appraisal and development system at Wooroloo was not well regarded by staff. Some staff told us that the system was not effective because it was not linked to promotion opportunities. However, this is not really the purpose of a performance management system.

2.32 A performance management system is merely a tool to encourage honest communication between managers and staff to provide feedback on performance and identify training needs. The existing structure of the system at Wooroloo did not meet these objectives. Because of the nature of the shift system and the rotation of officers, performance meetings would be held between senior officers and officers who had not recently worked together.

2.33 The Principal Officer at Wooroloo had plans to introduce a system where senior officers would meet as a group to conduct performance appraisals. This would ensure that somebody with actual knowledge of the officer is involved in the appraisal, but group engagement should alleviate concerns about personal bias. This model has been successful at West Kimberley Regional Prison and the Office has encouraged other prisons to adopt similar practices.¹⁵ The Department has also included a review of its performance appraisal reports as key deliverable under its strategic plan, with an estimated completion date of June 2017.¹⁶

Recommendation 1

Wooroloo should sustain its cultural change process. As part of this, it should:

- *improve senior management communications with staff*
- *aim to have at least two senior officers with recent and relevant supervisory experience involved in the performance appraisal and development process for each prison officer*

Workers' Compensation

2.34 Workers' compensation leave levels, often regarded as one measure of organisational health, were high at Wooroloo. In 2013–2014, the average number of hours of workers' compensation leave per FTE at Wooroloo was 99.7.¹⁷ As Figure 1 shows, this was the fourth highest in the state and considerably higher than the state average of 57.4. Wooroloo's figure had increased significantly from 34.0 in 2012–2013. Local management were aware of this sharp upward trend and had been monitoring the issue closely, but will need to increase efforts to turn around this worrying trend.

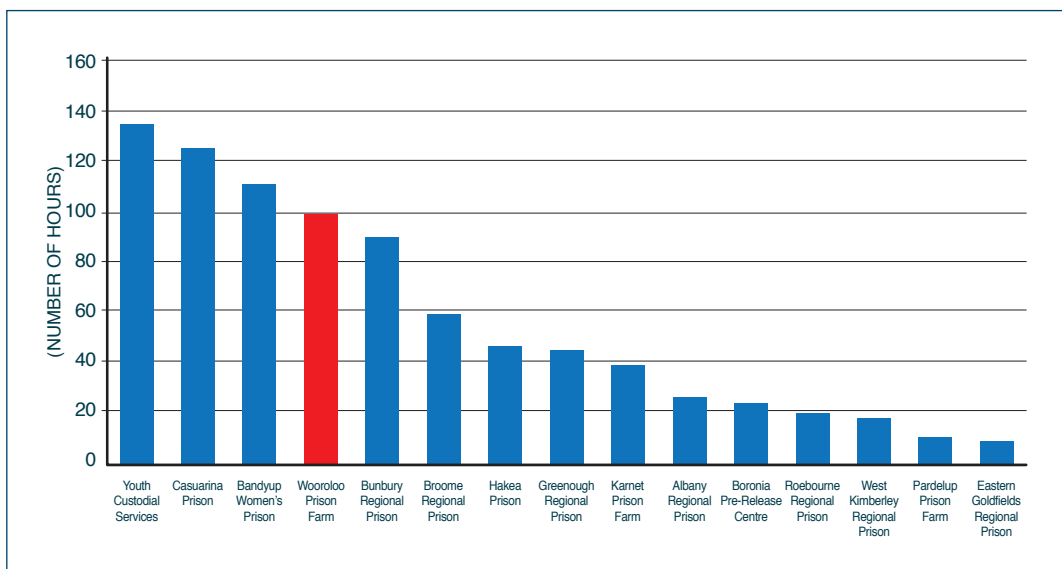


Figure 1: Average hours worker's compensation leave per FTE in DCS facilities in 2013–2014.

15 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of West Kimberley and Broome Regional Prisons*, Report No. 96 (March 2015) 27.

16 DCS, *Strategic Plan – Deliverable Milestones 2015–2018* (July 2015) 2.

17 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Banksia Hill Juvenile Detention Centre*, Report No. 97 (April 2015) 27.

Recommendation 2

Wooroloo and the Department should work proactively together to reduce the high workers' compensation claims at Wooroloo.

Community Relations

- 2.35 Wooroloo maintains a relatively strong relationship with the local and surrounding communities. A Community Liaison Group meets every two months, including several community representatives. Approved teams of prisoners continue to carry out a lot of work in the surrounding area and further afield.
- 2.36 Prior to 2007, the community shared access to facilities such as the nursing station, oval and social club at Wooroloo. However, since the fence was erected in 2007 there are some members of the community who lament the loss of the shared facilities. The limited ongoing maintenance and management of the swimming pool has also been cited as a symptom of the prison neglecting its relationship with the local community. However, the reality is that the prison's integration with the community will never be as strong as it was before the fence was erected, particularly in the current climate of budget restrictions that limit the services the prison can provide to the people of Wooroloo township. For example, this Office strongly supports in principle the idea of prisoners assisting in community work such as updating facilities at the community swimming pool or local sports ovals. However, this has to compete with other prison expenditure and risk management priorities. Going forward, Wooroloo may find it challenging to maintain a positive relationship with the local community.

Chapter 3

REHABILITATION, REINTEGRATION AND RE-ENTRY

- 3.1 The benefits of prisoner rehabilitation are obvious – a better life for the individual, a safer community, and reduced costs to government. As a minimum-security prison for prisoners preparing for their release back into the community, Wooroloo has a key role to play in rehabilitation and in assisting prisoners prepare for release. It should be providing the services and opportunities that prisoners need to live productive and fulfilling lives, and to manage life's ups and downs without turning to crime.
- 3.2 Security, safety and rehabilitation are the platforms in the Department's mission statement, and Wooroloo, like all prisons, needs to ensure the safety and security of prisoners, staff and the community.¹⁸ However, security and safety objectives can come into conflict with prisoner rehabilitation, and it can be difficult to find the right balance. There needs to be scope to give prisoners a degree of freedom and personal responsibility, to help them reintegrate with the community. Effective rehabilitation and reintegration services ultimately protect community safety by reducing reoffending. Finding a way to do this while keeping everyone safe and secure is one of the biggest challenges facing the Department and Wooroloo.
- 3.3 A spate of escapes in 2013 and 2014 saw the Department tighten security rules for prisoners.¹⁹ It was understandable that in the immediate aftermath of the escapes, there would be a universal tightening of policies. However, the reality is that the number of escapes remains low. A recent report on escapes by this Office concluded that:
- The most significant finding of this report is that most prisoners do the right thing; they never escape or try to escape, even when they have the opportunity to do so... [I]t is important not to allow a handful of escapes to lead to the system becoming so risk averse that it compromises its ability to achieve the critical outcome of preparing people for release.²⁰
- 3.4 Wooroloo served to confirm these concerns: the application of the new rules has made it harder for minimum-security prisoners at Wooroloo to reintegrate with the community before they are released. Prisoners who had behaved well throughout their sentences and had earned a minimum-security rating felt they were often worse off at Wooroloo than they had been at their previous prison. We are also concerned about the impact of such restrictions on prisoners' rehabilitation, dignity and wellbeing. It is time for the Department to analyse the impact of the changes on its rehabilitative and reintegrative goals, and consider ways to reduce the detrimental effect.

ASSESSMENT OF PRISONERS FOR EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

- 3.5 Wooroloo is a minimum-security prison, so before even arriving prisoners have been risk assessed to be reasonably trusted in open conditions and to require a low degree of control and supervision.²¹ Minimum-security prisoners can be further assessed to participate in external activities under section 95 of the *Prisons Act 1981* which states that prisoners can be involved in external activities for the promotion of their wellbeing and

18 DCS, *Creating Value through Performance – Strategic Plan 2015-2018* (2015) 3.

19 OICS, *Escapes and attempted escapes from corrections in Western Australia* (February 2015) iii.

20 OICS, *Escapes and Attempted Escapes from Corrections in Western Australia*, media release (7 April 2015) 1.

21 DCS, *Assessment and Sentence Management of Prisoners*, Adult Custodial Rule 18 (2005) 5.

rehabilitation. As a re-entry prison, we expect Wooroloo prisoners to have high participation in external activities.

- 3.6 In 2014, the Department changed the way it assesses which prisoners can participate in external activities. On 8 February 2014, Wooroloo prisoner Mr Bernd Neumann escaped while walking a learner assistance dog at a supervised external sporting event.²² Mr Neumann was only three years into his 15-year jail term. He was recaptured in Queensland on 8 October 2015. When questioned about the escape in Parliament, the Minister for Corrective Services, Hon. Joe Francis MLA, commented on the external activities assessment process, stating that:
- The problem with what happened in this instance is not caused by the program, but the assessment of the person’s eligibility to be out in the community doing the program.²³
- 3.7 The following day, when questioned again in Parliament, the Minister went on to say:
- The point here is what we have done about it. We have changed the rules on who should be classified as minimum-security prisoners and therefore be eligible for section 95 [external activities] anyway.²⁴
- 3.8 The Minister was referring to a new blanket policy which meant that any prisoner with more than five years to serve on their sentence could no longer be classified as minimum-security. The new policy saw 22 minimum-security prisoners immediately reclassified to medium.
- 3.9 However, the changes went much further than this, with new external activities assessment tools introduced to refine the criteria for minimum-security prisoners who wished to participate in external activities. Prior to these changes, external activity assessments were relatively straightforward. They contained basic details such as the prisoner’s offence details, outstanding charges and behavioural history. The new assessments are much longer and the assessment tool itself is more complex.
- 3.10 Prison officers and management at Wooroloo told us that the new external activity assessments were time-consuming and were one of the most frustrating parts of their job. Some prison officers claimed that it took about two hours or more just to do the initial assessment. Senior managers involved in implementing the tool agreed that the tool contained both unnecessary and confusing questions. The prison had put together a ‘cheat sheet’ to help the prison officers with the assessments, but even this was more than 30-pages long.

22 The Department asked us not to publish Mr Neumann’s name. While we would not usually identify individuals in our reports, Mr Neumann’s name is already widely known after media coverage of his escape. His name, alias and photograph was also available on the Department’s own website at <https://www.correctiveservices.wa.gov.au/_files/prisons/faulkner.pdf>

23 Hon. Joe Francis MLA, Minister for Corrective Services, Extract from *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)*, Legislative Assembly (Wednesday 19 February 2014).

24 Hon. Joe Francis MLA, Minister for Corrective Services, Extract from *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)*, Legislative Assembly (Thursday 20 February 2014).

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- 3.11 Once an external activities assessment was completed by prison officers, it could still take weeks, even months before the assessment was finalised. This is because the new assessment requires intelligence reports on each prisoner. We were told there was a significant backlog of intelligence reports to complete. Assessments also have to be reviewed every six months, which also adds to the workload. While it makes sense to capture intelligence that may affect the risk involved in letting a prisoner leave prison grounds, the delays were having a significant impact on prisoners' access to external activities and hence preparation for release. As at 27 May 2015, there were 50 external activity applications pending, some dating back 12 weeks.
- 3.12 To help cope with the new assessment workload, Wooroloo had decided only to assess prisoners for external activities if the prisoner submitted an application. Other minimum-security prisons assess all prisoners as a matter of course. Prisoners were noticing the long waiting periods and many told us that it deterred them from applying for an assessment. They would instead settle for spending the rest of their sentence within the confines of the prison fence, even though they might be eligible for, and would benefit from external activities. This is at odds with Department and Wooroloo's prioritisation of prisoner rehabilitation and reintegration.
- 3.13 Wooroloo has made small amendments to its local processes to make some external activities more accessible to its prisoners. Prior to 2007, Wooroloo was an open prison without a fence. Any prisoner transferred to Wooroloo was deemed suitable to live and work in this open environment. When the fence was built in 2007, it did not enclose the prison's industry workshops. This meant that prisoners needed an external activities assessment as well as a locally given clearance to work in the workshop industries.
- 3.14 Consequently, our 2012 inspection report on Wooroloo noted that the workshop employment places were not being filled. We recommended that Wooroloo review their risk assessment procedures to improve prisoner access to the industries area.²⁵ Wooroloo responded well to this recommendation. The prison conducted a risk assessment on the industry workshops area which enabled prisoners to work there without the local clearance while they waited for the completion of a full external activities assessment.²⁶
- 3.15 Understandably, after the high profile escape from Wooroloo, the Department reviewed and strengthened its risk assessment processes. There has been a significant change to the balance between the competing priorities of the prison service, with escapes now apparently the overriding consideration above all other positive outcomes. Now is an appropriate time to review and tailor the minimum-security and external activities assessment processes to ensure they support rehabilitation and reintegration in minimum-security prisons. The ultimate surety of public safety is a reduction in reoffending which access to external services so importantly supports.

25 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 80 (August 2012) 14.

26 DCS, *Prisoner Employment*, Internal Memorandum (3 April 2012).

Recommendation 3

The Department should ensure that the assessments of prisoners for external activities are conducted quickly and the process complements the operations and philosophy of Wooroloo as a re-entry prison.

CASE MANAGEMENT

- 3.16 Wooroloo case manages prisoners to help them to use their time in prison and to help their rehabilitation and re-entry back into the community.
- 3.17 The inspection found, however, that some aspects of case management at Wooroloo were quite cursory. In Western Australian prisons, prisoners who have a sentence of more than six months are set-up with an Individual Management Plan (IMP). An IMP sets out what the prisoner should do in prison to prevent them from reoffending when they get out. IMPs cover matters such as treatment programs, employment, education and training.
- 3.18 The case management team at Wooroloo track and review prisoners' progress against their IMP. In accordance with Departmental policy, the Case Management Coordinator at Wooroloo holds case conferences with prisoners every six months to check their progress against their IMP. Other staff, such as the prisoner's unit officer or the employment coordinator, may also attend. After the case conference prisoners are given a copy of their updated IMP. The team does a good job of keeping up with case management obligations with at most, only three per cent of IMP reviews overdue in any one month in 2014.
- 3.19 In between the six monthly case conferences, prisoners also meet with prison officers assigned as their 'case officers'. Staff confirmed that these meetings could be quite cursory, covering only a limited number of topics and resulting in very brief reports.
- 3.20 The Department is currently developing a more integrated, multidisciplinary approach to case management which will focus on rehabilitation, reintegration, reduction in offending, and safety.²⁷ It should give prisoners a more coherent pathway towards rehabilitation and a better chance at staying out of prison in the future. Wooroloo had not yet been involved in this project, but when it is introduced, it has the potential to lift the effectiveness of case management both at Wooroloo and other prisons.

PROGRAMS

- 3.21 The most direct way the Department tries to reduce reoffending by prisoners is through its offender treatment programs. We expected to see a high rate of program delivery at Wooroloo since the Department and Wooroloo have both committed to reducing reoffending. Unfortunately, we found that programs were less available to Wooroloo prisoners in 2014 than in 2013. Further, the Department still does not know if many of its programs are effective in reducing reoffending.

27 DCS, *Creating Value through Performance, Strategic Plan 2015-2018* 4.

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- 3.22 When prisoners enter custody, the Department assesses whether they need treatment to help them stop committing offences. Prisoners are then recommended for different programs. For prisoners, programs are not only a chance to turn their life around, they also increase their chance of getting parole by showing that they have addressed their offending behaviour. There were five programs either run at, or scheduled to be run at Wooroloo in 2014 and 2015. They were:²⁸
- Think First – a cognitive skills program aimed at helping individuals with social problem-solving so they can manage difficulties in their lives.
 - Pathways – an intensive cognitive-behavioural program aimed prevent alcohol and other drug abuse when it is related to offending.
 - Medium Intensity Program (Violence) – a medium intensity program catering for the needs of those offenders with violence and/or substance abuse needs.
 - Violent Offending Treatment Program – a high intensity program aimed at addressing risk factors linked to violence in high risk offenders.
 - Stopping Family Violence Program – a program aimed at getting individuals to take responsibility for their behaviour, develop skills to manage risk and increase accountability to their families and the community.
- 3.23 Apart from Think First, there is no clear evidence about how well any of these programs work.²⁹ Long-term evaluations are needed to see whether programs actually do reduce reoffending. Without this information, it is difficult to say whether program delivery at Wooroloo, or any other prison, is effective and providing value for money. In 2014, the Department had recently started to do long-term evaluations looking at the outcomes of some programs.³⁰ Unfortunately, these evaluation activities are currently on hold pending the Department's restructure and functional reviews.
- 3.24 The evaluation of Think First looked at changes in the way participants thought and behaved, as well as recidivism rates for participants.³¹ It found that the program did improve prisoners' behaviour in prison, did reduce self-harm acts and threats, and did reduce the severity of subsequent offences. It also found that one important factor in the success of the program was scheduling prisoners to complete Think First before, rather than after, other treatment programs.
- 3.25 While the Department told us that Pathways, Think First and Stopping Family Violence had been delivered in a culturally-responsive manner to Aboriginal prisoners, purpose-designed programs for Aboriginal prisoners were not available at the time of our inspection. The Department is currently developing such programs. This is an important step but still some way off. In the meantime, the Think First evaluation found that the current, informal tailoring of program delivery for Aboriginal participants was working well but, overall, the program was not as effective for Aboriginal participants as it was for non-Aboriginal participants.

28 DCS, *Adult Programs Guide* (December 2014).

29 OICS, *Recidivism rates and the impact of treatment programs* (September 2014) 29–32.

30 Ibid.

31 DCS, *Think First Prison Program: Long-Term Impact Evaluation* (February 2015) 3–4.

- 3.26 We also looked at how many prisoners at Wooroloo get to complete the programs they are assessed as needing. Figure 2 shows that while Wooroloo’s unmet treatment needs statistics are about average compared to other minimum-security prisons, programs actually became less available overall in 2014. Nearly one in five Wooroloo prisoners was released without getting to do a program because it was not available to them.
- 3.27 Figure 2 also shows that the number of people in minimum-security prisons who were unable to complete programs increased in 2014 from 2013.

Release Facility	% treatment needs not met due to lack of available program ³²	Change since 2013 ³³
Pardelup Prison Farm	26.9%	+8.7%
Wandoo Reintegration Facility	25.6%	+5.1%
Wooroloo Prison Farm	19.0%	+3.0%
Karnet Prison Farm	16.2%	+3.1%
Boronia Pre-Release Centre	5.1%	-0.3%

Figure 2: Proportion of unmet treatment needs due to program unavailability for prisoners released from minimum-security prisons in 2014.³⁴

- 3.28 Obviously, the significance of program completion on the risks of recidivism depends on whether the programs actually work. Given the paucity of evaluations, this is not clear. However, even in the absence of evaluations, program completion is significant in the sense that it is a factor to which the Prisoners Review Board gives some weight. The lack of programs was a big concern for prisoners at Wooroloo, who felt frustrated that they were being forced to spend more time in prison than they otherwise might.
- 3.29 The Department has advised that its recently updated assessment tool should help reduce the rate of unmet treatment needs. The new tool is called the Level of Service/Risk, Need, Responsivity (LS/RNR) checklist. It is designed to provide a better measure of the risk posed by a particular offender. The Department told us the new tool identifies fewer treatment needs than the previous tool, but targets programs to needs more precisely. When the level of identified treatment need is reduced across the system, the Department expects to be better able to meet it.

EMPLOYMENT

- 3.30 Wooroloo Prison Farm has a good range of employment opportunities available to prisoners, and prisoners are keen to work. Some do work that reduces costs for the prison system, such as cleaning, gardening and growing fruits and vegetables for prison meals. Other prisoners do work that actually makes money for the Department, such as constructing trailers, charity clothing donation bins and timber furniture.

32 Treatment needs where the program status was ‘unavailable,’ ‘identified’ or where no suitable program existed was included in this column.

33 OICS, *Recidivism rates and the impact of treatment programs* (September 2014) 28.

34 Table based on data extracted from the DCS’s Total Offender Management Solution system.

3.31 Inside the prison fence, prisoners' work options include:

- gardening
- cleaning
- maintenance
- laundry
- kitchen
- assisting with recreation
- reception
- canteen and stores

3.32 At our 2012 inspection, we found many prisoners allocated to do domestic work in their accommodation units, most of which only amounted to short periods of cleaning each day. In 2015 we were pleased to note this was no longer the case, although it was still an employment option available to some.

3.33 Because the prison is minimum-security and focused on re-entry, prisoners can also apply for employment positions outside the prison fence. Taking on responsibilities outside the prison helps prisoners to gradually reintegrate back into the community in preparation for their release. Prisoners can work out in the wider community on projects such as gardening for police stations and other prisons. They can also work on prison grounds but outside the fence, in prison industries such as the mechanical, metal work, carpentry and timber workshops, or the prison's market garden or farm.

3.34 However, as previously discussed, there are significant delays in completing assessments of prisoner suitability to participate in community-based activities, which includes work. This, along with other factors, has seen a troubling decline in some of Wooroloo's industries and limits reintegration opportunities at Wooroloo.

3.35 Figure 3 shows that on the second day of our inspection, less than 40 per cent of available external work positions at Wooroloo were filled by prisoners. The situation for internal industries, which do not require an assessment of suitability, was markedly better.

Industry location	Number of positions	Number of workers	Prisoners attending work	Prisoners attending work as a percentage of positions
Internal	246	219	185	75%
External	114	59	45	39%

Figure 3: Participation in internal and external industries on 11 May 2015.

3.36 Prisoners are supervised in their work by Vocational Support Officers (VSOs). VSOs who supervise work outside the prison fence told us that the lack of prisoners was having a negative effect on their industries. VSOs told us they felt devalued because the prison did not provide them with a sufficient workforce. They said they spend more time completing work themselves rather than supervising and training prisoners. This is a poor use of

resources that could be used training and preparing prisoners towards productive post-prison lives.

- 3.37 We also heard that customer orders for prison industry products have declined because it takes too long to complete work with the available prisoner workforce. In the 2013/14 financial year, Wooroloo had expected to make \$477,875 from its industries but raised only 63 per cent of this target (\$302,063).³⁵ The revenue from industries was also 17 per cent less than the previous financial year. Wooroloo expect revenue to be lower again in 2014/15 with a budget target of only \$289,300.³⁶
- 3.38 The farm was a good example of the difficulties faced by industries without enough workers. It is an integral part of the prison's identity but at most, has only 10 prisoner work positions allocated to it. This is less than three per cent of the population when the prison is at full capacity. Significantly, on the day we visited the farm during the inspection, only one prisoner was working there. This was a disappointing result for a farm that produces and sells nearly 2,000 lambs as well as wool, hay and grains. It was also disappointing for prisoners who could be learning farming skills and contributing to society through farm production. The fact that prisoners are not automatically assessed for external work suitability (unlike other prisons) reduces the number of possible workers to draw from.
- 3.39 The prison has taken some steps to address this through its 'internal clearance' process. Internal clearances streamline approval for prisoners to work outside, but close to, the fence while they wait for formal external activities clearance. The process is quicker to complete because the prison does not need to wait for intelligence reports from head office. It is helpful but only applies to limited activities, so the Department still needs to streamline the formal external activities assessment process. The disincentive created by the current process has created an imbalance in the security/rehabilitation/reintegration dynamic of prison operations.



Photo 2: A view across the farm at Wooroloo.

35 DCS, *Monthly Report Detail – Wooroloo Prison Farm – For Period Ending June 2014* (July 2014).

36 DCS, *Statement of Current Year Forecast – Summary – Wooroloo Prison* (March 2015).

PRISONER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

3.40 Approved prisoners can go out to work in ‘real’ jobs outside prison, under the Department’s Prisoner Employment Program (PEP). The program can be a very successful reintegration strategy, as prisoners can continue with their ‘real’ jobs once they are released. Not surprisingly, PEP placements involve a significant amount of risk assessment, administration and negotiation to organise. PEP does not have a strong participation rate in prisons, but Wooroloo was doing comparatively well. Wooroloo’s PEP coordinator was very popular and appreciated by both prisoners and staff alike. At the time of our inspection, four prisoners at Wooroloo were going to work in paid jobs in the community each day thanks to the efforts of the PEP Coordinator. In contrast, the majority of prisoners on PEP in Western Australia look for and prepare for work, but do not achieve actual employment. Wooroloo’s results are a significant achievement considering there was only one other prisoner in paid PEP employment across the entire Western Australian prison system at the time of our inspection.

GRATUITIES

- 3.41 Wooroloo pays prisoners for their work in line with regulatory and policy requirements. The *Prisons Regulations 1982* require that prisoner work positions are paid at progressively higher rates in correlation to the skill, aptitude and diligence required.³⁷ Level 1 is the highest gratuity rate paid in prisons. The Department’s Policy Directive 25 *Prisoner Constructive Activity* sets out a ratio for the proportion of prisoner work positions that can be paid at each level.³⁸
- 3.42 However, the policy for gratuity ratios is restrictive for a ‘working’, pre-release prison that has a relatively high proportion of skilled jobs. Prisoners at Wooroloo have often worked their way up into good jobs with high gratuities at other prisons, before coming to Wooroloo. Once they arrive at Wooroloo, they face the prospect of starting over in a prison with a skilled group of prisoners all competing for the best jobs and gratuity levels. The Department’s policy directive restricts the number of the positions that can be paid at the top levels of gratuities, irrespective of the types of work prisoners do. This is despite the fact that as a ‘working’ prison, Wooroloo has a relatively high proportion of demanding work positions. The restrictive gratuity profile policy could prove to be a threat to Wooroloo’s vision to be the best re-entry prison.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

3.43 Wooroloo provides a high level of education and training that includes a range of nationally accredited and non-accredited courses and traineeships. However, prisoners’ access to, and participation in, education and training has noticeably reduced. This is largely due to delays with external activity assessments as well as funding cuts. Wooroloo will need to do better in providing education and training to prisoners to become Australia’s leading re-entry prison.

37 *Prison Regulations 1982* (WA) reg 44.

38 DCS, *Prisoner Constructive Activity*, Policy Directive 25 (2007) 4.

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- 3.44 Wooroloo offers a range of quality education and training courses to prisoners including general education, vocational training and university level study.³⁹ The education centre has positive relations with Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) that offer nationally endorsed and transferable qualifications. The Education Campus Manager has organised and delivered the Certificate IV of Training and Assessment qualification to 12 VSOs, meaning that those VSOs can train and assess prisoners that work in their industries. If a prisoner has not completed their full qualification on release and wishes to continue with their studies, the statement of attainment for what they achieved at Wooroloo is accepted by RTOs across Australia.
- 3.45 However, there were significantly fewer prisoners doing traineeships compared to our 2012 inspection. This year we found only seven prisoners doing traineeships, compared with 25 prisoners in 2012. This was a very disappointing outcome. Wooroloo was not effectively meeting the requirements of pre-release prisoners in this respect.
- 3.46 One of the main contributing factors to low traineeship numbers was the time it took for prisoners to get clearances for external activities, which was decreasing prisoners' interest in working and training in external industries. The workshops are running well below their capacity of workers and trainees. For example, where there could be 15 students in the wood-work industries, at the time of our inspection there were only three.
- 3.47 Recent budget cuts were also significantly limiting education and training at Wooroloo. With limited funding, the education centre was at its capacity, even though only around 22 per cent of the prison population were engaged in education and training.
- 3.48 The education centre is closed for 11 weeks of the year over the summer period. Education opening hours now reflect school hours, which is not appropriate for an adult education environment, and statewide funding cuts have diminished the educational and training experience for prisoners at Wooroloo (and similarly at all prisons in Western Australia). Students have expressed frustration at the closures which resulted in the lack of computer access for a number of months during 2015. This meant that prisoners could not complete their assignments, carry out research or contact university staff by email.
- 3.49 Short courses, such as forklift training and scaffolding, have also been reduced. These courses often suit prisoners who may not be at Wooroloo long enough to do a full traineeship, but still give them marketable skills that they can use when they are released. Short courses are now only offered once a month. As a result, the numbers of students doing short courses has reduced from eight per fortnight to 10 each month.
- 3.50 The recent statewide cancellation of art and music programs due to budget cuts has also been a big loss. The subjects are often an enjoyable and effective way to introduce students to education and training in a prison environment. The prisoner who helps tutor students at Wooroloo told us that the loss of music and art has had a particularly big impact on Aboriginal students. He said that art and music were important for self-expression and confidence building and for encouraging communication between different Indigenous groups.

39 DCS, *EVTU Operational Level Agreements* 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15.

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- 3.51 Aboriginal specific education and training was not doing well overall. At the time of the inspection Indigenous prisoner engagement in education was only 15 per cent, which is a drastic drop from the 46 per cent of Aboriginal prisoners that were engaged in education during the 2012 inspection.⁴⁰ There are two Indigenous specific programs – ‘Keep Your Culture Keep Your Job’ facilitated by an Indigenous tutor, and ‘Standing on Solid Ground’ facilitated by a non-Indigenous tutor.
- 3.52 The education staff at Wooroloo are doing the best with what they currently have, and have been innovatively exploring opportunities. However, there needs to be a substantial investment and commitment by the Department to speed up external activity clearances. Increased funding is also required so that Wooroloo prisoners can get the comprehensive training and education they need to succeed in the community when they are released. Wooroloo prisoners lack access to traineeships, as well as options in music, art, information technology, and Aboriginal education. They also face difficulties accessing resources to complete university studies. Without more investment and commitment in education and training, reduced reoffending outcomes will be compromised.

Recommendation 4

The Department should restore and improve prisoners’ access to education and training at Wooroloo.

VISITS

- 3.53 Maintaining contact with family and friends is beneficial for prisoners’ wellbeing. Importantly, these relationships can also give prisoners invaluable support when they are released. Wooroloo has excellent facilities for prisoners to visit with family and friends inside the prison, and the prison also facilitates visits for some prisoners in the community.
- 3.54 Unfortunately, prisoners who are not from the Perth area often miss out on visits, so we would like to see the Department implement measures that would let them ‘visit’ with family and friends online.
- 3.55 As Wooroloo prisoners are working throughout the week, social visit sessions only occur on weekends. Visitors can book morning and afternoon sessions (or both), each running for a period of two hours. Wooroloo is not located close to any public transport so a bus service from Midland train station is provided on Sundays for visitors. The free service is a positive initiative. Other good services for visitors are the childcare and family support services provided by community organisation Outcare during visits at Wooroloo.
- 3.56 Wooroloo runs an impressive external visits program for prisoners participating in recreational sports in the community. Prisoners who participated in external recreation on weekends could invite their family and friends to watch their sports games. Their family and friends could then stay for a supervised visit afterwards. Both prisoners and visitors we spoke with at a weekend soccer game during the inspection told us that they really

40 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 80 (August 2012) 31.

appreciated these relaxed visits sessions and would not want to jeopardise them by inappropriate behaviour. This positive attitude was recently demonstrated when a fight broke out between visitors at an external football match. Commendably, the prisoners that were present kept well out of the fight, and made no complaints about having to leave early.

- 3.57 Good Beginnings, a national children's charity, run a program at Wooroloo that connects dads with their children. They help prisoners to liaise with the Department of Child Protection and Family Support, they keep 'mums' busy during visits to allow dads quality time with children and they help to set up the family days. Good Beginnings also piloted Skype visits between fathers and their children at Wooroloo, and at the time of the last inspection, six prisoners were contacting their families through Skype. However, this pilot has since ceased and Skype is no longer offered to prisoners at Wooroloo, despite being available to prisoners at other prisons like Acacia and Albany. Skype and similar technology offer a cheap and simple way for prisoners to maintain contact with family and friends. The Good Beginnings pilot proved that the technology can work at Wooroloo and should be a priority in a facility focused on rehabilitation and re-entry.

Recommendation 5

Wooroloo should facilitate and promote the use of e-visit technology for prisoners.

SERVICES FOR PRISONERS PREPARING FOR THEIR RELEASE

- 3.58 For many prisoners, Wooroloo is the last place they will be held in custody before release. It can be difficult for people to leave a very structured environment like a prison and to return to freedom. To help people make the transition, Wooroloo offers a fairly wide range of re-entry services. However, it is not possible to tell how well the services work because the Department does not measure re-entry outcomes, such as whether prisoners move from prison into suitable accommodation and jobs.
- 3.59 One of the most valued re-entry services at Wooroloo was help for prisoners to get their drivers' licences. The service provider Outcare can take approved prisoners on driving lessons in the community, allowing prisoners to develop not just theoretical but also practical driving skills.
- 3.60 It is not possible to say whether the services met demand, because some prisoners may not have needed any special assistance, and some who did need it might not have asked for help. When prisoners first arrived at Wooroloo they completed a checklist, nominating the re-entry services they were interested in. The Transitional Manager also kept open hours between 2:30 pm and 3:30 pm on weekdays, so prisoners could approach her for help as they needed to. While the Transitional Manager coordinated the re-entry services at Wooroloo, many services were delivered by contracted service providers rather than the prison itself. Much of the work of the Transitional Manager involved making referrals to these service providers.

- 3.61 During our inspection we held a small focus group with prisoners who were soon to be released. They told us the most important re-entry services were employment and accommodation. They said it was hard to turn their lives around if they did not have a job and somewhere stable to live. In the first three months of 2015, 171 of Wooroloo's prisoners were released into the community. Only two of these people had found accommodation through Wooroloo's re-entry services, and it is not known how many were helped to get a job through Wooroloo's career counselling.
- 3.62 The Department's head office manages the contracts with the service providers, and the prison itself knows little of how well the services actually work. We looked at the contract that the Department has with Outcare, which provides some key re-entry services to prisoners. We found that the contract did not contain any measures of effectiveness. We noted that the contracts are currently under review and encourage the Department to evaluate if re-entry services are effective in helping prisoners make a successful transition back into the community.
- 3.63 Given the critical importance of helping prisoners successfully re-enter the community, this Office is carrying out a review of the transition services provided by the Department. Our review is currently scheduled for release in early 2016.

Chapter 4

LIFE INSIDE THE PRISON

- 4.1 Rehabilitation is an important focus for a minimum-security prison like Wooroloo. Just as important to prisoners is the quality of life they have inside the prison. Prisoners reasonably expect that their lives in a minimum-security prison will be better than in a higher security facility. They expect a calm environment, more earned freedoms and privileges and decent quality basics like accommodation and food. In most cases, Wooroloo delivers on these expectations for its prisoners, but there remains no clear way for prisoners to take collective concerns directly to the prison management.

ARRIVAL AND ORIENTATION OF PRISONERS

- 4.2 Wooroloo had reasonable processes in place to manage the arrival of new prisoners but could do more to help them understand how the prison works when they first arrive.
- 4.3 There is a purpose-built reception facility to process new prisoners. When prisoners first arrive, their identity is double-checked and they are strip-searched, despite the fact they should have been strip-searched at the prison they had just left. The Senior Officer at Reception works through a checklist with each prisoner to determine if they are at risk of self-harm or suicide. Prisoners are given clothing, toiletries and bedding (two doonas in winter and an optional blanket, a pillow and two sheets) and any money prisoners accrued at other prisons is credited to their Wooroloo accounts. Two prisoners also attend reception and talked to new prisoners about the prison layout and routine, and walked them to their accommodation unit. New prisoners attended a group orientation session, held weekly. The orientation covered occupational safety and health, then different members of staff introduced themselves and spoke about the services they offer to prisoners.
- 4.4 While the reception process for new prisoners compared well to other prisons, our pre-inspection survey suggested that some prisoners did not receive enough information about how the prison works when they first arrived. Only around half (52%) of survey respondents said they got enough information to understand how the prison worked. Wooroloo should follow this up with prisoners to see how it can improve the information given to new prisoners.

ACCOMMODATION AND GROUNDS

- 4.5 The accommodation for prisoners at Wooroloo was quite good. Prisoners reside in one of four converted hospital accommodation units. We found them to be generally clean and in decent condition, though some painting work and gutter repair was required.
- 4.6 Wooroloo provided hierarchical accommodation options based on reward for behaviour. Prisoners that conduct themselves well can progress from fairly basic accommodation to semi-self-care and full self-care. In semi-self-care prisoners live in standard rooms but have access to basic shared kitchen facilities. Self-care accommodation is similar to housing outside prison, where prisoners have bedrooms, a shared lounge room and kitchen. It was encouraging to see that Wooroloo had allocated some of the semi-self-care and self-care accommodation specifically for Aboriginal prisoners.



Photos 3 and 4: A standard room (Unit 3) and a self-care room (Unit 2).

- 4.7 The grounds at Wooroloo were in very good condition. They provide a pleasant and relaxing environment for prisoners and staff alike. The well-tended grounds were a mixture of natural vegetation and cultivated gardens. One of the supervisors of the prisoner gardening team told us his was the happiest team in the prison, because it was rewarding to see the results of their work each day.



Photo 5: One of the garden areas at Wooroloo.

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS

- 4.8 Prisoners were generally treated with respect and decency at Wooroloo. Relationships between staff and prisoners were good and Wooroloo was paying attention to the needs of Aboriginal and foreign national prisoners. However, the prison needs to introduce a way for prisoners to raise any concerns they have as a group directly with the prison management. This will help the prison to better understand the issues that are important to prisoners, and should help stop prisoners’ collective concerns festering.
- 4.9 Both staff and prisoners reported quite positive relationships with each other. Figure 4 shows that a high proportion of prisoner survey respondents felt they got along well with prison officers, VSOs and other staff at the prison. The results reflected an improvement in staff/prisoner relationships generally, and in particular with uniformed staff, compared to both the 2012 results, and the average results across all prison facilities.
- 4.10 As part of our survey, prisoners could include additional free text comments. A number of prisoners chose to use this to comment positively about staff. Comments included:
- [M]ost staff treat you like a human being.
 - ... good officers[,] they are good people.
 - Treated well by officers.

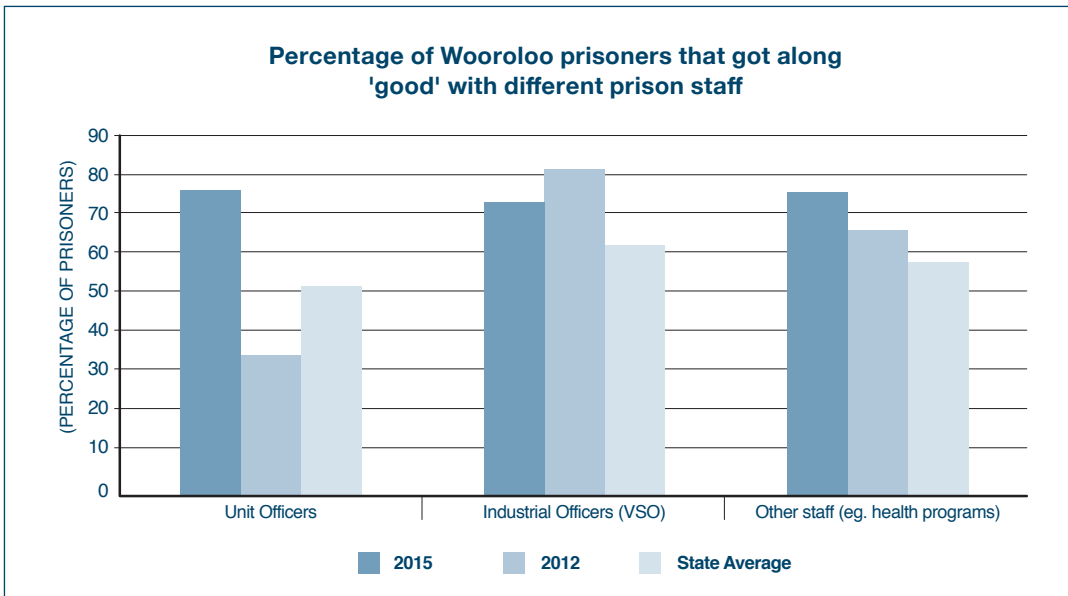


Figure 4: Prisoner survey results from this inspection of Wooroloo (2015), the 2012 Wooroloo inspection, and the average results from all prisoner surveys.

- 4.11 Staff also reported getting along well with prisoners. Seventy-nine per cent of staff that responded to our inspection survey said they thought that custodial staff and prisoners generally get on well. Again this is higher than the 69 per cent who said that in 2012, and is also higher than the 71 per cent state average for that survey question.

Support for Prisoners

- 4.12 Prisoners at Wooroloo have a range of specific supports available to them. The main supports were:
- A peer support team – a team of prisoners who helped new arrivals understand how Wooroloo works, and provided support to prisoners as and when they needed it. The team met regularly and its minutes given to the prison’s Superintendent. The team had completed ‘Gatekeeper’ suicide prevention training.
 - Prison Support Officer (PSO) – a staff member who led the peer support team and was also available to support other prisoners. The PSO was doing a good job, but was relatively new, so the prison administration will need to provide support.
 - Prison Counselling Service – provided individual counselling sessions to prisoners who are having trouble coping and are at risk of self-harm.
- 4.13 We remain concerned that Wooroloo still does not have a forum for prisoners to speak directly with the prison management. In our last inspection, we recommended that Wooroloo establish such a forum for prisoners, as we had seen them work well in other prisons such as Acacia.⁴¹ The Department did not support the recommendation, so the job largely still fell to the peer support team, even though the main role of peer support should be assisting vulnerable prisoners.

Recommendation 6

Wooroloo should create and support a representative forum, separate from the peer support team, through which prisoners and prison management can communicate with each other.

Treatment of and Support for Aboriginal Prisoners

- 4.14 We found that many Aboriginal prisoners at Wooroloo were angry and disenchanted with the reality of their experience having made it to minimum-security. They were frustrated and confused that after having worked and conformed to expectations to make it to minimum-security, Wooroloo was not living up to their expectations around the opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration. Aboriginal prisoners had seen people at Wooroloo before them make big changes in their lives by getting drivers’ licences, doing programs, maintaining family connections through community visits, and working outside the prison. They expected to have these opportunities when they got to Wooroloo, but often found this was now not the case.
- 4.15 In both individual conversations and a well-attended focus group, Aboriginal prisoners told us that they were not getting timely access to programs to help address their offending, not getting the chance to do work and recreation outside the prison, and were consequently getting knocked back for parole.

41 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Acacia Prison*, Report 90 (June 2014) 41.

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- 4.16 While these issues were important to a broad cross-section of prisoners at Wooroloo, it is important to reflect that Aboriginal prisoners were clear that these issues were specifically important to them. Some also perceived that the system was more favourable to other prisoners.
- 4.17 Another very important issue to Aboriginal prisoners at Wooroloo was funeral attendance. They said they were still being denied the chance to attend culturally important funerals. This Office has reported previously on the fact that the Department's policies regarding funeral attendance impacted disproportionately on Aboriginal people.⁴² The policies do not recognise the strong kinship ties in Aboriginal cultures, which do not always reflect the 'immediate' family relationships as understood in mainstream Australia.
- 4.18 The feedback we heard from Aboriginal prisoners was very clear and direct. Wooroloo, and the Department, have a responsibility to listen to these concerns and take them seriously.
- 4.19 On a positive note, Wooroloo has made efforts to support Aboriginal prisoners in some key areas. Wooroloo had been running an Aboriginal Services Committee since 2012, as well as an Aboriginal prisoner database called Pingaree since 2014. The Committee and the database were aiming to improve access to appropriate services and programs, to track contacts with services like education and career development, and to advise prison management. Both of these initiatives would benefit from regular reviews of their effectiveness, as their outcomes were unclear to the inspection team.
- 4.20 Aboriginal prisoners made positive comments about their access to kangaroo meat on a regular basis. The cook-ups had been reinvigorated following our 2012 inspection. However, Aboriginal prisoners did request that the cook-ups be held more frequently.
- 4.21 Aboriginal prisoners comprised 21 per cent of the Wooroloo prisoner population at the time of this inspection. While this was much lower than the Aboriginal prisoner population across all Western Australian prisons (about 38%),⁴³ it was higher than the approximately 14 per cent Aboriginal prisoner population at Wooroloo in 2012.⁴⁴ This inspection, we found that Aboriginal prisoners had jobs in a variety of industries, though they were under-represented at the higher paying gratuity levels. At 4 May 2015, Aboriginal prisoners comprised 21 per cent of the prison population, but there were no Aboriginal prisoners earning level one gratuities, which is the highest paying gratuity level in the prison.

Recommendation 7

Wooroloo should investigate the reasons for the low percentage of Aboriginal prisoners at high gratuity levels, then take action to improve their access to these positions.

- 4.22 Aboriginal prisoners were supported by the peer support team, the PSO and members of the Aboriginal Visitors Scheme (AVS). AVS are a team of Aboriginal people employed by the Department who visit the prison and speak with prisoners. We observed that they

42 OICS, *Funeral Attendances by Incarcerated People in Western Australia* (September 2013).

43 DCS, *Adult Prisoners in Custody Quick Reference Statistics* (March 2015) 3.

44 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 80 (August 2012) v.

have a presence through the prison, and have a transparent, structured process for sharing any concerns about prisoners' welfare with prison management.

- 4.23 Sadly, the success of the AVS at Wooroloo is under threat. While AVS staff were visiting Wooroloo, we heard that the Department had cut back their on-site hours. This meant the visitors could not always be there when Aboriginal prisoners needed them most, for example, after being refused an application to attend a funeral, or having had difficult discussions with family on the phone. It seems counterproductive to cut key services for Aboriginal prisoners in the context of the current government push to reduce Aboriginal incarceration rates and prevent Aboriginal deaths in custody, and the Department's own commitment to improving Aboriginal services and reducing disadvantage.⁴⁵

Recommendation 8

The Department should increase the on-site presence of AVS.

Treatment of and Support for Foreign Nationals

- 4.24 There were fewer Wooroloo prisoners with foreign nationality in 2015 than in 2012. Most of the foreign national prisoners we spoke to at the inspection and its lead-up were satisfied with their treatment in prison.
- 4.25 However, some were concerned about changes to the Australia's *Migration Act 1958* which increase the likelihood of deportation for foreign nationals after their release from prison. Specifically, some foreign nationals we spoke to were concerned about how their possible (or confirmed) deportation was going to affect their access to external activities at Wooroloo. Prisoners at risk of deportation have to have their assessment for external activities signed off by the Department's head office. This takes even longer than the already lengthy standard assessment process. Better communication with these prisoners could go some way to alleviating their concerns.

PRISONER COMPLAINTS

- 4.26 Wooroloo was actively managing prisoner complaints and grievances. Prisoners can make official complaints about their experiences at Wooroloo in different ways, including verbally and in writing. We found that the prison was responsive to complaints.
- 4.27 The Department runs a complaints telephone line for prisoners called the Administration of Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Scheme (ACCESS). In 2014, prisoners at Wooroloo lodged 39 complaints with the ACCESS line. Ten of the 39 complaints were about 'constructive activity,' which aligns to our inspection findings about problems with access to employment, education and training. Twenty-eight of the 39 complaints were reported to be resolved, while eight were recorded for information and three were still in progress.

45 Hon Colin Barnett MLA, *Government sets agenda for Aboriginal reform: Path forward in response to Deaths in Custody and Aboriginal Over-Representation in the Justice System*, media statement (24 June 2015).

- 4.28 Wooroloo's management told us that the prison took complaints seriously and that staff encouraged prisoners to use the ACCESS line. We happened to observe staff in reception as they were managing an ACCESS complaint about a prisoner's property. We found them to be very responsive in resolving the issue.
- 4.29 Instead of phoning ACCESS, prisoners could choose to lodge a written grievance. This complaint method seems to be falling out of favour, with no written grievances lodged at Wooroloo in the last half of 2014.
- 4.30 Prisoners could also send written complaints for free to 11 other bodies, including the Minister for Corrective Services, Ombudsman, Corruption and Crime Commission and this Office. The Department has a well-established, confidential process for sending such letters on behalf of prisoners. We tested this process at Wooroloo and found the confidential letter was sent promptly and appropriately by the prison.

FOOD

- 4.31 The food served to prisoners at Wooroloo was nutritious and hygienically prepared. Prisoners who live in self-care accommodation could prepare their own meals within limits, but they should have more choice in menu planning and responsibility for food budgeting, to better prepare them for release.
- 4.32 Forty-six prisoners were working under supervision in the Wooroloo kitchen at the time of our inspection. They prepared meals for most of the prisoner population, as well as meals for prison staff. The kitchen menu was nutritionally assessed by Curtin University in 2012 and the prison had implemented recommendations from the review. For example, it had reduced red meat meals, increased white meat options, and increased grain-based and vegetarian meals. Prisoners could eat as much as they wanted at meal times, though some did complain they were hungry in between meals.
- 4.33 The kitchen at Wooroloo was clean and tidy and subject to independent annual health inspections. Fridges and equipment were checked daily and kitchen staff told us they took hygiene seriously.
- 4.34 Muslim prisoners were provided pork-free meals, but the prison advised it was unable to source halal food. Prisoners observing Ramadan could use the kitchen to prepare their own meals to take back and eat in their room. A staff member would stay late during the week of Ramadan and supervise in the kitchen, and treats were provided at the end. We did not hear any complaints about the food from Muslim prisoners. In fact, the inspection team rarely heard any prisoner complaints about the food, which is unusual during an inspection, and a compliment to the prison's kitchen and its staff.
- 4.35 Wooroloo could improve its meals by allowing prisoners more opportunities to plan, budget for, and prepare meals in prison, so they can carry those skills forward when they get out. Self-care prisoners were given fresh ingredients and were responsible for cooking their own meals, but the system is fairly basic – the kitchen provided options for lunches and dinners each week and the prisoner selected what and when they cook each meal. The cook instructor would like self-care prisoners to have the chance to plan and budget

for meals independently. These practices already exist at some other minimum-security facilities, and there is no reason why Wooroloo cannot do the same for its self-care prisoners.

CANTEEN

- 4.36 Wooroloo offers a canteen service to prisoners but the standard of the service is below what we expect from a pre-release prison, and the canteen had ineffective stock controls. This was clearly demonstrated in the prisoner survey results, where 85 per cent of respondents claimed that they were unhappy with the canteen service at Wooroloo. This is well below state averages and the canteen was one of the most complained about services from prisoner during the on-site inspection. Prisoners could attend the canteen once a week to purchase items such as snacks, drinks, art supplies and shoes. Two prisoners worked with a Canteen Officer to manage stock and help serve customers.
- 4.37 As a re-entry prison, Wooroloo should offer prisoners a canteen service that is similar to a retail operation in the community. A good quality canteen service can encourage prisoners from higher security prisons to work to come to Wooroloo. It can also help prisoners transition back to a normal life as they approach their release from custody. In our previous inspection report, we recommended that Wooroloo upgrade the canteen to a similar facility to that at other re-entry prisons, such as the Bunbury Pre-release Unit and Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women.⁴⁶
- 4.38 The Department did not support our recommendation, and hence has not implemented it. Problems with the canteen at Wooroloo have continued. While the prison has made efforts to improve the operation of the canteen, they have not always been successful. For example, the canteen trialled selling meat packs to prisoners in semi-self-care but abandoned the practice rather than work at addressing the reasons for its failure.
- 4.39 Stocktaking of the products in the canteen has only recently been introduced. Even though a recent stocktake showed that significant quantities of some stock had gone missing, stronger controls had not been introduced at the time of our inspection. Wooroloo must introduce stronger controls in the canteen to prevent losses, monitor the effectiveness of the controls and follow up discrepancies identified.

Recommendation 9

Lift the standards of the Wooroloo canteen by introducing:

- *better controls over stocks*
- *a formal mechanism to consult prisoners about stock selection*
- *a notional budget and a traffic-light purchasing system for distribution of food for self-care prisoners*

46 OICS, *Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm*, Report No. 80 (August 2012) 18.

RECREATION

- 4.40 All prisoners should have access to daily recreation, both for health and leisure and to help keep boredom at bay. Wooroloo provides a good recreation program for prisoners who are assessed as suitable for external activities but the opportunities for other prisoners are much more limited.
- 4.41 If they have been assessed as suitable, prisoners at Wooroloo can join in with sporting activities in the community, outside the prison. This external recreation was a great initiative and was really appreciated by those prisoners who could participate. The external sports that were running during the inspection period were football and soccer on the weekends and cricket and basketball on weeknights. Both prisoners and the community sports venues they use are risk assessed by the prison before the sports can go ahead. Many of these prisoners told us that they understood their privilege, and were keen to live up to it by conducting themselves appropriately while in the community.

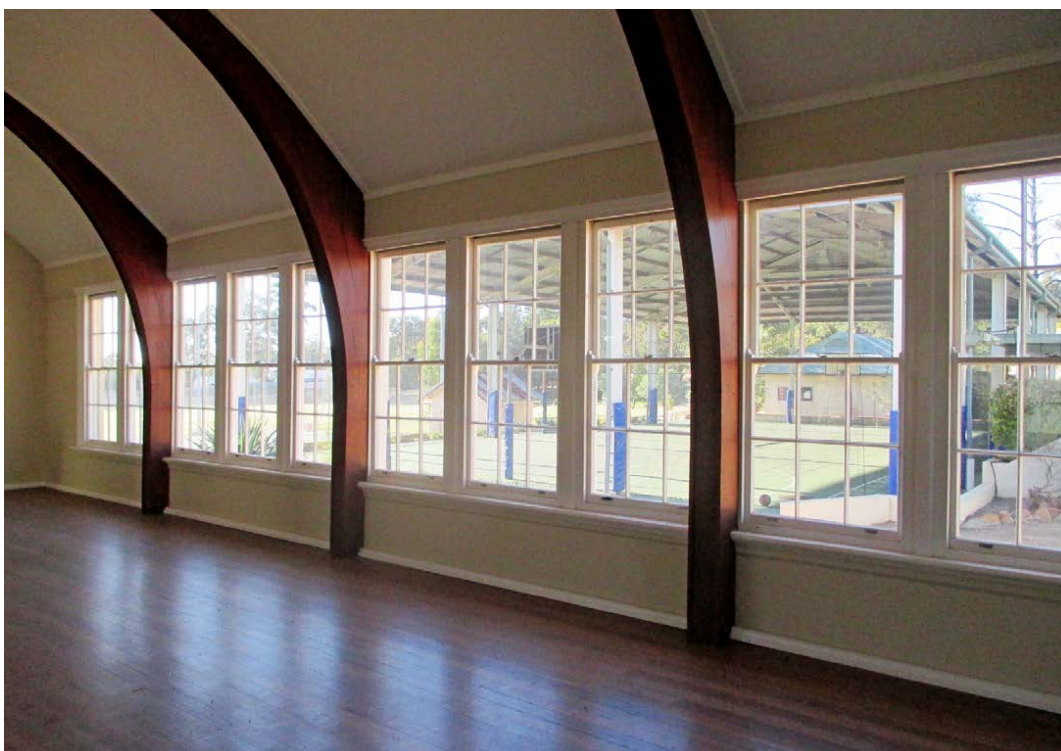


Photo 6: View from renovated recreation hall to the courts.

- 4.42 Not all prisoners have been assessed for external activities though, and not all who are assessed are approved. For these prisoners, recreation options were restricted to sports and other activities run inside the prison. In summer, sporting activities on offer include tennis, squash, volleyball and softball. Give given our inspection was held in autumn, these sports were not running. Prisoners who prefer more passive recreation can participate in bingo games and quiz nights, play board games or use the music equipment. There are also gyms available for prisoners to use and a range of isometric exercise equipment around the prison grounds.

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- 4.43 Unfortunately, only one of three recreation officers was working at the time of our inspection, as the other two were on long-term leave. If an external sporting activity was running, the recreation officer would accompany the sporting team off-site. This meant there were no recreation officers on-site to run any internal organised sport, or to give prisoners access to the library or sporting equipment. This was the case for most weekends and week nights.
- 4.44 Prisoner frustrations with the lack of recreation officers were reflected in the prisoner survey and in conversations we had during the inspection. Prisoners praised the hard work that the recreation officers do, but really wanted the staffing issues to be ‘sorted out’ so they could have access to a full range of internal recreation options. They were particularly concerned about the frequent closure of the library, which contains legal resources. Our prisoner survey results showed the proportion of respondents satisfied with access to library dropped from 73 per cent in 2012 to 48 per cent this year.
- 4.45 The 100-year-old Wooroloo recreation hall is heritage listed. For a long time the hall had been in disrepair, with the roof leaking, window frames rotting, and failing brickwork. Wooroloo refurbished the hall and reopened it in October 2014, to coincide with the centenary celebrations. Unfortunately the beautifully restored hall has remained unused since the opening. The senior management team told us that they are reluctant to let prisoners use the hall unsupervised and cannot afford an officer to supervise while prisoners use it. The recreation hall is such a valuable asset to the prison, and particularly given the amount of time and money spent on restoring it, it should not be wasted.

*Recommendation 10**Improve recreation options for prisoners inside the prison, by:*

- *filling all three recreation officer positions*
- *increasing library opening hours*
- *making use of the renovated recreation hall*

CLOTHING, BEDDING AND PERSONAL PROPERTY

- 4.46 Clothing and bedding at Wooroloo is of decent quality and the laundry runs well. While the laundry building was an old structure, it was fitted with aging but serviceable laundry equipment. The laundry has a workforce of 21 prisoners who were trained in occupational health and safety. As well as prison laundry, they also wash laundry for a police station, a bed and breakfast establishment and the Banksia Hill Detention Centre. Prisoners kept their own numbered clothing, and prisoners who wanted to could do their own laundry in small machines at different times.
- 4.47 Wooroloo also had clear rules governing the amount and type of personal property that prisoners could keep in their cells, and any extra property was stored in secure and well organised facilities. There were only two complaints to ACCESS about prisoner property in the last six months of 2014.

Chapter 5

HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY

- 5.1 While prisons are an inherently risky environment, all staff, prisoners and visitors are entitled to be safe when they are there. Prisoners should also receive health care in prison that is equivalent to community standards, particularly since they have no autonomy to at least make alternative arrangements.
- 5.2 Health care at Wooroloo was generally good, but the number of prisoners that face ongoing delays to attend external medical appointments was unacceptably high. The prison itself provided a reasonably safe environment, though security weaknesses in the control room jeopardised the safety of staff, visitors and prisoners alike.

PHYSICAL HEALTH CARE

General Health Services

- 5.3 Overall, the physical health care services for prisoners at Wooroloo are good, including ready access to consultations. This positive result is consistent with what we have found at previous inspections.
- 5.4 The health centre at Wooroloo is well-staffed, with two clinical nurses and a Clinical Nurse Manager on shift each day, and a General Practitioner attending three days per week. Together they see around 15 to 20 patients a day. Prisoners generally only wait two days to see a nurse after requesting an appointment, then two more days if they then need to see the doctor.
- 5.5 The health centre runs other health initiatives as well as seeing individual patients. It runs a men's health assessment and information program called Pit Stop, the Health in Prison, Health Outta Prison (Hip-Hop) program about blood borne viruses, and a weight loss club. The health centre also helps facilitate visits by an optician, podiatrist and physiotherapist.
- 5.6 The Department surveyed prisoner patients in July 2014 and found that over 95 per cent of medical centre users had a positive experience in accessing health services. We assessed access to the centre being of a good standard as well. However, in our own pre-inspection survey of prisoners, only 58 per cent of respondents rated the general health services at Wooroloo at 'good.' When we discussed health services with prisoners during the inspection we heard two common complaints that may explain some of the dissatisfaction expressed in the survey.
- 5.7 Firstly we heard that health providers sometimes questioned the legitimacy of prisoners complaints, putting it down to drug seeking behaviour. This is a difficult issue to address – in the health context prisoners should be seen as patients first and foremost, but any drug use histories can also not be ignored. This is a challenge for the Department's health services.
- 5.8 Secondly, prisoners told us it was difficult to access physiotherapy services. There was a perception of reluctance to refer patients to the visiting physiotherapist. In response to budget cuts in 2014, the service was reduced to monthly, which has further eroded prisoners' access.

Specialist Health Services

- 5.9 Our prisoner survey results revealed some dissatisfaction with specialist health services. When we explored this during the on-site inspection, we heard that prisoners have trouble accessing specialist health services outside the prison, and are subject to sometimes puzzling security restraints when attending medical appointments.
- 5.10 Prisoners complained of difficulty accessing external specialist health services. If the doctor and nurses at Wooroloo cannot meet a prisoner's health needs, the prisoner has to access community-based health services. Wooroloo is responsible for providing uniformed staff and vehicles to escort prisoners to these appointments.⁴⁷ Even though the prisoners at Wooroloo are minimum-security, a policy introduced in November 2014 (in response to an escape from custody) requires:
- [A]ll prisoners [on] external escort are to have restraints applied and are to be escorted by a minimum of two escort officers...⁴⁸
- 5.11 Wooroloo has needed to dedicate extra resources to external health appointments to meet the new requirement. However, as the prison budget only allows allocation for two staff and one vehicle to this task, Wooroloo can only take, at most, two prisoners to external appointments each day (if the appointments are at nearby locations) but more usually only for one at more central medical centres. The demand for these services is generally much higher than that. Prison medical staff then have to decide which specialist appointments to cancel and reschedule. Delaying these appointments places prisoners' health at serious risk. It also places the staff that have to make this decision at serious professional risk.
- 5.12 Data extracted from the Department's database showed that in the six month period from 3 July 2014 to 1 January 2015, 30 per cent of the 289 external health appointments were cancelled. Of the 88 cancellations, 58 (68%) were initiated by the prison, rather than the external health service.
- 5.13 As well as a two-officer escort, prisoners going out to medical appointments from Wooroloo have to be restrained with handcuffs or leg irons and handcuffed to an officer. Three other minimum-security prisons (Boronia, Pardelup and Wandoo) were given exemptions from the 'blanket' restriction, however, neither Wooroloo nor Karnet were exempted.
- 5.14 This has resulted in absurd situations. We were told of one prisoner who had spent a few days at home on reintegration leave, returned to the prison, changed into prison greens, and was then placed in handcuffs and leg irons to attend his medical appointment. Afterwards, he returned to the prison, changed into civilian clothes then was free to walk out the front gate and return home on his reintegration leave.
- 5.15 Restraining minimum-security prisoners in this manner is unnecessary, expensive and demeaning. Blanket policies can also present risks to health outcomes for prisoners by restricting timely access to services. In an environment of diminishing Departmental resources, it is also not good value for money, nor does it enhance public safety.

47 Wooroloo is excluded from the state's Court Security and Custodial Services contract, which provides prisoner transport services for most other prisons in the state.

48 DCS, *Assistant Commissioner Custodial Operations Notice 26/2014: Conduct of External Escorts* (November 2014).

While possibly understandable as an initial response to an individual incident, it is now appropriate to reassess the necessity of the rules at minimum-security facilities, especially in light of the exemption given to other facilities.

Recommendation 11

In line with Boronia, Pardelup and Wandoo minimum-security facilities, the Department should allow Wooroloo to conduct its own individual risk assessments for medical escorts.

DENTAL CARE

5.16 Access to dental health care had improved considerably since 2012. Historically prisoners at Wooroloo have not had access to on-site dental care. In 2015, this had changed and Wooroloo finally had its own on-site dental service. A dentist and dental nurse from Swan Dental Health had been attending the prison three days a week to work through the substantial backlog of patients. At the time of the inspection the service had recently been reduced to two days a week because the prison population had gone down. The pre-inspection prisoner health survey reported a 39 per cent positive rating for dental services. This was a lot better than in 2012 when only eight per cent of respondents rated dental services positively.

MENTAL HEALTH CARE

5.17 We found that prisoners at Wooroloo had good access to a mental health nurse, but those who need more complex psychiatric care are transferred to Casuarina Prison. Mental health services at Wooroloo are provided by a co-morbidity nurse who services both mental health and addictions needs. About nine per cent of the prisoners at Wooroloo are supported by the mental health nurse. A visiting psychiatrist attends only once a month and e-consults are used at other times. This means that prisoners with more difficult to manage psychiatric conditions have to be moved out of Wooroloo because the service level cannot meet their needs. For about five months in 2014 the prison had no on-site psychiatry available at all. This may have been reflected in our pre-inspection prisoner survey results in which only 15 per cent of respondents rated psychiatric care at Wooroloo as 'good.'

DRUG ADDICTION SERVICES

5.18 Wooroloo provides reasonable support for prisoners endeavouring to address their substance use issues. The addiction treatment services provided by Wooroloo are in line with the Department's Drug and Alcohol Agency Action Plan 2010–2014.⁴⁹ Services included:

- the mandatory Hip-Hop program that covers topics such as blood borne viruses, sexually transmitted infections and harm minimisation practices
- the Pathways program for prisoners assessed as needing a high intensity treatment program
- the Drug and Alcohol Through-care Service, for which prisoners can self-nominate. The service starts in prison but continues to support prisoners after their release. Figures provided by the prison showed that in the three-month period to October 2014, 42 prisoners accessed the program

⁴⁹ DCS, *Drug and Alcohol Agency Action Plan 2010–2014* (2010) 4.

- the Prison Addictions Service (PAST) group, which is run by a drug and alcohol counsellor. The prison health services advised that this group gets strong attendance and positive response from prisoners
- the Prisoner Counselling Service supports prisoners with addictions
- Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous groups. These meet regularly and are well attended

RESPONDING TO DRUG USE IN PRISON

- 5.19 Despite the range of drug treatment services available at Wooroloo, the prison focuses almost exclusively on punishment when responding to prisoners who use drugs in prison. If a prisoner tests positive for drugs and is found guilty of drug use by a visiting justice, their security classification may increase from minimum to medium. If that occurs, they will be transferred from Wooroloo to a higher security prison such as Acacia.
- 5.20 If the prisoner remains at minimum-security, Wooroloo moves them from their regular cell to the prison's 'drug management unit.' They will remain in this unit for 90 to 180 days, depending on whether it is their first or second offence. Third offences are referred to an outside Magistrates Court.
- 5.21 Prisoners in the drug management unit face a number of restrictions, including:
- reduced gratuities, no private cash and rationed canteen access
 - non-contact visits only
 - no personal electrical items
 - no participating in external activities
- 5.22 They are also subject to regular urine tests and are referred to see the drug and alcohol nurse.
- 5.23 Wooroloo's Drug Management Strategy does not adequately balance the safety and security aspects of the Department's mission with the rehabilitation aspect.⁵⁰ The regime was introduced to try to reduce drug use in the prison. However, it is predominately a punishment strategy and does not focus on the rehabilitation of the prisoner. While prisoners should not be coerced into drug rehabilitation programs unless they are personally motivated,⁵¹ Wooroloo should prioritise prisoner access to rehabilitation and treatment if they are caught using drugs in prison, and look at incentives to encourage prisoners not to use drugs, in line with the Department's responsible prisoner program currently under development.⁵²
- 5.24 Secondly, a lengthy stay in Wooroloo's drug management unit seems excessive for people classified as minimum-security. Spending months on such a restrictive regime is a harsh punishment, particularly compared to the consequences for those who are reclassified as medium-security. Many reclassified prisoners end up at Acacia where, after a short time in a management cell, they will have full access to work, gratuities, private cash, visits and

50 DCS, *Creating Value through Performance – Strategic Plan 2015-2018* (2015).

51 OICS, *Recidivism rates and the impact of treatment programs* (September 2014) 25.

52 Butler S, 'Bid to bribe inmates off drugs', *The West Australian* (4 August 2015). Available at <<https://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/wa/a/29171168/bid-to-bribe-inmates-off-drugs/>>

electrical items. A prisoner's lifestyle at medium-security may well be more pleasant than remaining in the drug management unit at Wooroloo. This could act as a disincentive for prisoners to progress to minimum-security, which in turn could affect their rehabilitation prospects.

Recommendation 12

Wooroloo should revise the Drug Management Strategy to focus more on support and rehabilitation, including incentives for prisoners who address drug-taking behaviour.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- 5.25 Security at Wooroloo is generally effective, with only a small number of security incidents occurring. However, the prison needs to ensure that while it enjoys a relaxed, minimum-security atmosphere, it does not become complacent about security procedures and staff relationships with prisoners.
- 5.26 Security in prisons can be broken into three types – physical, procedural and relational security. Physical security is perhaps the easiest to understand, as it involves physical barriers such as fences and locked doors. Procedural security refers to the processes used to keep the prison secure, such as locking gates and searching cells. Relational security is more abstract, relating to gathering information through staff and prisoner relationships, and it is critical to balancing effective security with other priorities like rehabilitation.

Physical Security

- 5.27 As a minimum-security prison, the physical security at Wooroloo is limited but sufficient. There is perimeter fence with security cameras that successfully acts as deterrent for escapes. However, it does not prevent the entry of contraband, nor should it in a regime where prisoners are frequently outside the prison fence. Wooroloo relies more on procedural and relational security in that regard.



Photo 7: Wooroloo's perimeter fence and gatehouse.

Procedural Security

- 5.28 Procedural security is important in any prison. Systems of security can break down very quickly if procedures are not followed. At Wooroloo we found some deficiencies in the way staff implemented security procedures. The prison was attempting to address these problems but they were still occurring at the time of our inspection. The main problems related to keeping prison keys secure, responding quickly to alarms and new rules for searching.
- 5.29 Staff, contractors and guests enter the fenced area of Wooroloo through the main gatehouse. During the inspection, the gatehouse was being upgraded to improve the flow of people into and out of the prison, and to prevent people from taking keys off-site. In the 12 months leading up to the inspection, keys were taken off-site on at least five occasions, so it was positive to see the prison implementing a new procedure to reduce further security breaches.
- 5.30 People who work in prisons wear personal duress alarms in case an incident should occur. When a personal duress alarm is pressed, it activates an alarm in the control room, and the control room operator announces the emergency to all staff over the radio. For this reason (and others discussed below), the control room should be staffed at all times. During the inspection, we pressed one of our duress alarms to test the prison's response. It took 40 seconds for the control room operator to respond to the alarm and announce it over the radio. This was far too long.
- 5.31 While our staff were not physically present in the control room when the alarm was activated, it is possible that the control room operator may not have been present in the control room when the alarm was pressed. In fact, throughout the inspection our staff regularly observed the control room empty and the door to the control room wedged open. Perhaps even more alarming was one occasion when staff from this Office observed an incident where another personal duress alarm had been activated in the prison and the control room was empty. The alarm went unnoticed until the control room operator returned to the control room.⁵³ It is not known how long the alarm went unnoticed.
- 5.32 As well as monitoring personal duress alarms, it is also an essential requirement for someone to be present in the control room to monitor fence alarms, the multipurpose cell alarms and the closed circuit cameras in the multipurpose cell.⁵⁴ Wooroloo must ensure that the control room is staffed and secured closed at all times. If not, there is an unacceptable risk to the safety and security of everyone inside the prison. We made it clear at the inspection that the process needed to change immediately.

Recommendation 13

Ensure the control room is secured and staffed at all times.

53 This situation turned out to be a false alarm, where the staff member accidentally pressed their personal duress alarm. However at the time, the control room officer is unable to tell if the alarm is a real emergency or a false alarm and all situations should be treated as real.

54 See [5.40].

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- 5.33 Prisoners, staff and visitors may be searched as they enter or exit the prison or for other security reasons. Being a minimum-security facility, the most common form of searching is either a pat search on prisoners and staff and handheld metal detectors on visitors.
- 5.34 In December 2014 the Department's searching policy was updated and a number of rules were introduced that affected the prison operations at Wooroloo.⁵⁵ Prisoners, staff and visitors can now only be pat searched by an officer of the same sex. This is reasonable and appropriate. However, the staff rosters sometimes meant that only female officers are assigned to work in a unit, and they are unable to pat search male prisoners. Furthermore, the new rule states that female staff and visitors cannot be pat searched within sight of any male persons. This meant that prison operations had to change, and staff of both genders were resistant to the change. Despite such resistance, Wooroloo's prison management were confident that the changes could be implemented and procedures tweaked to accommodate the new rules.

Relational Security

- 5.35 At a minimum-security prison like Wooroloo, relational security is arguably the most critical aspect of security. Wooroloo performs well in this regard, but has still had a number high profile security incidents in the past two years – a high profile escape of a prisoner who was walking a dog at a park as part of an approved external activity, and the death of a prisoner who was assaulted by another prisoner. Both incidents have been addressed, but they do highlight that even though Wooroloo is minimum-security, it is a prison and security risks will always exist.
- 5.36 During the inspection we observed many examples of respectful and positive interactions between staff and prisoners. Staff said that some prisoners are willing to report information because they want to protect the relaxed atmosphere at Wooroloo. An example of this occurred in April 2014 when a prisoner was assaulted by another prisoner and subsequently died. The prison staff quickly discovered the circumstances of the assault due to the good relationships between staff and prisoners.
- 5.37 It is rare for such violent incidents to occur at Wooroloo, or any other minimum-security facility.⁵⁶ In the three years since our last inspection of Wooroloo, only 15 assaults have been reported there. Of course in the prison environment, a number will also go unreported. However, this compares to 65 assaults reported in the same period at Albany Regional Prison, a maximum-security facility with a similar number of prisoners. Our survey of Wooroloo prisoners showed that 75 per cent of prisoners who responded said that they feel safe at Wooroloo. Similarly, all staff who responded to the staff survey claimed that they felt safe working at Wooroloo.
- 5.38 However, Wooroloo is still a prison and caution must be maintained even though it is a more relaxed atmosphere than medium and maximum-security prisons. The good relationship between staff and prisoners may run the risk of deteriorating as officers spend more time in their office completing clearances for external activities and other administrative requirements. Staff also must remain vigilant against complacency.

55 DCS, *Policy Directive 26: Searches* (May 2001).

56 OICS, *Assaults on staff in Western Australian prisons* (July 2014) iii.

PUNISHMENT OF PRISONERS

- 5.39 Under the *Prisons Act 1981* certain conduct by prisoners is classed as a disciplinary offence. Prisoners who commit a disciplinary offence may be charged under section 69 or section 70 of the *Act*. Section 69 offences are more minor such as disobeying rules, behaving in a disorderly manner, indecent language, and damaging property. The more serious section 70 offences include returning a positive urine result, assaults, behaving in a riotous manner, escapes, being in the possession of a weapon or failing to submit for a drug test.
- 5.40 There are three secure multipurpose cells located within the reception building at Wooroloo. Two of these cells are primarily used for punishment and management of prisoners. These two cells contain basic amenities – a bed, shower, toilet, water fountain and closed circuit television (CCTV) camera. Under the *Prison's Act 1981* prisoners may be confined to the multipurpose cells for up to 28 days as punishment for a disciplinary offence. If they are misbehaving, they can be placed in the cells for 30 days for the good order and security of the prison.
- 5.41 Prisoners are allowed one hour out of the punishment and management cells each day for exercise in the small, enclosed yard. Staff also allow prisoners out of the multipurpose cells to shower, because there are problems with condensation and damp in the cells.
- 5.42 The third multipurpose cell is equipped with a television, and is used for prisoners who may require some 'time out' from being in the mainstream population or who may need additional observation. If a prisoner is in serious need for ongoing observation, they will be transferred to the Crisis Care Unit at Casuarina Prison.
- 5.43 Prisoners confined to the multipurpose cells are monitored by CCTV from the prison's control room. Prisoners can use their cell call buttons to communicate any of their needs to the control room officer. Given their isolation and reasons for being in the cell in the first place, prisoners in the multipurpose cells could be at higher risk of self-harm. It is therefore vital that they are continuously monitored. As mentioned earlier, we found the control room was not always staffed, which put the security and safety of staff, guests, the prison perimeter and any prisoners in multipurpose cells at risk.

Chapter 6

CHALLENGES AHEAD

- 6.1 This inspection of Wooroloo found the prison tentatively embracing change and taking steps to turn around its declining performance and negativity. Factions among staff groups seemed on the way out, and better relationships were forming between staff and also, generally, between staff and management. Wooroloo was looking towards its future and had created a new vision for itself as Australia’s leading re-entry prison. However, it remains a ‘work in progress’, and momentum needs to be maintained.
- 6.2 With its vision in place, Wooroloo, and the Department centrally, need to give serious attention to its prisoner rehabilitation and reintegration services. We found that Wooroloo was facing many challenges in this area. The Department had introduced tighter security policy across prisons which were effectively limiting minimum-security prisoners’ rehabilitation and reintegration opportunities. In particular, the Department’s assessments of whether prisoners are suitable for activities like work and recreation outside the prison had become more complex and time-consuming. Wooroloo runs some key industries, like the farm, market gardens, mechanical workshop as well as projects in the community – outside its fence, and we found low numbers of prisoners working in those industries due to the frustrating assessment process. This limits not only prisoners’ employment and training options, but also their opportunities for community reintegration.



Photo 8: Vigorous growth in the tomato shed.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

- 6.3 Even Wooroloo prisoners who were approved for unsupervised activities outside the prison had to be handcuffed and escorted to medical appointments under Departmental policy. This situation is absurd, unnecessary and degrading. While some stronger requirements were justified, the Department and the prison now need to work together to assess the impact of security policies on the rehabilitation and reintegration of Wooroloo prisoners. Changes to both Departmental policy and prison practice will likely be needed to give Wooroloo a realistic chance of realising its ambitious but worthy vision as the best re-entry prison in Australia.
- 6.4 For most prisoners at Wooroloo, it will be the last place they are held in custody before their release, so services to help them transition back to the community are vital. Wooroloo's 're-entry' services follow the Department's standard model which sees prisoners referred to contracted service providers for practical assistance. There is little information available about how well re-entry services meet the needs of prisoners. Evidence suggest that the things prisoners need most to help them stay out of prison, specifically housing and work, continue to be the hardest to get.
- 6.5 While prisoners and prison staff generally got along well, Wooroloo does not have a specific forum for prisoners to voice what concerns they do have with prison management. There is no representative Prisoner Council, which meant the prison was missing opportunities to identify ways to improve their experience and target resources to better meet prisoners' needs.
- 6.6 The positive relationships between staff and prisoners saw Wooroloo's relational security, including intelligence-gathering, working quite well. However, we found there were some issues with procedural security. Specifically, the prison's control room was sometimes left unsecure and empty which meant the prison took too long to respond to duress alarms. Basic procedural security such as staffing and securing the control room is critically important even in the relaxed environment of a minimum-security prison.
- 6.7 Despite the challenges ahead, the positive cultural shift we saw in this inspection means Wooroloo is in a better position to meet those challenges in 2015 than it has been for quite a few years.

Appendix 1

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2015 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
<p>1. Wooroloo should sustain its cultural change process. As part of this, it should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• improve senior management communications with staff• aim to have at least two senior officers with recent and relevant supervisory experience involved in the performance appraisal and development process for each prison officer	<p>Supported in Part</p> <p>Response: The Department has a focus on embedding a culture of leadership at all levels. The cultural change process at Wooroloo will be sustained to completion to continue positive results already achieved.</p> <p>The Department's performance appraisal and development process provides the opportunity for the assessor to gather evidence of an employee's performance from other staff, including Senior Officers.</p> <p>Action Required: No further action required.</p>
<p>2. Wooroloo and the Department should work proactively together to reduce the high workers' compensation claims at Wooroloo.</p>	<p>Supported – Existing Departmental Initiative</p> <p>Response: The Department has established a project to address the workers' compensation climate across the organisation; to enhance injury prevention frameworks and reduce volume of time lost by injured staff. In light of the Departmental guidelines, Wooroloo is already proactive at reducing the instances of workers' compensation.</p> <p>Action Required: No further action required.</p>
<p>3. The Department should ensure that the assessments of prisoners for external activities are conducted quickly and the process complements the operations and philosophy of Wooroloo as a re-entry prison.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>Response: A review of the section 95 processes to ensure consistency of process and appropriate management of risk has commenced. This streamlined risk mitigation process will reduce the time for approval taken and continue to be aligned to the Department's objectives and the philosophy of rehabilitation and reintegration.</p> <p>An updated approach is being established to streamline the assessment process and complement the operations and mission, vision and values of the Department.</p> <p>Action Required: No further action required.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2015 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
<p>4. The Department should restore and improve prisoners' access to education and training at Wooroloo.</p>	<p>Supported in Principle</p> <p>Response: The Department recognises the importance of education within the prison environment and has introduced measures to increase the flexibility of service delivery, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the delivery of education programs are in line with community models; • the use of self-paced learning packages, which have been rolled out to all prisoners; • the facilitation of Certificate IV of Training and Assessment qualification for 12 Vocational Support Officers; and • traineeships within the prison workshops that continue to be delivered. <p>Action Required: No further action required.</p>
<p>5. Wooroloo should facilitate and promote the use of e-visit technology for prisoners.</p>	<p>Supported – Existing Departmental Initiative</p> <p>Response: The use of audio visual technologies to facilitate communication at all prison sites is part of the Department's Strategic Plan.</p> <p>A pilot utilising the Department's existing network cables to support an independent internet connection is about to commence at Bunbury. Options will be considered further to an evaluation of the pilot.</p> <p>Action Required: No further action required.</p>
<p>6. Wooroloo should create and support a representative forum, separate from the peer support team, through which prisoners and prison management can communicate with each other.</p>	<p>Supported – Existing Departmental Initiative</p> <p>Response: The introduction of prisoner consultative committees across all facilities is part of the Department's approach to offender management.</p> <p>Action Required: No further action required.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2015 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
<p>7. Wooroloo should investigate the reasons for the low percentage of Aboriginal prisoners at high gratuity levels, then take action to improve their access to these positions.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>Response: Prisoners receive gratuities for participation in constructive activity at a rate commensurate with the skills and diligence required to perform that activity. The current assessment assesses the prisoner's skill level, and this has had an unintended consequence of precluding Aboriginal prisoners across the prison estate from receiving high gratuities level. A substantive equality and diversity impact assessment will be undertaken during 2016. Any areas identified as having adverse impact will be rectified and subject to ongoing monitoring through the Integrated and Individualised Offender Management approach.</p> <p>Action Required: Undertake substantive equality and diversity assessment of the prisoner gratuity system.</p>
<p>8. The Department should increase the on-site presence of AVS.</p>	<p>Supported – Existing Departmental Initiative</p> <p>Response: A review of the Aboriginal Visitor Scheme (AVS) has commenced.</p> <p>Action Required: No further action required.</p>
<p>9. Lift the standards of the Wooroloo canteen by introducing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better controls over stocks • a formal mechanism to consult prisoners about stock selection • a notional budget and a traffic-light purchasing system for distribution of food for self-care prisoners 	<p>Supported in Part</p> <p>Response: The Department has initiated measures at Wooroloo for stock control.</p> <p>The Wooroloo canteen is limited in its operations due to the size, layout and storage capacity and would not sustain an increase in stock selection or a traffic-light purchasing system.</p> <p>Action Required: No further action required.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2015 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
<p>10. Improve recreation options for prisoners inside the prison, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • filling all three recreation officer positions • increasing library opening hours • making use of the renovated recreation hall 	<p>Supported – Existing Departmental Initiative</p> <p>Response: Wooroloo has three recreation officer positions, all of which have substantive occupants. Short term vacancies are filled in accordance with the Departmental vacancies management policy. To improve recreation options for all prisoners, external activities have temporarily ceased at Wooroloo. This has enabled an increase in library opening hours and the renovated recreation hall is being utilised for supervised passive recreation activities and being reviewed for program participation.</p> <p>Action Required: No further action required.</p>
<p>11. In line with Boronia, Pardelup and Wandoo minimum-security facilities, the Department should allow Wooroloo to conduct its own individual risk assessments for medical escorts.</p>	<p>Supported – Existing Departmental Initiative</p> <p>Response: The Department's mission and vision is to achieve a safer community by focusing on security, safety and rehabilitation. Consistent with Departmental procedures and directives, Wooroloo conducts its own individual risk assessments for medical escorts on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Action Required: No further action required.</p>
<p>12. Wooroloo should revise the Drug Management Strategy to focus more on support and rehabilitation, including incentives for prisoners who address drug-taking behaviour.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>Response: The drug management strategy for the Department will be part of a comprehensive review of offender programs and interventions. It will form part of the Integrated and Individualised Offender Management (IIOM) approach, which will require individual offender needs to be appropriately identified and services directed to those needs. Principles for IIOM are built on respect, decency, responsibility and rehabilitation.</p> <p>Action Required: Review the drug management strategy in line with IIOM philosophy and interventions framework.</p>

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE 2015 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
13. Ensure the control room is secured and staffed at all times.	<p>Supported</p> <p>Response: Wooroloo management have conducted a comprehensive review of control room staffing and work practices, taking into account the observations of this report and other benchmarks of good practice. All necessary changes identified to improve processes and practices have been made.</p> <p>Action Required: No further action required as all issues identified in the report have been addressed.</p>

Appendix 2

SCORECARD ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRESS AGAINST THE 2012 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation No.	Recommendations Report No. 80, <i>Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm.</i>	Assessment of the Department's Implementations				
		Poor	Less than acceptable	Acceptable	More than acceptable	Excellent
1.	Staffing Issues Make substantive appointments to the remaining vacant positions on the senior management team at Wooroloo Prison Farm.			•		
2.	Staffing Issues Improve anti-bullying strategies at Wooroloo Prison Farm with robust and transparent processes and mechanisms, and comprehensive training and education for all staff.			•		
3.	Staffing Issues Improve communication within the prison by implementing well defined processes to ensure that all staff receive clear and consistent information.			•		
4.	Staffing Issues Provide senior officers and acting senior officers with the opportunity to participate in relevant supervisors training offered by the Corrective Services Academy.			•		
5.	Staffing Issues With staff consultation and input, develop a strategic plan for Wooroloo Prison Farm outlining the prison's vision, role, priorities, culture and values.			•		
6.	Custody and Security Review the various risk assessment procedures at Wooroloo Prison Farm with a view to improving and streamlining prisoner access to the industries area.		• ⁵⁷			
7.	Care and Wellbeing Provide infrastructure and resources to upgrade the canteen at Wooroloo Prison Farm into a facility similar to those at Bunbury Pre-release Unit and Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women.	•				

57 Wooroloo did review and improve access to the industries area, but new Department policy subsequently undermined the improved access.

SCORECARD ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRESS AGAINST THE
2012 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation No.	Recommendations Report No. 80, <i>Report of an Announced Inspection of Wooroloo Prison Farm.</i>	Assessment of the Department's Implementations				
		Poor	Less than acceptable	Acceptable	More than acceptable	Excellent
8.	Care and Wellbeing Establish a representative forum for prisoners at Wooroloo Prison Farm similar to those operating at Acacia Prison, Albany Regional Prison and Hakea Prison.	•				
9.	Care and Wellbeing Racism, Aboriginality and Equity Finalise and implement the Department of Corrective Services' policy on foreign national prisoners as a matter of urgency.			•		
10.	Care and Wellbeing Establish family events as a more regular fixture on the Wooroloo Prison Farm calendar.			•		
11.	Care and Wellbeing Expand the use of Skype (or similar technology) to include social visits and other visits.	•				
12.	Care and Wellbeing Racism, Aboriginality and Equity Introduce strategies to ensure that Aboriginal prisoners are proportionately represented in higher levels of accommodation and higher paid employment at Wooroloo Prison Farm (in line with the Department of Corrective Services' Substantive Equality Policy).			•		
13.	Health Ensure that health staffing levels at Wooroloo Prison Farm are not reduced.			•		

SCORECARD ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRESS AGAINST THE
2012 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation No.	Recommendations Report No. 80, <i>Report of an Announced Inspection of Woorloo Prison Farm.</i>	Assessment of the Department's Implementations				
		Poor	Less than acceptable	Acceptable	More than acceptable	Excellent
14.	Rehabilitation and Reparation The Department of Training and Workforce Development should, consistent with previous practice, ensure that prisoners engaging in external studies are given access to training equivalent to other members of the Western Australian community.		•			
15.	Rehabilitation and Reparation Ensure meaningful employment is available for all prisoners at Woorloo Prison Farm.			• ⁵⁸		
16.	Rehabilitation and Reparation Establish the Industries Coordinator as a permanent position at Woorloo Prison Farm.			•		
17.	Rehabilitation and Reparation Provide assistance and equipment for prisoners to prepare parole plans.		•			

58 Meaningful employment opportunities have substantially increased though we are not confident these opportunities will be available to all prisoners if the population increases again.

Appendix 3

THE INSPECTION TEAM

Neil Morgan	Inspector
Natalie Gibson	Director Operations
Amanda Coghlan	Acting Principal Inspections and Research Officer
Joseph Wallam	Community Liaison Officer
Kieran Artelaris	Inspections and Research Officer
Charles Staples	Inspections and Research Officer
Michelle Higgins	Inspections and Research Officer
Grazia Pagano	Expert Advisor for Education and Training

Appendix 4

KEY DATES

Formal notification of announced inspection	19 January 2015
Pre-inspection community consultation	17 March 2015
Start of on-site phase	10 May 2015
Completion of on-site phase	14 May 2015
Inspection exit debrief	20 May 2015
Draft Report sent to the Department of Corrective Services	27 August 2015
Draft report returned by the Department of Corrective Services	25 August 2015
Declaration of Prepared Report	8 October 2015

*Inspection of prisons, court custody centres, prescribed lock-ups,
juvenile detention centres and review of custodial services in Western Australia.*



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