

**MEDIA RELEASE – EMBARGOED UNTIL 12NOON ON TUESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE 2016**

**Report No. 103 – Pardelup Prison Farm**

The recent inspection of Pardelup Prison Farm by the Inspector of Custodial Services provided a positive and hopeful contrast to the majority of the State's prisons in a highly stressed custodial environment.

In the report of the inspection released today, Acting Inspector Eamon Ryan said that: 'the Pardelup inspection in late 2015 found a genuinely professional working environment actively implementing the Department's mission for the security and safety of prisoners, safety of staff, and rehabilitation.'

'It is unusual in the current environment of crowded prisons for us to find a prison that is so successfully contributing towards a safer community through a holistic focus on rehabilitation, self-development, and positive staff-prisoner interaction,' Mr Ryan said.

The report found that Pardelup had continued to develop since the previous inspection in 2012, with service delivery focused on training, employment, reparation and re-entry. The now unique prison environment – that is with no perimeter fencing and only single cell accommodation – created an atmosphere highly appropriate to end-of-sentence preparation for re-entry into society. The 2015 inspection found the prison had made improvements to infrastructure, maintained tight budget control, and had continued the operation of traditional prison industries.

Unlike nearly all prisons in WA, at Pardelup, every prisoner had meaningful employment.

Given the success at Pardelup, it was surprising that the Department was not making a more concerted effort to analyse the reasons behind its success and transfer that success to other prison facilities.

'When good and successful practice is identified it is imperative that such success is carefully analysed and replicated elsewhere in the prison system.' Mr Ryan said.

While Pardelup is a high achieving prison, a number of areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

No concrete action had been taken to address a 2012 recommendation that Pardelup needed to increase the number of Aboriginal prisoners. Despite the intentions espoused in the Department of Corrective Services' *Reconciliation Action Plan (2015)* the Department to date has been unable to successfully increase numbers of Noongar prisoners progressing to the farm, or to the work-camp at Walpole that the prison operates. During the inspection Aboriginal prisoners spoke very highly of the benefits and opportunities available for them at Pardelup.

'Only giving 'in principle' support to another recommendation to work towards increasing Aboriginal representation at Pardelup suggests a lack of commitment to real action. Many Aboriginal prisoners in WA are held out of country and at least at Pardelup they would have access to services that could make a real difference to their life on release.' Mr Ryan said.

As with other minimum security facilities, Pardelup has also suffered from decisions made at head office, where an apparent emphasis on risk avoidance in security classifications had restricted prisoner access to community work programs and paid employment off-site.

Despite that, Pardelup enjoyed excellent community relations with the residents of Mount Barker and Walpole, earned by years of reparative project work around those towns. Aware that occupancy at Walpole had fallen during 2015, community members there urged the Department to keep the work camp active and full.

Eamon Ryan  
**Acting Inspector**

For more detail, please see the Inspector's Overview to the Report and Key Findings (copies attached).

#### **For Further Media Information**

The Acting Inspector, Mr Eamon Ryan, will be available for comment from 12 noon on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2016 and can be contacted on 0421 480 925.

The full report will be available on the Inspector's website ([www.oics.wa.gov.au](http://www.oics.wa.gov.au)).