



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR
OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES

2022 INSPECTION OF ROEBOURNE
REGIONAL PRISON

145

OCTOBER 2022

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2022 Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison

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Inspector's Overview

WE SAW EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN ROEBOURNE, BUT THESE WERE OVERSHADOWED BY CONCERNS ABOUT EFFECTIVE SUMMER CLIMATE CONTROL IN THE PRISON.

This report highlights examples of good practice across the prison that have been implemented or continued since our last inspection, and several other areas where further work is necessary. Unfortunately, all aspects of the daily prison regime were being significantly impacted by staff shortages.

But the issue that dominated the inspection was concerns about the overnight temperatures in the main accommodation units during the summer months. This is an issue that we have raised in every report we have published on Roebourne Regional Prison (Roebourne) since 2003.

For almost 20 years, we have made essentially the same recommendation in each of the eight reports published on the prison. The Department's responses over that time have varied from support (subject to funding) to rejection.

The issue once again attracted significant public attention both locally and nationally following Roebourne recording a record 50.5 degree day in January 2022.

For the five days of the inspection in March 2022, we placed tamper-proof temperature data loggers in five cells across the two main male accommodation units and one in a cell in the air-conditioned female unit. The detailed results and comparisons are set out in Chapter 5, but the evidence clearly shows that overnight temperatures in the cells without air-conditioning was unacceptable and posed a risk to the health and wellbeing of the men. The average overnight temperature in the five cells without air-conditioning did not go below 32 degrees and in the hours before midnight remained above 35 degrees.

The evidence in favour of effectively addressing the issue of overnight cell temperatures in summer is compelling, and it is difficult to see merit in counter arguments particularly those centred around cost.

On the last day of the inspection as I was leaving the prison, I was struck by a troubling contrast that left me with a very uneasy feeling as I drove back to Karratha for the flight home. Off in the distance but still visible from the prison there was a steady procession of trains heading to the port at Cape Lambert, each one carrying enormous wealth for export. This was iron ore mined from the Pilbara, the traditional lands of many of the men and women incarcerated in the prison. A prison with 86 per cent of the population identified as Aboriginal that had so many gaps in services for prisoners. Areas such as infrastructure, health, programs, education and employment were all in desperate need of additional funding.

This contrast is something we as a community need to reflect on and address if we are to genuinely close the gap and improve the lives of Aboriginal people in prison and more generally.

WE SAW EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN ROEBOURNE, BUT THESE WERE OVERSHADOWED BY CONCERNS ABOUT EFFECTIVE SUMMER CLIMATE CONTROL IN THE PRISON.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We have two recently appointed Independent Prison Visitors who are community volunteers appointed by the Minister for Corrective Services. They attend Roebourne on a regular basis providing an opportunity for the men and women to raise issues and feedback that information to our office. I acknowledge the importance of their work and thank them for the contribution they have made to our ongoing monitoring of Roebourne.

I acknowledge also the support and cooperation we received throughout the inspection from the acting Superintendent and staff at Roebourne and from key personnel in the Department. The men and women living in the prison who took the time to speak with us and share their perspective also deserve our acknowledgement and thanks.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the inspection team for their expertise and hard work throughout the inspection. I would particularly acknowledge and thank Cliff Holdom for his hard work in planning this inspection and as principal drafter of this report.

Eamon Ryan

Inspector of Custodial Services

28 October 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

On 13-17 March 2022, we conducted our ninth inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison (Roebourne). During each day of the inspection the temperature was above 40 degrees. The prison population was 191 and Roebourne had just received its first COVID-19 positive prisoner. Staff shortages had been commonplace over the previous year, which was impacting every aspect of prison life.

GOVERNANCE

Roebourne had a good business plan, but further elaboration was needed, by allocation of specific responsibilities and development of measurable targets. We saw good leadership in governance from the incoming Superintendent. It was also good to see a new Assistant Superintendent Offender Services (ASOS) position in place, something this Office had previously recommended.

But we found staff generally less positive about relationships with management or with each other. And short staffing had become chronic, largely caused by a 17 per cent rate of 'unknown or unexpected absences' which was additional to other forms of planned leave. A new training officer was in place but short staffing made it hard to catch up with essential training.

EARLY DAYS AND DUTY OF CARE

Dedicated staff continued to make reception work, despite infrastructure deficiencies that we have previously identified. Prisoner orientation was not well structured, and we worried that some new prisoners may be falling through the gaps. Seventy-four per cent of prisoners who completed our survey said they mostly felt safe at Roebourne. The anti-bullying strategy had been revised but we found little evidence that Roebourne was a trauma-informed workplace.

Remandees had fewer opportunities than sentenced prisoners and were ineligible to join offender programs or access the work camp. We thought there was a need to better educate prisoners about legal processes and ensure access to appropriate resources. We believe it is time the prison considered using the Aboriginal Interpreting WA service for key interactions with prisoners such as health, education or treatment assessments and counselling.

Prisoners used the ACCESS complaints system, but they told us they had no faith in the grievance or confidential mail systems. Two Independent Visitors had recently been appointed by the Minister and they had visited twice so far.

DAILY LIFE

According to the revised Roebourne routine, the maximum productive time for most prisoners in work or education outside their unit is just four hours per day.

Prisoners were much less happy with their living experience in general. Accommodation was still crowded despite reduced numbers and some men were still choosing to sleep on

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

mattresses on the floor, preferring to be in a cell with family. It was good to see that women's cells and the maximum-security yard had been refurbished, although the latter was still rather stark. Unfortunately, ablutions had not fared well and needed better cleaning and maintenance.

Prisoners were less positive about food, they told us the menu was repetitive. Most meals were cooked fresh each day, but better oversight and training was needed to lift kitchen hygiene standards. We found no issues with the laundry service and women were happier with the colours and range of their clothing.

The social visits centre was much improved, but COVID-19 restrictions had resulted in caps in visit allowances and visitor numbers. Only a single e-visit terminal was available inside the prison for remote social visits and the work camp had its own e-visit terminal. Welfare calls and sorry time were offered to grieving prisoners. But many funeral escorts did not go ahead for logistical reasons.

Recreation had suffered greatly due to chronic staff shortages. In the months prior to our inspection there had been limited access to the air-conditioned recreation hall and library, weekend sport on the oval, other organised sport, and special fitness classes for women and elderly prisoners. Chaplaincy was also restricted in contact with prisoners and no church services were available. But work was underway to improve healthy eating options in the canteen.

CLIMATE IMPACTS

There had been much public attention on the lack of air-conditioning in the mainstream male prisoner accommodation and prisoners complained of sleep deprivation due to the heat. Our data loggers showed that overnight heat in cells was the same as that recorded in 2016 despite reflective paint being applied to roofs in 2020. Additional shade and demisters were installed in units and bigger ice machines were being installed, but there was little access to the air-conditioned recreation hall. An engineering consultancy firm has since been engaged by the Department to do a feasibility study on retrofitting air-conditioning to prisoner accommodation.

HEALTH AND SUPPORT

We found a busy health service operating seven days a week at Roebourne. But there was instability in leadership with the Clinical Nurse Manager being on long term leave and the position covered by acting appointments. Waiting lists were short and prisoners received annual health checks. Chronic disease was also well managed, but optometry was the only allied health service attending the prison. The health centre infrastructure remained unfit for purpose and the waiting area is an outdoor cage exposed to the weather. Dental services were entirely inadequate and there were long periods where no service was available at all.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mental health was serviced remotely by telehealth which was manageable but less than ideal given cultural barriers and limited knowledge of local conditions and services for throughcare. However, the Psychological Health Service (PHS) counsellor was locally based and appeared to be well supported by colleagues from other facilities.

The Peer Support Team was beginning to become less effective following the recent loss of the Prison Support Officer (PSO). There was no Aboriginal Visitor Service (AVS) in the prison. The Regional Suicide Prevention Coordinator was providing regular safeTALK training to prisoners and staff. But a death in custody in 2020 highlights the need for continued vigilance and best practice in suicide prevention.

MANAGING BEHAVIOUR AND SECURITY

We found that positive staff-prisoner relations put security and safety on a good footing as did better relations between security and other staff. An Electronic Drug Trace Detection (ETD) unit had enhanced gate security and the addition of new cameras should reduce blind spots. Searching was carried out in a respectful manner. The prosecutor had been provided with more time to prepare prison charges and a new solution was found for remote hearings by a Visiting Justice. Emergency preparedness was good, including for COVID-19 outbreaks. Both Ventia, the Department's transport contractor, and the prison struggled to meet all prisoner transport requirements.

REHABILITATION AND REPARATION

Assessment staff were often redeployed to cover staff absences leading to delays that impacted prisoner access to programs and parole. While program delivery was consistent, 'unmet treatment needs' was one of the reasons cited by the Prisoner Review Board for 35 prisoners in the Roebourne population who had been denied parole. This was due to short sentences, delays in treatment assessments, refusals to transfer out to do programs (especially women for whom local programs were not offered) and insufficient treatment gains in programs completed. There was often a mismatch between individual learning capacity and the learning needs of the programs being provided.

There has been a significant level of instability in education over recent years and a new team were just starting to get established. There had been little consistency in what was being offered in terms of basic education or training over time. While women had some special programs, there was no opportunity to do an ongoing program of study. A new radio studio was one element in some new possibilities in education and training.

Transition Management was functioning as a 30-hour per week stand-alone role, although we were told that this was only a temporary arrangement. While the re-entry service offered some excellent voluntary programs, there had been a decline in the level of engagement by prisoners in case management. Throughcare supports that were available included the KJ Rangers *Yiwarra Kuju* program for Martu prisoners returning to country, assistance from native title trusts to individual members, addictions counselling by Yaandina Community Services, and driving lessons provide by Red Dirt Driving Academy.

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We thought that opportunities existed to better utilise some excellent pre- and post-release employment and training opportunities, including the *Walking Together* program coordinated by the Ngarluma Yindjibarndi Foundation Ltd (NYFL) in Roebourne.

The Town Work Camp continued to make a great contribution to the West Pilbara community. Even though Section 95 community work was shut down for various periods during the pandemic, the prisoners had made furniture and fixtures in the workshops for community groups and the prison itself. It continued to have an effective role in preparing prisoners for release. However, numbers were lower than before.

FEMALE PRISONERS

We thought the women's precinct was rather cramped but still had some good facilities. Due to regular staffing shortages, restrictions too often defined the women's experience. They were often confined to their unit with little access to recreation or even to the available resources within their own section, such as the activity donga. This was especially the case when there was no Women's Support Officer which occurred often. Women had fewer work opportunities but were paid at least Level 3 gratuities for the unit-based work they could undertake. Work in the kitchen for two sessions per week provided some opportunity. Significant change is needed in arrangements for Pilbara women in custody to better meet their needs.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1

The Department should develop a more effective system to support prisoner access to basic legal knowledge and information.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Roebourne should trial the use of Aboriginal interpreters for key interactions with prisoners from a particular language.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Restore in-situ lunch breaks to maximise participation for those prisoners engaged in constructive activities.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Significantly extend and promote access to e-visits at Roebourne.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Roebourne and the chaplaincy service should ensure restoration of regular religious services and effective processes for pastoral visiting.

RECOMMENDATION 6

All residential and special cells at Roebourne should have effective climate control.

RECOMMENDATION 7

The health centre be refurbished and extended to make it fit for purpose; this should accommodate general health, telehealth, mental health, allied health, dental health, disability access, health education, officer station, internal waiting room, crisis care and medical observation.

RECOMMENDATION 8

Ensure regular access to a provision of and access to regular dental services for prisoners at Roebourne including for basic preventative and restorative care.

RECOMMENDATION 9

As a matter of urgency, the Department should recruit and appoint a PSO and AVS staff for Roebourne Regional Prison.

RECOMMENDATION 10

Quarantine at least one report writer position to fully engage in assessments.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 11

- 1) Identify or develop more culturally responsive addictions, family violence and general offending programs for delivery in the Pilbara.
- 2) Develop a delivery methodology to address the program needs of Pilbara women without requiring time out of country.
- 3) Provide Cognitive Brief Intervention or a similar intervention for male and female remandees and short-term sentenced prisoners at Roebourne on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDATION 12

Recruit and appoint to all of the positions in the education and training team at Roebourne so that prisoners can reliably access core programs and other suitable courses.

RECOMMENDATION 13

Plan for a more suitable facility for incarcerated women in the Pilbara.

RECOMMENDATION 14

Review staffing to provide for more consistent, effective and comprehensive provision of services to and custodial management of women at Roebourne Regional Prison.

FACT PAGE

NAME OF FACILITY

Roebourne Regional Prison

ROLE OF FACILITY

Roebourne is the receival facility for men and women in the Pilbara region who are on remand, sentenced or returned to prison. Eighty-six per cent of people held at Roebourne identified as Aboriginal. Roebourne holds medium and minimum-security prisoners for longer periods, but maximum-security prisoners are only held on a short-term basis. It also hosts a Town Work Camp for trusted minimum-security prisoners.

LOCATION

The prison is located five kilometres from Roebourne town which is 1,572 kilometres north of Perth by road. The Traditional Owners of the land where it is located are the Ngarluma people.

BRIEF HISTORY

Roebourne Regional Prison was opened in 1984. The facility replaced Roebourne Gaol which is now a tourist site in Roebourne town. The prison was originally a minimum-security prison and was converted to a medium-security prison in 1995. Our Office had conducted nine previous inspections of the prison, the last in May 2019. A Town Work Camp adjacent to the prison was opened in June 2014, which replaced a smaller work camp at Millstream.

CAPACITY INFORMATION

Table 1: Roebourne Regional Prison operational capacity

Unit	Wing	Description	Standard Beds	Special Beds
Unit 1	1	Male medium	43	
	2	Male medium	42	
	3	Male maximum	12	2
Unit 2	4	Female maximum/medium	14	2
	5-6	Male medium	85	
Work camp		Male minimum	25	
Total			221	4

PRISON POPULATION

191 (at 11 March 2022)

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 OUR NINTH INSPECTION OF ROEBOURNE REGIONAL PRISON

Hot weather was the distinguishing feature for this inspection

On 13-17 March 2022, we conducted our ninth inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison (Roebourne). In many ways this was a standard inspection occurring three years after the previous inspection. Some years before, this office had undertaken more frequent inspections of Roebourne due to persistent issues around prisoner conditions and staffing arrangements. The prison had now been progressing over an extended period.

This inspection was preceded by the usual requests for information to the Department, the administration of surveys with prisoners and staff, and a meeting with service providers to the prison in the community. We employed our standard methods of meeting with staff at all levels, examining documentation, meeting with prisoner groups and spending time in units and work places throughout the site. Feedback was given separately to staff and prisoners following the inspection.

But a distinguishing feature for our team was the heat. The weather was above 40 degrees all week. This gave us a taste of what was the issue raised most persistently by prisoners, the lack of climate control in mainstream accommodation in the prison. In fact, this issue had received considerable public attention of late and is the subject to a separate chapter in this report.

Roebourne's population had eased a little

There has been a small reduction in the population in Roebourne since our last inspection in 2019. Roebourne had 191 prisoners at the time of the inspection in March 2022, which included 15 in the work camp, compared to 208 in May 2019, including 25 in the work camp.

As shown in the following table, the demographic profile of the prison had changed slightly since our last inspection, but Roebourne remains largely an Aboriginal prison.

Table 2: Demography of prisoners at Roebourne at 11/03/2022

	2022	2019
Legal status		
Remandees	30.4%	34.1%
Sentenced	68.6%	65.0%
Appeal	1.0%	0.9%
Demography		
First Nations	86.4%	78.8%
Other Australians	11.0%	16.8%
Foreign Nationals	2.6%	10%
Male	94.2%	92.0%
Female	5.8%	8.0%
Security classification		
Maximum	1.6%	0.9%
Medium	76.4%	76.1%
Minimum	22.0%	23.0%

INTRODUCTION

Roebourne had just received its first COVID positive prisoner

A number of people suspected of having COVID-19 had been received during the previous months and successfully managed in isolation, in either the maximum-yard or one of the management cells. Staff had been trained in managing prisoners suspected of having COVID-19, including through preparedness exercises and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when working with this group.

As a preventative measure social visits had stopped in 2020. And although they had restarted, prisoners and visitors were required to wear masks and were forbidden from touching each other. Section 95 work in the community had also been stopped for a long period, then restarted, but stopped again in February 2022. External providers had been engaged to vaccinate willing prisoners every few months.



Photo 1: COVID isolation tape

In the week before the inspection, Roebourne received its first COVID-19 positive prisoner. The prisoner was housed in the mother/baby cell in the women's precinct which was taped off from the general area accessed by women. In the weeks that followed, several more prisoners tested positive for COVID and were kept in the management cells or in the maximum yard. A whole unit eventually had to be isolated with regular testing often detecting new infections. Routines associated with preventing and managing COVID positive prisoners and their close contacts put added pressure on both staff and prisoners.

INTRODUCTION

Every aspect of prison life was affected by staff shortages

As discussed in the next chapter, staff shortages have been commonplace over the last year, which impacted every aspect of prison life. In the chapters that follow we touch on its impacts on staff-prisoner relations, and on prisoner access to work, education and recreation.

Chapter 2

GOVERNANCE

2.1 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Roebourne has a good business plan, but further elaboration is needed

Roebourne had a current strategic plan in place, *Roebourne Regional Prison Strategic Plan 2021 – 2023: our vision and strategic objectives* (DoJ, 2021), compiled by the Acting Superintendent on his arrival in January 2021. The plan is divided into four focus areas of people, prisoners, community, and business with identified strategic priorities for each of these areas.

However, only a few of these priorities have measurable targets or timeframes. For example, there is a target to complete 100 per cent of annual staff performance reviews. But other priorities provide only generalised targets, such as ‘increased delivery’, ‘improved access’, and ‘more opportunities’. Many of the priorities have not been assigned to particular managers so it is unclear in some cases who should take ownership of that priority and drive it to conclusion. The plan is a good starting base, but it could be so much better with specific responsibilities and measurable targets.



Photo 2: Visit centre entry

Good leadership in governance, but staff less happy

In 2019, we found a strong and well-regarded leadership team at Roebourne. A substantive Superintendent had just been appointed having acted in the role for about 18 months. The team was highly visible in the prison (to both staff and prisoners) and that had resulted in a cooperative and respectful relationship with the staffing group.

GOVERNANCE

We heard that by the following year things started to deteriorate, and fractures appeared in some elements of the staffing group. There had been some actions around performance and conduct issues being addressed. It appeared this had compounded into factions in disagreement, and negativity towards management from some staff.

At the start of 2021 the Superintendent left to take up a new opportunity and an acting Superintendent commenced. This coincided with the reimposition of the Department's overtime cap, and a tightening of approval processes for certain staff allowances in accordance with the Prison Officers' Industrial Agreement. There was a sense of grievance about this tightening by some staff, many of whom had worked there for many years. But in the end, good governance is good business, and the acting Superintendent has exercised strong leadership in that respect.

This narrative is probably reflected in the declining results in some areas from the staff perception survey undertaken prior to this inspection. The survey showed a decline in perceived support from management at all levels, including line managers, local management and head office management.

Table 3: Staff ratings of different levels of management

	2022 staff survey			2019 staff survey		
	Poor	Mixed	Good	Poor	Mixed	Good
Your line manager						
Support from	21%	48%	31%	17%	31%	52%
Communication from	26%	40%	33%	17%	31%	52%
Local management						
Support from	33%	48%	17%	5%	40%	55%
Communication from	29%	48%	21%	5%	36%	59%
Head office						
Support from	57%	38%	5%	24%	57%	19%
Communication from	43%	45%	12%	24%	50%	26%

In interviews during our inspection some staff recounted specific instances, some quite old, that they said contributed to the tensions. While many appreciated the need for better management of entitlements, perceptions were also expressed about managers not applying rules consistently or making decisions to favour certain individuals or groups. Official staff grievances were low, which sometimes reflects a lack of faith in processes to resolve these fairly.

Our staff survey also indicated increased concerns about poor or inappropriate behaviour between staff members, including verbal abuse, physical abuse, and racist remarks. Conversely, there was less concern about bullying among staff than three years ago. Short staffing was another issue raised by many staff and this is covered later in this report.

GOVERNANCE

Table 4: Staff survey: how often do you think the following occurs at this prison? (staff on staff)

Staff on staff	2022 staff survey			2019 staff survey		
	Never	Sometimes	Often	Never	Sometimes	Often
Physical abuse	29%	52%	5%	95%	3%	0%
Racist remarks	2%	57%	3%	53%	38%	7%
Other verbal abuse	12%	50%	26%	36%	52%	19%
Bullying	43%	45%	0%	21%	55%	22%

These factors contributed to lower staff morale at the time of the inspection. Some staff felt things were just starting to improve, but others felt things had not been properly resolved. There may be opportunities for staff and management to work together over time to address some of these concerns and ensure that outcomes for prisoners are not impacted.

Senior management now includes an Assistant Superintendent Offender Services

The Senior Management Team (SMT) had been bolstered by the addition of an Assistant Superintendent Offender Services (ASOS). We had in our last two inspections advocated for this position (OICS, 2016 and OICS, 2020). So, it was pleasing to see that in late 2021, the Superintendent put up a new business case which was approved. At the time of our inspection, Roebourne was fortunate to have an experienced acting ASOS. He demonstrated the value of the position in sharing the load in senior management, in cultivating and coordinating relationships with internal and external service providers, and in leveraging better outcomes for prisoners.

A selection process to permanently fill the ASOS position was underway at the time of the inspection. So too was the state-wide recruitment process for the Superintendent pool from which it is anticipated that a permanent Superintendent for Roebourne would be appointed.

Substantive new appointments included the Assistant Superintendent Security, Principal Officer, and Training Officer. Both the Education Campus Manager and the Clinical Nurse Manager were on extended leave with positions covered by acting staff.

2.2 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Prison routines and programs were impacted by short staffing

Short staffing has always been a problem at Roebourne but had become gradually more acute over the 12 months prior to our inspection. Due to the local climate, it was not safe to lock prisoners in cells during the day, so staffing units at a certain level is an absolute priority. But it was not always possible to fill the few available overtime shifts.

To cover units, staff from other areas, including duty officers, assessment report writers, Vocational Support Officers (VSOs) and security staff were constantly redeployed. This affected their ability to support or provide prisoner services such as work, education, recreation, library access, work experience or voluntary programs. Industrial work areas impacted included maintenance, gardens and section 95 work in the community.

GOVERNANCE

We tried to distinguish whether this problem was caused by staff shortages, or staff absences. The former refers to staffing levels, vacancies and relief arrangements for planned leave, the latter for other types of absences such as personal leave, worker's compensation leave, and leave related to disciplinary matters.

Documents provided to us showed actual vacancies at Roebourne were minimal. There was a healthy list of officers on the transfer-in list so staff who leave are readily replaced. In 2021, four staff transferred out and seven transferred in. The catch was in delays caused by the offer and acceptance processes, and the limited availability of Government Regional Officer Housing accommodation. We heard that it could take many months for transfers to happen, causing shortages. Other forms of long-term leave, such as long service leave or maternity leave, also led to shortages where relief staff were not readily available. Prison officers who may be stood down for disciplinary reasons can only realistically be replaced by overtime. In theory, absences by VSOs and public servants can be relieved by recruiting contract staff; but in practice, such staff can be hard to secure due to the tight labour market in the Pilbara.

Initial analysis of information provided by the prison (for the period 18 June 2021 to 17 March 2022) suggests a custodial officer absence rate of close to 17 per cent of rostered shifts for 'unknown or unexpected absences'. This excludes annual leave, long service leave, purchased leave or other expected vacancies. It is a significant proportion of shifts to try and fill daily, especially in a small remote location. It has impacted the prison's ability to operate properly and provide services it should be delivering. Strategies to address the level of unexpected absences need to be examined and devised.

Providing adequate relief staffing to cover the prison for its known absences is also important, and these were not fully covered at Roebourne. Ongoing workers' compensation cases, secondments and staff suspensions were not routinely covered. The Department must consider such needs when allocating staffing at all prisons, particularly those in remote locations with a limited workforce. Overtime is a partial solution but should be strictly limited due to its cost and the imposition on the personal lives and welfare of staff.

Staff training was getting back on track, but still facing some challenges

While we found training to be working well in 2019 and a new training facility developed, the Training Officer left some months later and was not replaced for 18 months. Four local staff received training to enable them to deliver modules to their peers, but training sessions were not prioritised, and training at Roebourne fell behind. Training outcomes declined steadily with even core training neglected. As few as 20 per cent of staff had received certain modules of compulsory refresher training.

A new Training Officer commenced in October 2021 on a two-year contract from the Corrections Academy. Since then, essential modules have been prioritised and the officer reported that around 65 per cent of staff had now completed these units. This has been done in part during the dedicated training morning, when prisoners remain in wings to allow for training, and by the trainer delivering modules in-situ to officers when they cannot be relieved from their post.

GOVERNANCE

It was a struggle for the prison to prioritise training. Training mornings were often redirected to meet other needs, such as immunisations. The trainer was also increasingly used to cover shift positions contrary to the nature of his special role. Nor were leave arrangements favourable for the delivery of training.

Chapter 3

EARLY DAYS AND DUTY OF CARE

3.1 RECEPTION

Staff made reception work but infrastructure was still poor

Dedicated staff continued to make reception work, despite infrastructure deficiencies that we have previously identified, which included:

1. Holding cells lacked intercoms or camera surveillance. This presents risks given potential vulnerability and volatility of newly received prisoners.
2. Sensitive intake assessments were undertaken in the reception office which has a dysfunctional layout that risks safety and confidentiality. The computer screen is visible to the new prisoner and others looking into the office, and the officer has their back to the prisoner when inputting information.
3. The sallyport cage was too small for safe loading and unloading of prisoner transport vehicles.

A recommendation to address infrastructure issues in our 2020 report was rejected by the Department (OICS, 2020). However, it was pleasing to hear that cameras were to be installed in the holding cells in the months following our inspection as part of a general upgrade in CCTV infrastructure across the prison.



Photo 3: Reception interview

The privacy risk in the reception office was partially addressed by a screen filter which reduced the viewing angle of the computer monitor. But the filter was only being used during interviews. At other times, the prisoner worker in reception, and other prisoners attending reception could see information on the screen. We still believe the layout of

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reception should be changed to enhance privacy and safety. A small room close to the office could offer a more appropriate space for admission interviews, but that was being converted into a valuable property store following a breach in existing arrangements.

3.2 ORIENTATION

Orientation processes lacked structure

Orientation was not well structured, and we worried that some new prisoners may be falling through the gaps. Of the prisoners that responded to our 2022 pre-inspection survey, 63 per cent said they did not get enough information on how the prison works. In 2019, this figure was only 36 per cent and at that time we found orientation at Roebourne had 'significantly improved' (OICS, 2019, p. 17) mainly due to greater involvement by peer support prisoners. But that involvement was less regular since the Prisoner Support Officer (PSO) had left and the team had less direction and access to information about new prisoners. It seemed the only opportunity new prisoners had to read the prisoner handbook was in the reception holding cells.



Photo 4: Handbook in holding cell

Officers did do the mandatory orientation checklist interview within a day of each prisoner arriving in the unit which covers several topics in one go. In some cases, they made referrals for help to counselling, transitional services or peer support. But prisoners we spoke to said they had not had an orientation tour of the prison and had not received the prisoner handbook. They said they were mainly informed about how the prison works by other prisoners.

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Good practice in orientation involves some of the following processes, many of which happen separately and with different timeframes:

- A medical screen by a nurse, normally the day following admission and a fuller assessment by a doctor due within the first month.
- Management and Placement Plan (MAP) by assessments to determine initial management and placement settings due within five days.
- Transition Checklist completed during an interview with the Transition Manager (TM). This includes information about: the voluntary programs prisoners can do; re-entry services for those who are sentenced; and help with fines conversion and obtaining identification documents. Normally these are done within the first few weeks.
- Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) and food safety courses provided by education which includes an informal literacy and numeracy assessment. WHS and food safety programs are run intermittently, so it can take some months before a prisoner can do them.

In addition to restoring the initial prisoner orientation, it would be helpful for the ASOS to audit exactly how many prisoners are receiving these services to see if any are being missed.

3.3 SAFETY FROM BULLYING AND PROTECTION

Prisoners mostly felt safe

Seventy-four per cent of prisoners who completed our survey said they mostly feel safe at Roebourne. This was higher than the state average of 72 per cent, but a drop from 82 per cent last inspection. Prisoners said the presence of family and countrymen contributed to their sense of safety, 'I got family in here so that's all good'; 'no humbug' and 'you can talk to officers at any time about anything'.

We saw behaviours and interactions that supported this prisoner perception. There was good humour in units and prisoners helped each other out. We heard that family and social networks were a protective factor. Older prisoners looked out for younger relatives and new prisoners could find and share cells with family. Staff were told about any mental health or other vulnerability and if there were issues with the self-placement, they would encourage the prisoner to change cell.

Several prisoners told us that the heat in cells and the attitude of some staff detracted from their sense of safety. The lack of onsite medical care overnight was also identified as a risk.

The anti-bullying strategy was clear but rarely needed

Sixty per cent of staff who responded to our survey said prisoner to prisoner bullying occurred 'sometimes'. But prisoners told us there was minimal bullying. When issues arose, prisoners said family supported each other and resolved matters informally, often without involving staff. We also heard that prisoners would talk to officers if they needed to.

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Roebourne approved a three stage anti-bullying and violence reduction strategy in February 2021 consistent with the Department's new Commissioner's Operating Policies and Procedures (COPP 10.6 *Anti-bullying*). Strategies to support the victim, included relocation of the alleged perpetrator, and sanctions and regimes to discourage further bullying. Staff we spoke to were aware of the policy and prepared to act if needed. We heard the anti-bullying committee last met in July 2020. However, there was low level understanding of the anti-bullying policy among prisoners despite being outlined in the prisoner handbook.

Roebourne lacks a separate unit for prisoners in need of protection from others. Should the need arise, that person will be held in the maximum-security yard before being transferred to a metropolitan facility.

Trauma informed care was not so evident

Many prisoners will have experienced trauma in their lives. It can affect people's health, their sense of safety, and how they choose and function in relationships. Trauma informed prisoner management may contribute to a safer working and living environment because staff understand the interplay of trauma, triggers and how this presents in behaviours. This may strengthen prisoner/staff relationships, for example in deescalating a distressed prisoner.

Some staff recognised that many people at Roebourne will have experienced trauma. Others understood how trauma shows itself in a custodial environment. But we found little evidence that Roebourne had a trauma-informed working approach. And this is often the case in a prison setting, where violence, isolation and use of restraints are part of life. For example, at Roebourne, all prisoners are strip searched after a visit. Although searches were conducted using the recommended half and half approach, it is routine rather than intelligence led. In our 2019 review into the practice of strip searching, we found this was degrading and re-traumatising and an ineffective way to find contraband (OICS, 2019a).

We heard training is available via the Department's online Justice Education Management System. But trauma, like reconciliation, is healed through connection, and this is less likely to be learned via on-line training. We think there is an opportunity for Roebourne to do more and would support trauma informed training being delivered to staff in person, especially if as part of regional specific cultural package.

3.4 REMANDEES

Remand prisoners were just marking time

Remand prisoners made up 30 per cent of the prisoner population at Roebourne. This was down from 41 per cent in 2019 when we last inspected. This group had fewer opportunities than sentenced prisoners. Remandees complained they had no access to departmental programs to address underlying behaviours that may have gotten them into trouble in the first place, such as substance misuse or violence. Remandees are the lowest priority for education and training and are unable to start longer term courses. Remandees cannot live and work in the work camp.

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Although remandees can seek work, they were much less likely to have meaningful work. Sixty per cent of them were on Level 5 gratuities as unemployed or miscellaneous workers. This compared to only 21 per cent of sentenced prisoners at Level 5.

The legal right for remandees to access daily visits was introduced in Roebourne shortly after our 2019 inspection. With many remandees from distant parts of the region and beyond, such visits were never a reality for everyone, but since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, visits have been significantly restricted.

A computer with a legal database was available to remandees but it was locked away in a room next to the recreation hall. We heard that prisoners almost never asked to use this resource, most likely due to a lack of knowledge that it existed, a lack of understanding how to use it, and a lack of confidence that it would be of any meaningful benefit. Nor did it help that recreation staff were frequently redeployed, so the recreation hall and library were often closed.

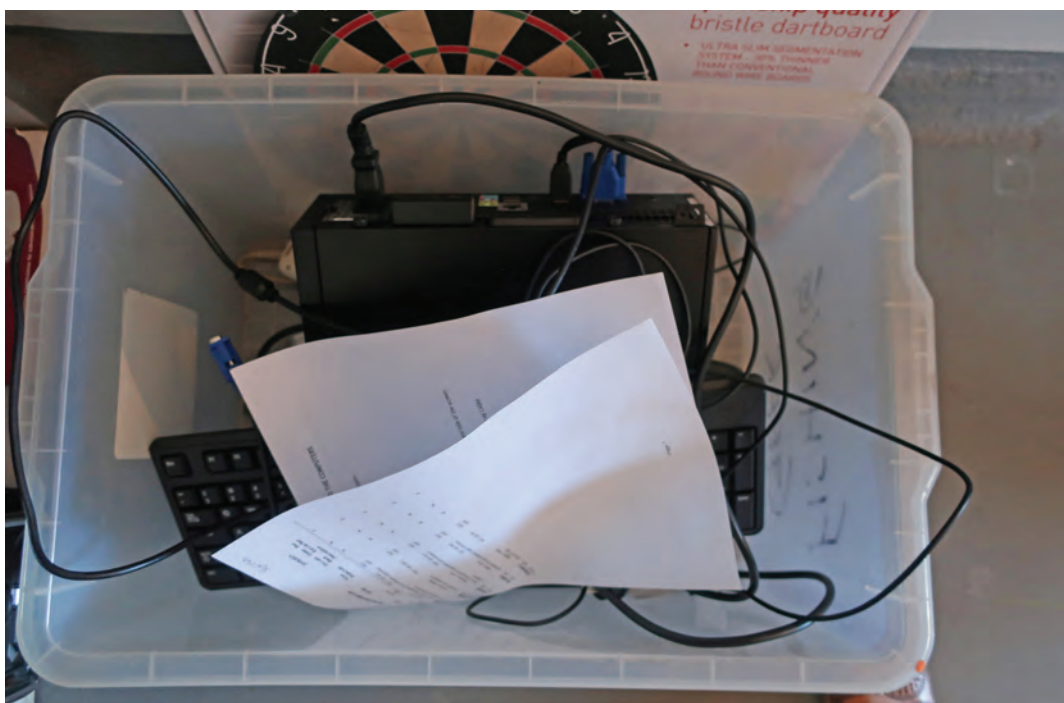


Photo 5: Legal computer

It is unknown how many prisoners were unrepresented or would be better served if they were able to engage more knowledgeably on their case with their legal representative. But there seems to be a need to better educate prisoners about legal processes and ensure access to appropriate resources. For example, some kind of legal workshop could be provided to every new remand prisoner, either through education, alongside the OSH introduction, or by the Transition Manager.

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One positive note was that remandees benefited from the increased range of voluntary programs, workshops and external services, such as the leadership program run by Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (the KJ Rangers). These are discussed further later in the report.

Recommendation 1

The Department should develop a more effective system to support prisoner access to basic legal knowledge and information.

3.5 CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD) PRISONERS

In many settings, the term CALD refers to non-English speaking immigrants and foreign nationals. Agencies like the Telephone Interpreter-Service facilitate communication with these groups.

At the time of our inspection, Roebourne had just five foreign nationals with only one from a country where English was not the official language. We had no complaints from these men about their situation.

The main sources of cultural and linguistic diversity at Roebourne was the large number of Aboriginal groups from throughout the Pilbara and other parts of Western Australia. It may be easy to say that people from these groups live within an English-speaking world, but for many English is not their first language. Until recently, professional interpretation services for such diverse language groups has not been available, and the prison had used other prisoners whenever interpreting was needed. This practice risked less than adequate communication and disclosure, and a possible breach of personal privacy.

Opportunities to be gained from having language competency in the prison have been highlighted by regular visits from the KJ Rangers with Martu prisoners over the last few years. This has increased the confidence and participation of Martu prisoners in many aspects of prison life, not the least of which is in addressing their own offending issues, in reconnecting to their culture, and in better preparing for life outside prison.

The *Western Australian Language Services Policy 2020* (OMI, 2020) requires public sector agencies ensure language is not a barrier to fair and equal access to services and information. Aboriginal Interpreting WA (AIWA) provides a professional translation and interpretation service that covers some of the key Pilbara Aboriginal languages including Martu, Nyangumarta, and Yindjibarndi, and many others from other regions. We believe it is time the prison considered using this or a similar service for certain key interactions with prisoners. Such interactions might include health, education or treatment assessments and counselling. As a start, one of these services should be asked to trial the use of the interpreter service to test its benefits and value.

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Recommendation 2

Roebourne should trial the use of Aboriginal interpreters for key interactions with prisoners from a particular language group.

ACCESS used but confidence was lacking in grievance and confidential mail systems

Offenders in custody or under community supervision - or their families, can make a complaint by phone or confidential mail to ACCESS, the Department's formal complaints resolution system. The following table lists the nature of the complaints raised by Roebourne prisoners in 2021. The Department informed us that 37 of these were resolved, with no action needed for the other four.

Table 5: Complaints to ACCESS from Roebourne prisoners in 2021

Complaint Category	Number
Communication	9
Sentence Management	9
Offender Incidents and Charges	5
Health (including dental)	4
Property	4
Reportable Incident re Staff	3
Constructive activity (programs/recreation)	3
Funerals	2
Facilities	1
Gratuities and Private Cash	1
TOTAL	41

Lodging a grievance is another option for prisoners, but prisoners across the state have never had confidence in that process. The prisoner has to approach the unit office and say they want to make a grievance. The officer then has to print a form with the prisoner's details from the Total Offender Management Solutions system (TOMS). There was only a single grievance lodged at Roebourne in 2021, which is recorded as having been resolved.

Prisoners can access yellow envelopes through which they can send confidential mail to the Superintendent, Commissioner, Minister, or to various accountability agencies. Boxes to post these envelopes in units are carefully placed out of direct sight from unit offices. These are collected by the Principal Officer and forwarded unopened to the intended recipient. Correspondence from these agencies to prisoners is also confidential.

Despite assurances from staff, many prisoners were convinced that such mail is opened by prison staff and that they would be transferred if they sent any such letter. Others had no idea what yellow envelopes were for. And while we saw envelopes freely available in some units, they were missing from the boxes in other units. Better education is needed about the system as part of the orientation process.

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Another avenue for complaints is the Independent Visitors (IVs). While this service was missing at Roebourne since before the last inspection, two new IVs had their first visit in December 2021 and again in January 2022. They heard, documented and passed on collective and individual complaints to prison management.

Chapter 4

DAILY LIFE

4.1 PRISON ROUTINE

The prison routine compromised constructive activities

The prison routine is outlined in the prison's Standing Order 10.2 (DoJ, 2021) which was revised in February 2021 to conform with the Department's new COPPs. According to that routine, which covers the prison compound at Roebourne, not the work camp, prisoners are unlocked at 7:30 am, Monday to Saturday. Prisoners remain in units on Tuesdays to facilitate staff training, but on other week days, those with industrial work outside the unit, or attending education, training or programs should be sent out before 8:45 am. The order defines these activities as 'constructive activities'. We found that attendance at these activities was usually not until 9:00 am. An exception was kitchen workers who were woken earlier and may be called to work as early as 6:30 am.

The new routine requires that a count is done at 11:40 am. The previous version, in place at the time of our last inspection, stated that workers and students could stay for lunch in the industries quadrangle, and report to the visits centre for the count. Current practice is that those involved in constructive activities must return to units by 11:30 am for the count. The only exceptions to this are the laundry and kitchen workers, who stay in the recreation hall over the lunch period.



Photo 6: Count in Unit 1

Grilles are closed in units over lunch to facilitate staff meal breaks. Those returning to units can only resume their constructive activities after 1:00 pm. There is no set finish time for the afternoon session in the routine, but we saw that prisoners were required to return to their units at 2:30 pm. Thus, the maximum productive time for most of these prisoners

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is four hours per day, four days per week. In practice, this time is further reduced by tea breaks, COVID-19 cleaning requirements, and time taken to set up and pack away tools and equipment for the day. All of this does not account for additional lost time due to lockdowns, closures and restrictions caused by staff absences or shortages.

This arrangement minimises prisoner productivity. Staff are employed for 7.5 hours per day or more in these areas to supervise, teach, or facilitate programs for just four hours of contact time per day. This impedes progress in completing valued work, progressing in education or training, and addressing offending needs. Both external trainers and programs facilitators alike have expressed concern at the limited time they have with prisoners during their visits. We believe that these prisoners should all be allowed to stay in the recreation hall or adjacent quadrangle area over lunch to increase time available for constructive activities.

Unfortunately, most prisoners do not have access to productive activities outside their units, some have unit jobs but many others lack any meaningful work. The prisoner routine provides for separate recreation sessions for men in Units 1 and 2 each afternoon after those involved in constructive activities have left the unit. A further recreation session runs at 3:15 pm after workers have returned and following the 3:00 pm count. A 'female or mixed recreation' session is scheduled each weekend morning along with additional recreation sessions for the two male units morning and afternoon.

Recommendation 3

Restore in-situ lunch breaks to maximise participation for those prisoners engaged in constructive activities.

4.2 CONDITIONS AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Prisoners were less happy with living conditions and quality of life

Much of this chapter deals with prisoners' quality of life, including their living conditions, food, family contact, recreation and canteen. This table sets out responses from our inspection survey of prisoners to some of these areas. From our interactions with the prisoners, it was still very much the case that they would rather be at Roebourne than anywhere else. But as can be seen, they were rather less happy with their living experience in 2022 than in 2019. In some areas, such as 'amount of food', their 'unit' and 'shower/bathroom facilities', they were also much less happy than was average for prisoners throughout Western Australia.

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Table 6: In this prison what do you think about...?

Item	2022		2019		State average	
	Good	Poor	Good	Poor	Good	Poor
Food quality	46%	45%	55%	41%	41%	56%
Amount of food	46%	44%	50%	46%	52%	45%
Clothing issued	40%	49%	43%	51%	42%	55%
Laundry	51%	35%	57%	40%	56%	40%
Bedding	49%	38%	53%	44%	51%	46%
Your unit	45%	40%	51%	44%	61%	35%
Canteen	63%	20%	61%	36%	55%	40%
Shower/bathroom facilities	39%	47%	48%	49%	55%	42%

Our inspection survey also asked prisoners to rate their quality of life out of 10. The rating from Roebourne in 2022 had deteriorated since 2019 and was also below the state average. The mood of the prisoners was evidently quite different. Many prisoners we spoke to were unhappy about the heat, and the impact of staff shortages.

Table 7: How would you rate the quality of your life in this facility?

2022	2019	State average
4.82	5.71	5.17

4.3 RESIDENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Accommodation was still crowded despite reduced numbers

The prison compound at Roebourne comprises two units, each with three wings. Two wings in each are joined to make a large triangular yard and provide mainstream accommodation for men. The third wing in each unit is a smaller triangular yard. In Unit 1 this is the maximum-security yard for men, and in Unit 2, the women's yard. The accommodation was built with a mixture of single cells, doubles and quadruple occupancy for a total standard capacity of 114 prisoners. There were also six special cells. Over time, additional bunks have been added with most single cells now double bunked, all double cells now triple-bunked, and quadruple cells now holding six beds, for a standard capacity of 196. We consider these beds additional to the original built capacity.



Photo 7: Double bunk in six out

On 11 March 2022, there were 176 prisoners in the main prison, a decrease from 201 in May 2019. It was less crowded and there were only a small number of prisoners sleeping on mattresses placed on the floor, compared to 15 in 2019. Floor sleeping was preferred by those prisoners so they could be with people from the same family or culture. Prisoners in the triple and six bed cells at least benefited from a private toilet area within their cell. Those in double bunked cells had no private toilet and many said it was humiliating to have to use the toilet in front of their cell mate. Many people liked the social support in shared cells, but there were also complaints about a lack of property storage, shelf space, privacy, limited furniture and of course the heat.

Refurbishment had extended to women's cells and the maximum-security yard

Cells in the mainstream men's units were almost fully refurbished before the last inspection and were generally still satisfactory, despite starting to look old and shabby in parts. Multi cells were cluttered with property and bedding. Wet towels and sheets were hung at night for cooling or ripped to tie back cyclone shutters. Most flyscreens had still not been replaced leaving cells vulnerable to insects and vermin. Food scraps and other rubbish still found its way outside the cells onto rarely used service thoroughfares. The prison had some stronger mesh to replace the flyscreens but so far it had only been installed in one cell

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Photo 8: Maximum-security yard

Following our 2019 inspection we recommended that Roebourne ‘refurbish the maximum-security yard and day room, and the cells in the women’s and maximum-security yards,’ as these had missed out on renovations undertaken (OICS, 2020, p. 22). It was pleasing to see this work completed. Female cells were brighter, and typically included a bunk bed and ladder, two chairs, a bench and a TV. There was a toilet, privacy curtain and a small sink. The maximum yard and day room had been cleaned and painted, but still looked very stark, lacking any furniture, equipment or other fittings.

Ablutions had fared less well

Communal ablutions comprised four showers, two toilets and two sinks in each wing. These had been refurbished before the 2019 inspection but in 2022 were suffering from a combination of wear and tear from heavy use, inadequate cleaning and maintenance, especially in Unit 1. Grime, scale, stain, soap residues, and soiled clothing items were very much in evidence, and surfaces were beginning to flake. In our survey, only 39 per cent of prisoners said bathroom facilities were good compared to 48 per cent in 2019 and a state average of 55 per cent. A minor refurbishment would restore these, and we thought that cleaning and maintenance needed to be enhanced.

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4.4 ENCOURAGING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

The privilege system is weak except for those who can aspire to the Work Camp

A system wide approach known as hierarchical management seeks to encourage and reward high standards of behaviour. Poor behaviour can result in a loss of privileges along with sanctions. On the first day of the inspection, there were approximately 16 prisoners across the two units and women's yard who were on 'earned' supervision, the highest level of privilege. According to the Department's COPP 10.1 *Prisoner Behaviour Management*, at a minimum, prisoners who have achieved this can:

- send extra letters;
- have more money on their phone account;
- spend more money at the canteen; and
- have five rather than the standard three personal electrical items per cell.

Several people on earned supervision told us that incentives were thin on the ground and lacked appeal. One prisoner was unclear if and how their entitlements had changed since achieving 'earned' status. Prisoners made several suggestions to broaden the appeal of earned supervision and reward people who were ineligible for the work camp. For example, having additional e-visits, longer social visits, air-conditioned accommodation and access to fresh food items from the canteen. These ideas deserve further consideration by the Superintendent and Senior Management Team.

4.5 FOOD AND NUTRITION

Prisoner satisfaction with food was mixed

Prisoners were less positive about food than they had been in 2019. As seen in Table 6 above, 46 per cent of prisoner respondents in 2022 said the food quality was 'good'. This was down from the 55 per cent recorded in 2019, but still higher than the state average of 41 per cent.

Meals from the main kitchen were cooked and served, on the same day or the next day, in portioned disposable trays. Prisoners were pleased that most meals were fresh. But while the meals were planned on a seasonal and six-weekly cycle, prisoners said they were repeated from one week to the next. They appreciated the choice of a cultural meal, using kangaroo meat on Mondays, but they wanted to have a choice of meal on other days too. Desserts were served a couple of times a week.

The kitchen catered for a range of special meals including low fat, no fish, dairy or pork. But we heard from many prisoners that they wanted salad more often. Prisoners did not know if their feedback on the menu went anywhere, but kitchen staff said they reviewed minutes from unit meetings and Prison Council meetings for ideas. This uncertainty could be overcome by a more direct feedback mechanism.

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Although picnic style gas BBQs had been installed in units, we were told that these were rarely, if ever used. Instead portable BBQs were wheeled into units once a month allowing prisoners to cook sausages, chops and eggs. This was very popular amongst prisoners.



Photo 9: Work camp salad bar

Prisoners in the work camp were positive about the quality, variety and amount of food available. Some reported taking up healthier eating habits as the salad bar was so appealing.

Oversight and training were needed to uphold kitchen standards

The main kitchen was a busy workplace, employing up to 17 male prisoners on most days and a smaller group of women on Fridays and Sundays. The kitchen sent approximately 300 breakfast packs, 230 lunches and 210 evening meals to units each day. Kitchen VSOs are not redeployed, but neither do their shifts overlap for planning and handover.

Both the prison kitchen and workcamp kitchen had passed an internal Food Stars audit in June 2021. But when we walked through, we thought cleanliness and hygiene in the main kitchen was a little lacking. Some kitchen workers were not wearing hairnets, and none were wearing masks. Some of the walls were dirty and we saw washed chopping boards with meat scraps and blood on them. We saw food stored on the floor in the cool rooms and two large bagged pumpkins had mould on their skin. There was also food debris left on shelves in the store rooms.

VSOs told us that they had their hands full with food production, kitchen hygiene, safety and security, and said it was difficult to invest time in training the workers.

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4.6 CLOTHING AND BEDDING

No concerns were raised about laundry and clothing

Prisoners' rating of laundry as good was lower in 2022 at 51 per cent compared to 2019 at 57 per cent. Each prisoner's laundry is numbered and returned when washed and dried. Missing items are replaced. Bedding also rated a little lower in 2022 at 49 per cent compared with 53 per cent in 2019. But we could not identify any specific reasons for the drop in satisfaction and we did not hear any complaints about this during the inspection.

Women were happier with their clothing

Last inspection, female prisoners told us they were unhappy with the colour and range of their clothing. Things have improved and the mustard yellow and brown clothes have been replaced by lilac and grey instead. Over the last year, women were unhappy with restrictions around what they could wear at recreation, but alternative clothing has since been supplied. We also heard that an appropriate range of sizes and styles of women's underwear was now available for purchase in the canteen.

4.7 MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

The social visits centre was an attractive but underused space

We were pleased to see that the social visits centre was much improved, having recommended in 2019 that visits and communication services at Roebourne be expanded (OICS, 2020). Upgrades included an extension and better wheelchair access. It had been painted and furnished with large colourful paintings and six islands of tables built by prisoners. The staff control station was also much improved as was the CCTV surveillance. A video terminal had been installed in a locked wall cabinet in the official visits room.



Photo 10: E-visit terminal in visits

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While some of the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted in the community, the custodial system introduced new protocols to reduce transmission risks, which at Roebourne meant:

- there was a cap of six visits per session;
- prisoners, visitors and staff wore masks for the entire visit session;
- no physical contact was allowed including for greetings or goodbyes table-width distance was maintained between the prisoner and visitor;
- no sharing of refreshments; and
- no play area, free play or toys for children.

In the end, the cap on visits sessions may not have been required because there were just two visitors at each of the morning and afternoon sessions we observed. Most prisoners had told their family and friends to stay away, and not to bring children. Prisoners told us it was too hard seeing loved ones, especially children when they could not touch them.

The e-visit service did not meet demand

When social visits were cancelled in 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold, the Department fast-tracked installation of e-visit video facilities in all prisons as an alternative way of supporting family contact. This office had long advocated such a solution including at Roebourne where families and friends are spread across vast regions, and many prisoners had very few, if any, visits (OICS, 2019, p. 30. Recommendation 8).

However, while most prisons had several e-visit terminals installed, Roebourne got just three. One is located in the work camp, another in the official visits room in the visits centre, and one in the video-link room. The work camp terminal is well used on weekends. The visits centre is normally only staffed during visit sessions, making use of the terminal in the official visits room rare. The terminal in video-link is in the same room as the court video-link, so access is restricted.

Court and other legal video-links have priority over social visits, so times available to schedule e-visits were limited and could be displaced on the day. Only one person can have an e-visit at a time, and there is usually no access in the late afternoon, evenings or weekend. Although we did hear that special e-visits have been provided on occasion for compassionate reasons, including observing funerals remotely and seeing terminally ill loved ones.

Some prisoners were enthusiastic about the 20-minute e-visits once a week. But others were frustrated that one session was insufficient to maintain connection, especially with young children. They would like frequent, timetabled visits, including outside school hours. Many said they were waiting for an appointment or had given up due to the demand. We also met some prisoners who did not appear to know about or understand how e-visits worked. There are only three lines about e-visits in the Orientation Manual which says that Skype visits are available and that visitors need a Skype account, which is no longer the case as Microsoft (MS) Teams is now used instead. A few said their families had problems getting it to work at their end.

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We were told that the current infrastructure could not accommodate additional terminals and that staffing would be an issue in any case. While the video-link could be subdivided, or e-visit terminals installed in the visits centre, or perhaps even in the old library, it may not be necessary to change infrastructure. Hand-held pad technology could be used instead.

Preservation of family links is a protective factor for offenders so we think expansion of this service should be a priority for a regional prison that services such a vast area. The service should be expanded, promoted to prisoners and appropriate assistance provided to families in establishing contact.

Recommendation 4

Extend and promote access to e-visits at Roebourne.

Sorry time is taken seriously at Roebourne

Roebourne staff understood the impact of loss on prisoners, and the need for Aboriginal prisoners to grieve for lost loved ones in culturally appropriate ways. Additional welfare calls were offered, and people from different units, including women, were allowed to have sorry time together. Peer support, unit staff, chaplains and others were all attentive to those who were grieving.

There is a strong cultural obligation on Aboriginal prisoners to attend funerals, even when in prison. Unit staff prepared funeral applications but said it was hard to do while managing other responsibilities. So some applications were written across several shifts and by different staff members. Some staff thought there should be a position responsible for coordinating this work, before it reached the approval stage within the prison. Positively, the Department's COPP 14.5 on *Authorised absences and absence permits* maintains broad criterion for attendance, taking cultural relations into account, and many applications were supported.

However, there were many logistical reasons and challenges why applications to attend funerals could not be approved, or if approved could not proceed. At times, communities have been closed, or numbers have been capped due to COVID-19 protocols. Sometimes victim considerations are an overriding factor, or Ventia (the contracted transport provider) do not have enough staff or vehicles for the escort. An example of the types of challenges arose in 2021 when a Roebourne prisoner was transferred to Greenough Regional Prison to attend a funeral in Carnarvon. Prisoners were taken by local Ventia staff in a prisoner transport vehicle but turned away from the funeral at the direction of local police due to conflict at the funeral.

Funeral live streaming was still rare in the Pilbara, but that may change as the KJ Rangers hope to offer video participation by prisoners in funerals involving Martu people.

4.8 RECREATION

Recreation was the heart of prisoner life, but it was in poor condition

Our first day of the inspection reminded us, and the prisoners, of how good things were when recreation ran normally in the prison. The recreation hall has pool tables, a library, x-box machines, darts, and audio-visual equipment to play video music clips. We saw women in the hall after their morning session in the kitchen, playing pool, listening to music and sorting out boxes of photos. Later in the recreation quadrangle, we saw a game of basketball involving teams representing the two male units. This area also has a volleyball court and an excellent outdoor gym under a roof. It is surrounded by a veranda popular for walking, with two pagodas and an adjacent Aboriginal cultural area.

In the afternoon, each of the male units had a turn using the half-sized oval to play football. These games were spirited but somewhat strange to watch, as both teams were heading for the same goal! Although the grass was a bit uneven and patchy, it was in reasonable condition given the heat of a late summer. The game took place on a day of over forty degrees, but with lots of cool water and frequent breaks it was possible to play in those conditions.

Roebourne has two recreation officer positions that are meant to cover seven days. Both positions were filled but one officer was on long term leave. A person had been engaged on a six-month contract to cover the position but had finished some time before the inspection. And due to staff shortages, the other substantive recreation officer was redeployed to undertake other duties almost every day. This meant that structured recreation was ad hoc. The default position was that the two male units have 'split recreation' every afternoon again in the late afternoon and on weekends. Split recreation means that each unit recreates separately. Women were scheduled to access the recreation yard or the recreation hall just twice per week.



Photo 11: Playing footy

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Aspects of recreation that had been missing for many months included:

- sport on the oval on weekends – the day of our visit was the first time in months;
- regular access to air-conditioned recreation hall, previously available during split recreation;
- organised sport like volleyball or basketball tournaments;
- special sessions in the recreation hall for older prisoners and/or regular oval walks for them;
- special activities for women such as yoga or boxercise and access to the oval;
- mixed recreation when select men and women could socialise in the quadrangle; and
- AFL training and/or training in umpiring and coaching.

In 2019, we described recreation as the heart of prisoner life at Roebourne (OICS, 2020), and while that was still true in many ways, that heart was in poor condition. This is reflected in prisoner responses to our pre-inspection survey questions about recreation (see below).

Table 8: In this prison what do you think about...?

Item	2022		2019		State average	
	Good	Poor	Good	Poor	Good	Poor
Amount of organised sport	42%	41%	50%	44%	35%	60%
Gym	27%	64%	60%	37%	52%	48%
Access to other recreation	29%	63%	38%	57%	34%	66%
Access to library	27%	64%	33%	62%	50%	47%

Since the inspection another recreation officer has been appointed on contract which may help restore some aspects of the recreation program.

The library is well stocked but needs attention and better access



Photo 12: Books for sorting

DAILY LIFE

The library migrated into the indoor recreation centre. Shelving which was created from scaffolding material in the prison workshop holds a varied book collection. But the collection is only partly organised with numerous boxes of books lying around. The library worker position was lost in the last gratuities audit. It was not considered essential because there is no borrowing system. Prisoners are free to take any books they want and return them when ready. But the library is only accessible during recreation and then only infrequently when the recreation hall was open. Regular weekly access needs to be arranged.

4.9 RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

Chaplaincy meetings had stopped

Roebourne has long been looked after by a local Anglican chaplain and until recently a pastor from the Seventh Day Adventist Church. But the work has been harder than it should be for some time. While visits have continued, they have been confined to the recreation quadrangle where most people are busy exercising. Not everyone comes out and so chaplains have to talk to people through grilles at unit doors. Women are even harder to access as they rarely get out to the quadrangle. A prisoner in the survey told us that they look to chaplains at times of loss, so it is important they are accessible. The remaining chaplain is developing a grief and loss seminar that could be offered to such prisoners.

Church services have not been available for prisoners for a very long time. Chaplaincy preferred to run bible studies with only very occasional services. For a time, these were mixed, but the prison stopped allowing women to join these groups, believing that non-religious motivations were driving attendance. And due to short staffing, bible studies were cancelled so frequently, they ground to a halt.

Responses to the prisoner survey in the table below show clearly that prisoners do not feel able to express their faith at Roebourne, and that this has gotten worse over the last three years. As one prisoner said, 'I want church here, but they don't do it.' Bible study may be a valuable tool for Christian growth, but it is not a substitute for religious expression. Ideally, services that incorporate learning are needed.

Table 9: Are you able to practice your religion in this prison?

	2022	2019	State average
Yes	27%	31%	34%
No	41%	43%	29%

Rule 65 from the Mandela Rules affirms the fundamental human right of prisoners to have access to chaplains, attend services and receive pastoral visits in private (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). And Rule 66 provides for prisoners to 'satisfy the needs of his or her religious life by attending services provided in the prison' and having 'in possession books of religious instruction of his or her denomination'. This really needs renewed attention at Roebourne.

Recommendation 5

Roebourne and the chaplaincy service should ensure regular religious services and effective processes for pastoral care.

4.10 PRISONER GRATUITIES

The prison was reforming its gratuity profile

The Department has a system of gratuities to reward prisoners for the nature of their engagement in constructive activities. Under COPP 8.1, *Prisoner Constructive Activities*, the prison is required to create a Prisoner Constructive Activities Profile ‘resembling’ a table provided. Previously, the prison’s gratuity profile allocated too many high-level gratuity positions.

The prison had recently reworked its profile to try and reduce the numbers receiving the highest levels, but this was still above the allocated proportions. VSOs were unhappy they were not consulted during this process. Existing workers remained at the same level, but fewer workers could now aspire to higher levels. And while Level 1 worker numbers were still high, there were far more on Level 5 than there should be, and fewer on Level 3. Work camp prisoners attract higher gratuities than others, known as Level 23.

Table 10: Gratuity profile – COPP 8.1 mandate vs actual at 11 March 2022

Gratuities level	COPP 8.1	Actual Nos.	Actual %
1	10%	32	16.8%
2	20%	27	14.2%
3	45%	39	20.5%
4	15%	16	8.4%
5	10%	61	32.1%
23		15	7.8%
Total	100%	190	100%

4.11 CANTEEN AND TOWN SPENDS

The canteen was popular and improving healthy eating options

Prisoner survey results (see Table 6 above) found above average satisfaction with the canteen. Discussions with prisoners reflected the same. Prisoners could request new stock items through both Peer Support and Prison Council meetings. The range of women’s products had improved. Prisoners on standard supervision could spend \$150 per week in the canteen, and those on earned supervision could spend \$180. Canteen was distributed to the Work Camp on Wednesday afternoons and main prison Thursdays.

The VSO Canteen and ASOS were working with a Nutrition Coordinator from the Western Australian Country Health Service Pilbara to improve healthy eating options at the canteen. Items were identified as red, orange or green, from least to most healthy. They aspired to

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have at least 50 per cent of items in the green category for sale. This was previously at 24 per cent, but had already increased to 57 per cent, which is excellent progress. However, it may prove more challenging to reduce the proportion of items in the red category as tobacco products still make up the largest proportion of sales.

Prisoners appreciated town spends

Prisoners can order some items not normally stocked in the canteen through a process known as town spends. Those in the main prison could order from a limited list of items which included vitamins, pillows and doonas, dressings, wraps, fresh fruit, yoghurt, sportswear, music, DVDs and guitars. Funds could be sent in by family and friends and allocated for approved town spends items.

Men in the work camp could purchase a much larger range of items from local shops such as Woolworths, Kmart, Foot Locker, Rebel Sport and JB Hi-Fi which work camp officers facilitated on a fortnightly basis.

Chapter 5

CLIMATE IMPACTS

5.1 A MATTER OF CONTINUED CONCERN

Lack of air-conditioning in prisoner cells has received considerable public attention

This inspection took place at a time when the prison had been receiving significant public attention due to the lack of air-conditioning for prisoner accommodation. Media coverage on 13 January 2022 reported Roebourne's record temperature of 50.5 degrees and described Roebourne prisoners as 'set to swelter without air con' (Birch, 2022). Subsequent media coverage reported concerns expressed by locals, the Western Australian Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS), human rights advocacy groups and a Western Australian Senator. The Australian Human Rights Commissioner was asked about the matter in her appearance before a Federal Senate Estimates Committee. And the ALS referred the matter to special rapporteurs of the United Nations (Birch, 2022).

OICS has been raising this issue since 2003

Media coverage of this issue has included references to two reports from this office, the report of our 2019 inspection of Roebourne which was published in 2020, and our 2016 review of *Thermal conditions of prison cells* in which we found:

The temperatures we recorded at Roebourne were not simply uncomfortable; they demonstrated a significant threat to prisoner health (OICS, 2016).

As shown in the following table, since our first inspection report in 2003, this office has consistently raised questions relating to the impact of heat and inadequate climate control at Roebourne. The Department has sometimes supported measures to address climate control in prisoner cells, but it was always qualified by available budget resources and strategic priorities.

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Table 11: Responses to our recommendations regarding heat in cells at Roebourne

Report	Year	Rec.	Response	Department's comments
128	2020	7	Not supported	Not a current priority for the Department. Other controls implemented.
106	2016	1	Supported	Considered against budget, strategy and Department priorities.
Review	2016	6	Noted	Assessed against community standards at time of construction; air-con subsequently retrofitted in a number of areas; active and passive measures also utilised.
89	2014	4	Not supported	Considered [a] low relative priority by CET/ business case rejected.
70	2011	5	Supported in principle	Various options are continually being explored and will be implemented within available budget resources.
48	2008	11	Supported in part	In addition to being prohibitively expensive, this is not fully supported by all prisoners.
24	2004	8	Agreed [to review]	A review of the climate control needs of prisoners at Roebourne Prison will be conducted.
14	2003	7	[Not supported]	When constructed the medium and minimum cell accommodation met building code design guidelines in regard to air flow and natural ventilation as appropriate to the region.

Prisoners were complaining about the extreme heat

Roebourne's prisoners were concerned that temperatures had reached 46 degrees on 7 December 2021 and there were inadequate supplies of cool water and ice. Ninety signed a petition which was forwarded to various agencies including this office. Members of the Peer Support Team and Prison Council strongly expressed their views about this issue when we met with them in December 2021 and again in February 2022.

Prisoners continued to make their views known to our staff through our pre-inspection survey and in person during the inspection. Some prisoners reminded us of the passing of Mr Ward on 27 January 2008 due to overheating in a prisoner transport vehicle travelling between Laverton and Kalgoorlie.

5.2 SUMMER HEAT IMPACTS OVERNIGHT

Heat mitigation strategies were ineffective overnight in mainstream cells

Prisoners in the mainstream male units suffered overnight in their cells during summer months. The buildings retain heat, so temperatures at night in cells were normally well above those experienced outside. While cells were built with reasonably good ventilation this was often ineffective because of the hot night-time air. Permanent screens were installed outside north-facing blocks to reduce sun exposure, but this also stopped any breeze. The only attempt to mitigate heat in cells since the last inspection was reflective

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paint applied to roofs in late 2020. A layer of dust had to be washed off in late 2021 in time for summer.

We placed LogTag temperature data loggers in five male cells and one air-conditioned female cell over the five days of our inspection to continuously monitor and record cell temperatures. The results are shown below.

This diagram shows the average readings from LogTag data loggers placed in the male cells over the five days of our inspection, in comparison with readings from one air-conditioned female cell, and data from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) Roebourne Airfield station for the same period. While the female cell remained within an acceptable temperature range, male cells became extremely hot during the day, and remained above 35 degrees in the hours before midnight every night. These readings are almost identical to those taken at Roebourne by researchers for our 2016 report on cell temperatures (OICS, 2016). The application of reflective paint has not made a measurable improvement in overnight heat retention.

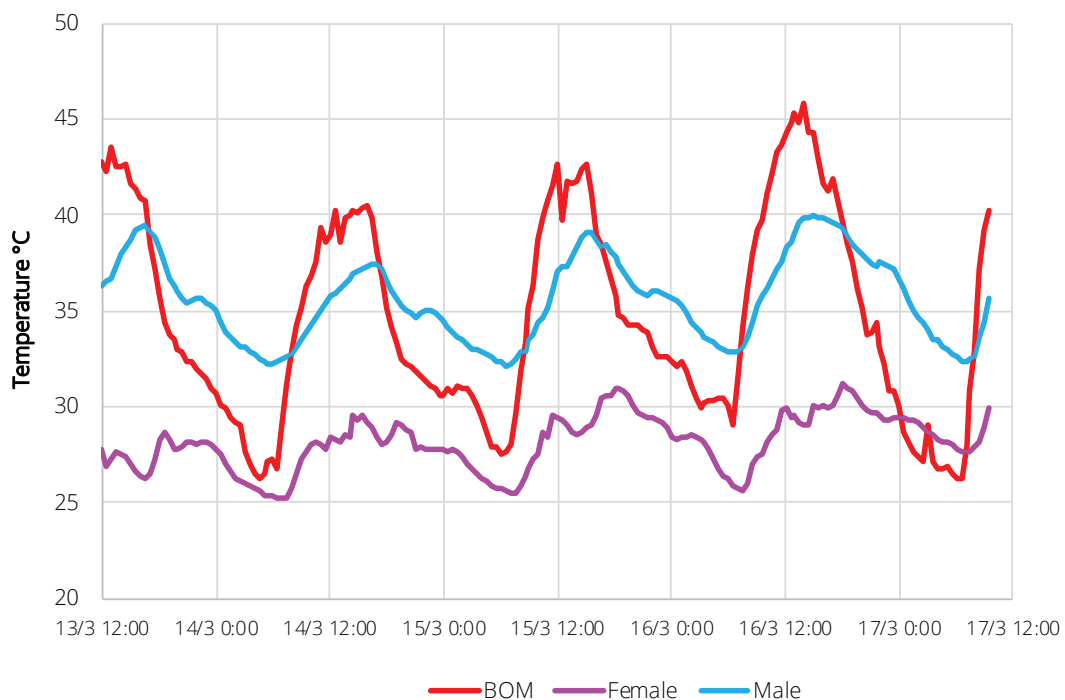


Figure 1: Cell temperatures vs BOM readings 13-17 March 2022

Other efforts at mitigation included ceiling fans in multi-cells, personal fans that can be purchased from the canteen, and bags of ice and cool water that prisoners could take to their cells. Ice machines were installed, but they were proving to be too small. Ice could be given to everyone in the morning or the late afternoon but not both. Bigger ice machines had been ordered and the installation was completed on the last day of the inspection which can provide ice twice per day. Prisoners were given two one-litre bottles to collect

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cool water as part of their kit when received at Roebourne. Water cooler bottles and small eskies for ice could be purchased from the canteen.

During the week of the inspection temperatures in Roebourne reached close to or above 40 degrees each day. Yet, two electric water coolers in unit day rooms were broken at that time and it took several weeks for them to be fixed.

Prisoners cannot easily change their situation or routines to mitigate heat whilst locked in cells from 6:30 pm until 7:30 am. Many men told us they were unable to fall asleep and when they did, they woke several times wet with perspiration. They said their mental health and ability to manage day to day tasks suffered because they were sleep deprived. Others woke up feeling unrested, unfit for work, and irritable. They described the experience as torturous and many called this feeling 'boiling brain'. This feedback came from regional men (e.g. Pilbara and Kimberley) and from men beyond these regions.



Photo 13: Ice machines

When surveyed, 91 per cent of prisoners agreed with the proposition that air-conditioning was necessary in every cell; only two per cent disagreed. Roebourne was built in 1984, a time when the Department contends that air-conditioning was not the community standard. But times have changed. Indigenous prisoners told us their homes on communities mostly had air-conditioning and they would use it on hot nights or sleep outside. When asked how they coped at home, one prisoner from the region replied to the question with a look of incredulity and said "we use the aircon".

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We also examined the risk to prisoner health in our 2016 report on thermal conditions in cells (OICS, 2016, p. 2). We found then, many prisoners at Roebourne were vulnerable to heat-related illness, including the elderly, those taking certain medications, those with certain chronic illnesses and those with mental health conditions. The prison says that anyone needing air-conditioning because of such a condition can sleep at night in an air-conditioned cell in the maximum-security yard.

But the maximum yard is generally reserved for newcomers, maximum-security prisoners awaiting transfer out and those with behavioural concerns. Shortly after the inspection it became the isolation yard for COVID positive prisoners. It also lacks any amenities beyond the ablutions, phone and an unfurnished day room. As such, no-one wants to go there. Medical staff agreed that some prisoners would be healthier in a climate-controlled environment, not least three men all regarded as having terminal conditions.

5.3 DAYTIME HEAT IMPACTS

There was also little relief from heat during daylight hours

Before the 2019 inspection, the underused air-conditioned dining room was converted into a recreation hall and library, intended to provide respite for prisoners during recreation sessions. For much of the period since then, access by prisoners was intermittent, due to staff shortages. Access daily was impossible for most and unlikely even on a weekly basis, including over the summer months when it was most needed. The only prisoners with reliable access were kitchen and laundry workers who could use the hall over lunch on their work days. As it turned out, the air-conditioner compressor had been broken for some weeks prior and was awaiting replacement parts at the time of the inspection.



Photo 14: Mistlers in Unit 2

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Apart from that, workers in the laundry had air-conditioning in their workplace and students in education and program participants also had time in air-conditioned spaces. A handful of cleaners worked briefly in air-conditioned office areas. But other industrial workers, unit workers and trainees were exposed to the heat of the day as were the large number of unemployed. In many other prisons, people are locked in cells over lunch. Due to the extreme heat, Roebourne does not lock prisoners in cells during the day, but unit grounds provided limited shelter.

Despite having the same built design, the two units were configured differently. Unit 1 is divided into two smaller yards with sky bars overhead and no shade sails. The prison tried to counter this by building patio roofs along both sides of the central dividing wall covering picnic tables. Large fans had recently been installed on the central wall and misting tubes placed along the outside beams.

Unit 2 is undivided and has a large lawn area with a few Casuarina trees. It is more open but provides little shade from heat and glare. Day rooms were better used. Some misters had been installed on parts of the verandas, and a few new shade sails had recently been added around the entry area where prisoners used the phones. Day rooms in the two units were fairly small, not fully enclosed and not air-conditioned. We have previously suggested they should be extended, fully enclosed and air-conditioned to provide a climate-controlled space to eat meals.

Showers gave little relief to prisoners as the cold-water tap delivered water at temperatures up to 39 degrees; in any case, showers are premixed with a set ratio of hot and cold water.

We should acknowledge here that women, and people in the maximum yard were better off in this regard. With air-conditioning they could comfortably spend time in their cells during the day. Women also had access to an air-conditioned furnished day room and to an air-conditioned activity donga, although access still depended on staff availability.

Recommendation 6

All residential and specials cells at Roebourne should have effective climate control.

At the end of the inspection, the Superintendent informed us that government had commissioned an engineering consultancy to do a feasibility study on retrofitting air-conditioning to prisoner accommodation. This appeared to be a very positive development, but the results have not yet been released at the time of writing.

Chapter 6

HEALTH AND SUPPORT

6.1 PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

Health services were doing a good job

We found a busy seven days a week health service operating at Roebourne. The team comprised four nurses and a Clinical Nurse Manager (CNM). During the week there were two nurses on duty, plus the CNM. On the weekends this dropped to one nurse. While shortages across the nursing staff did occur, we heard that staffing levels on the whole were better than they had been in the recent past and the service was coping.

There was some instability with the CNM position. The experienced long-term CNM had been on personal leave since mid-2021 and it was unclear when she would return. During the inspection, the Acting CNM was away on annual leave. There was a lack of clarity about when and how the position would be filled going forward. The nurses we spoke with were positive and enthusiastic. They were a supportive team. Similarly, the Senior Medical Receptionist (SMR) was proactive in the role, and the nurses described her as doing the work of two people. An effective General Practitioner (GP) service was provided by two medical officers who attended for two days each week on alternating weeks. This was complemented by telehealth.

The appointment system was working well and prisoners on average were only waiting a day between requesting an appointment and being seen at the medical centre. It was good to hear that prisoners were receiving annual health checks. The SMR had this as a reminder on her task list with an alert showing when a prisoner's annual assessment is due. Those over 35 years undergo an ECG as part of their annual assessment. And blood tests are ordered for older prisoners, or at the discretion of the GP.

Chronic disease management was also well managed. Those with a chronic disease portfolio were reviewed every three months with specific care plans developed depending on individual treatment needs and prognoses. Chronic disease portfolios were developed for prisoners identified as having cardiac problems, and those diagnosed as asthmatic and/or diabetic.

The only allied health service that attended the prison was an optometry service. Prisoners put their names down to see the optometrist and once the list grew to around 20, the optometrist would attend in person. Other services, like physiotherapy and podiatry, were out-sourced and prisoners had to attend these services as an external medical appointment.

The health centre was still not fit for purpose

There had not been any modifications or improvements to the health centre since our last inspection in 2019, and so health infrastructure at Roebourne remains a very challenging space for staff and the prisoners they treat. The health centre has only two consulting rooms, no internal waiting area, and no dedicated office space for the custodial officer assigned to providing security for the centre each day. Nor are there dedicated facilities for visiting allied health clinicians, especially for dental, or for mental health consultations. Access for those with mobility impairments was also problematic.

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Prisoners called to attend a medical appointment have to wait in an external caged area, exposed to the weather. At the time of the inspection, as concession to the extreme heat, prisoners were allowed to wait on stools in the narrow corridor. But consulting rooms were not soundproof, so this arrangement was a potential risk to privacy of medical consultations.



Photo 15: Waiting room cage

The officer assigned to the medical centre was based at a desk in a corner of the communal staff room. This was a space where nursing and other health staff took their meals, made coffee or tea, had meetings, or have some quiet time. This arrangement was less than ideal.

We have recommended changes to make the health centre fit for purpose going back to 2016 (OICS, 2016, p. 79 Recommendation 14). The Department supported this recommendation, and it was included in its infrastructure plan. But neither that, nor subsequent business cases to upgrade the health centre, progressed. Ideally, a new centre should also include decent provision for crisis care and medical observation.

Recommendation 7

The health centre should be refurbished and extended to make it fit for purpose; this should accommodate general health, telehealth, mental health, allied health, dental health, disability access, health education, officer station, internal waiting room, crisis care and medical observation.

HEALTH AND SUPPORT

Dental services were poor

In our pre-inspection prisoner survey, only 14 per cent of respondents said dental care was good. This was down from 32 per cent in 2019, which we thought was a poor result back then. The Western Australian prison system depends solely on the resources of the public dental service for care in prison (OICS, 2021a). The arrangement was that a dentist attend at Mawarnkarra Health Service in Roebourne for two weeks in every six, during which one appointment per day is offered to the prison, occasionally more. We were told this met demand for emergency dental work, such as pulling teeth or a simple filling. There is no access to preventative or restorative dental care. Daily escorts are a significant impost on the resources of Ventia, the custodial transport contractor, so the prison often had to undertake these escorts.

But there had been no dentist in attendance at Mawarnkarra since November 2021, some five months prior to our inspection. There was a similar long gap in service provision in November 2020. The impact of this was devastating for those prisoners in desperate need of urgent dental care. Nurses told us that they dispensed pain relief in the form of paracetamol and ibuprofen to some prisoners up to three times a day.

However, an interesting and positive development is that the native title trusts of a few prisoners have been able to fund private dental care for their members, and the prison has been willing to facilitate these escorts. This does not detract from the need for a properly resourced dental service, preferably one able to visit the prison on an ongoing basis.

Recommendation 8

Ensure regular access to dental services for prisoners at Roebourne, including for basic preventative and restorative care.

6.2 MENTAL HEALTH CARE AND SUPPORT

Mental health was serviced remotely, which was not ideal

At the time of the last inspection, mental health care at Roebourne was provided by Western Australian Country Health Services which facilitated continuity of service to prisoners entering and leaving custody.

Mental health services at Roebourne in 2022 were now only available through telehealth. A Mental Health Nurse from another regional prison provided a fortnightly telehealth clinic as did a Consultant Psychiatrist from a Perth prison. Input to the Prisoner Risk Assessment Group (PRAG) was provided by phone from the clinician, or through the prison's nursing staff. Health staff have found this service manageable, and it helps that the acting CNM has mental health nursing experience. But the lack of face to face contact between clinicians and patients would seem less than ideal, particularly in a prison with such a high proportion of Aboriginal prisoners.

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According to the December 2021 Psychiatric Priority Ratings, Roebourne had a total of 21 prisoners with known or suspected psychiatric conditions. These comprised 11.54 per cent of the population, one the highest among regional prisons. The lack of a local mental health position raises questions about the quality of mental health assessments given the cultural barriers, limited local knowledge available to telehealth clinicians about the patient, delays in access to treatment and loss of opportunity to provide group or individual therapy. Throughcare to and from local services is also more difficult.

Addictions, which is often linked with mental health issues, is another area that would benefit from interventions by locally based staff. Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs (MHAOD) in Perth run an effective group program on addictions known as 'PAST', but this or anything similar is not offered in Roebourne.

6.3 SUICIDE PREVENTION AND SUPPORT

Counselling is better covered and supported

Roebourne has a long-standing Psychological Health Service (PHS) counsellor who provides risk management assessment and counselling, and some additional counselling relating to grief, coping, sleep hygiene, depression and anxiety. She provides key input into the ARMS (At Risk Management System) and PRAG processes through which at-risk prisoners are identified and supported. It was a positive development that PHS staff from Roebourne, Greenough and West Kimberley/Broome now provide coverage for each other when one is on leave, and that remote assessments are usually done by video rather than by phone. These staff also do peer supervision with each other and each has a clinical supervisor to support their work.

Peer support lacked coordination in the absence of a PSO

Roebourne's Prison Support Officer (PSO) resigned around the time of our inspection after only a year in the position. During that time, a strong team of peer supporters had developed, who actively sought out new prisoners, assisted many with parole plans and other written materials, and had supportive interactions with others. However, the team had begun to drift, no longer having daily access to information about new prisoners, or weekly meetings for mutual support and coordination. Nor did they have access to a computer to help prisoners type up parole plans, letters to the prisoner review board or other correspondence.

The PSO is employed through MHAOD in Perth, who also have responsibility for the Aboriginal Visitor Service (AVS), and we understand that at the time of writing recruitment for that position had not commenced. Nor had anyone been recruited to work in the AVS role at Roebourne since the last inspection. We believe there is a need to put in place appropriate means of coordination and support for the peer support team in the absence of a PSO.

HEALTH AND SUPPORT

safeTALK training was provided to prisoners and staff

It was pleasing to hear that the Regional Suicide Prevention Coordinator from the Western Australian Country Health Service was involved with the prison, providing regular safeTALK training to prisoners, especially those involved in peer support, and staff as well. safeTALK is a half-day workshop that prepares anyone to become a suicide-alert helper. It is aimed at equipping people to help identify and avert suicide risks.

Prisons can never be complacent about the risk of suicide

In July 2020, a Pilbara Aboriginal man was reported as having taken his own life in the screened off bathroom area of a six-person cell at the prison. There has not yet been a coronial hearing about this case. But it does highlight the need for continued vigilance, to continue the search for best practice in suicide prevention, and to fully equip staff and prisoners to help identify and address any concerns. Several important elements are needed to support and positively engage people at risk of self-harm and suicide. These include mental health services, counselling, appropriately trained and guided peer supporters, suicide awareness training for prisoners and staff, Aboriginal Visitors, chaplaincy, family visits, rehabilitation programs, constructive activities, recreation and family contact.

Recommendation 9

As a matter of urgency, the Department should recruit and appoint a PSO and AVS staff for Roebourne Regional Prison.

Chapter 7

MANAGING BEHAVIOUR AND SECURITY

7.1 SECURITY PRACTICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Positive staff prisoner relations put security and safety on a good footing

We thought that staff and prisoners related well. We saw positive interactions such as an officer patiently explaining remand processes to a new prisoner, and staff watching to ensure a vulnerable prisoner got his evening meal and ice allocation. Prisoners found most staff to be approachable, one saying 'you can talk to officers at any time about anything'. Staff also acknowledged that prisoners at Roebourne were easy to relate to and expressed genuine concerns about aspects of the conditions they experienced and services they needed.

In our inspection survey, 62 per cent of prisoner respondents said they got on well with unit officers. This was a slight improvement on 58 per cent last inspection and ahead of the state average of 59 per cent. And 54 per cent of prisoner respondents thought that officers were approachable up from 47 per cent three years ago and well ahead of the state average of 39 per cent.

In matters of behaviour management and discipline, prisoner views were also favourable:

Table 12: Prisoner views on prison officers from pre-inspection surveys

Do you think officers at this prison:	2022		2019		State average	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Apply the rules fairly?	54%	41%	47%	48%	42%	48%
Are respectful during cell searches?	55%	37%	56%	37%	47%	44%
Use too much force?	26%	66%	33%	56%	35%	55%
Treat prisoners with dignity?	49%	40%	47%	42%	40%	47%

Staff we spoke to during the inspection said that use of force should be a last resort in resolving an incident. Use of force is a core focus in training which had received more attention since the new trainer came to Roebourne last year. Staff are trained to deescalate situations and use alternative means when possible, not only in correct use of force. In reality, use of force is rarely needed at Roebourne and only two incidents in 2021 required a formal review in accordance with COPP 11.3 *Use of force and restraints*.

Quality and amount of staff information to security has improved

The new Security Manager has strengthened the relationship between his team and other prison staff. He had reengaged staff in listening to recorded prisoner phone calls on night shift and encouraged them to submit intelligence in ways that worked for them. Staff were reportedly more security aware and were feeding in better intelligence. He fed back security reports to staff on a regular basis. We heard that good relations with prisoners was also invaluable in sourcing information.

MANAGING BEHAVIOUR AND SECURITY

Improved drug detection capabilities

Following our 2019 inspection we recommended that the Department improve drug detection capabilities at Roebourne. The Drug Detection Unit (DDU) were only able to send a team about twice a year, and regional police no longer had their dog team who also used to visit the prison. The Department supported the recommendation and sourced an Electronic Drug Trace Detection (ETD) unit. We saw this used in the gate house with social visitors and random checks on other people coming into the prison.

Exit security alarm system was ineffective

An alarm system had been partly installed at the front door of the gate house to stop security items such as keys, radios, and personal alarms leaving the prison. But it was rendered ineffective by interference from the door itself when opened and no other positioning would work. There were eight reports of security items leaving the prison in the 11 months leading up to the inspection. This is a serious risk. Procedural measures had been put in place to stop this, including having an officer questioning everyone leaving, checking their lanyards and operating the front two doors manually. But this is still not foolproof, and a different alarm system was being considered.

Additional new cameras will reduce risk for staff and prisoners

A tender had been accepted to install an additional 32 security cameras in blind spots in units, in the recreation quadrangle, reception and areas adjacent to industries. This extra monitoring and recording of incidents will increase deterrence and responsivity. It should also prove easier to identify perpetrators of incidents that may arise. However, these cameras were being installed by a different company to the existing cameras and there was concern expressed to us whether different contractors would have to be called to fix and maintain different parts of the camera system.

Searching exceeds requirements and is carried out in a respectful manner

Departmental data shows that staff at Roebourne carried out many searches on cells, grounds, various buildings, vehicles and prisoner property. In the 12 months to 28 February 2022, there were 13,945 searches logged in the TOMS database, which we were told more than met departmental requirements. Just 20 finds were recorded, 12 of which involved excess food or sugar in cells, three involving scissors, razors and an Allen key in cells, and one each of tattoo equipment, a drug, a drug use item, a displaced game machine, and an object in a perimeter fence.

As noted in our prisoner survey results (see Table 11), prisoners were broadly accepting of the way searches were done, telling us that officers conducted them quickly and replaced most of their items before finishing the search.

However, just four of these recorded searches were strip searches. Yet we know these are routine at least for those entering or returning to the facility and following a social visit, so there appears to be an issue in either the recording or reporting of these.

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Searches of the vehicles at the gate were done efficiently and the numbers of searches of staff/contractors/official visitors were more than the required figures set by the Standing Order 11.2. However, when things were busy in the gatehouse, we saw that the searching of staff could become cursory.

A new solution for remote hearings by a Visiting Justice

The 2019 inspection of Roebourne found the Visiting Justice (VJ) had not attended the prison for some years. Arrangements to have charges heard by a VJ attending at other prisons had proven unworkable. In part, this was because courts had priority in using the video-link facility. In 2022, we found that a much more flexible and workable solution was in place. An experienced VJ was willing to undertake remote hearings on a needs basis. Use of MS Teams had been approved so hearings could be conducted remotely back to Roebourne.

Dedicated time allocated to prosecutions

As the prosecutions position is not a full-time position in Roebourne and work is conducted alongside other duties, it was difficult for the prosecutor to find time to prepare charges. However, the Superintendent had allowed extra hours for this purpose, and with the new VJ arrangement, the backlog in charges had reduced. Prison charges are intended as a means of dealing with serious misbehaviour by prisoners, so it was positive that more could be dealt with and the backlog reduced.

7.2 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Roebourne is well prepared for emergencies

Last inspection, we found Roebourne's emergency preparedness was more than adequate. This was still the case. In 2021 Roebourne ran eight live exercises and five desktop exercises, exceeding departmental requirements. The live exercises involved outside agencies and included a perimeter breach, response to a Personal Duress Alarm indication, fire in the medical centre, fire in workshops (requiring use of breathing apparatus), a medical emergency, a COVID-19 contact tracing exercise and intake of a suspected COVID-19 positive prisoner.

The desktop exercises included: hostage, lock and key compromise, death in custody, major disturbance and attempted suicide. Non-custodial staff including medical staff were included in some of the exercises which was useful as they are often needed in live situations. Some areas of training, such as the use of the breathing apparatus, had fallen away and other areas, such as COVID-19 scenarios, had not been undertaken before. These areas became a focus for training arranged by the Satellite Trainer. Roebourne's Local Emergency Management Plan was updated in January 2022.

Generally, results from our staff surveys often show small numbers reporting they have received adequate training in emergency response to fire, natural disaster or a loss of control. But 48 per cent of Roebourne staff respondents said they were adequately trained in responding to fire and natural disaster and 36 per cent for a loss of control. Although these numbers are still relatively low, they are better than the state average, which were 38 per cent and 28 per cent respectively.

MANAGING BEHAVIOUR AND SECURITY

Prisoner transport arrangements were problematic

Ventia Services Group has the main contract for court security and custodial services in Western Australia including for prisoner transport. They have a transport team based at Roebourne to service the prison and court security staff based at South Hedland. Ventia are required to clear people coming into custody from courts and police lockups throughout the Pilbara, return prisoners to courts for hearings, and do other escorts such as medical appointments, funerals, and hospital sits.

Through a combination of logistical issues, short staffing and availability of vehicles, it was not always possible for Ventia to meet all of these transport needs. The prison is responsible for unscheduled medical escorts and hospital sits and occasionally helps with other escorts. This puts additional pressure on a facility which already struggles with staffing numbers for each shift.

Chapter 8

REHABILITATION AND REPARATION

8.1 ASSESSMENTS AND CASE MANAGEMENT

Assessment delays impacted prisoner access to programs and parole

The Management and Placement plan (MAP) is the first of many assessments for newly received prisoners. It should be completed within five days and there are different versions depending on whether the prisoner is on remand or sentenced. It includes an examination of offence information, outstanding court remands, sentence details (if sentenced), initial security classification, any welfare considerations and provides the recommended placement for that prisoner.

Sentenced prisoners with over six months to serve in custody must also have an Individual Management Plan (IMP) completed within 42 days of sentencing. At Roebourne, MAPs were mostly up to date, but initial IMPs were not. On 24 March 2022, the TOMS database reported there were 26 prisoners whose initial IMPs had not been completed. Ten of these were within the 42 days, but 16 were outstanding. Delays in initial IMPs are problematic as it reduces the time available to prisoners to undertake programs to address their offending behaviour in time for their parole application.

IMPs require inputs from treatment assessors, education assessors and assessment writers. Treatment assessments are quite complex requiring professional input and in some cases approvals by supervisors. This has often caused delays in completing initial IMPs, but Roebourne's treatment assessments were up to date at the time of the inspection. It was the education and other assessments processes that were causing delays. As discussed later, staffing in education had recently turned over with new staff still becoming familiar with all the role requirements.

The prison's day to day custodial staffing shortages were impacting the assessments unit. This area is run by the Case Management Coordinator (CMC) and is supposed to be assisted by two prison officers seconded as assessment writers. We found that both these officers were continually subject to redeployment; one rarely got to do the job at all. The other officer was meant to be quarantined from redeployment, but their focus was disrupted on most days by having to undertake other duties, such as filling other duty officer roles, performing escorts, doing searches, staffing visits and similar tasks.

This added to the workload of the CMC. It also reduced the development of skills, knowledge and job satisfaction for the writers. It created delays in initial IMPs and other assessments and risked negative outcomes for prisoners. None of this should be construed as criticism of assessments staff. We were impressed with the scope, volume and quality of assessment work undertaken.

We did not closely examine case management at Roebourne. Only sentenced prisoners with an IMP are eligible for case management. But as discussed in previous reports, for example (OICS, 2021, p. 48), we question the practical value of the case management system in Western Australian prisons as it is limited in scope and offers very little benefit.

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Recommendation 10

Quarantine at least one report writer position to fully engage in assessments.

8.2 OFFENDER PROGRAMS

Offender programs ran well but were not fit for purpose

Roebourne has two experienced Senior Programs Officers who offer three to four programs per year. In 2021, they ran two Pathways programs for men (100 program hours) and one Cognitive Brief Intervention (CBI) for women (20 hours), the latter being the first women's program run in Roebourne in some years. Anglicare is contracted to provide two Connect and Respect family violence programs (51 hours) per year but has had difficulty finding qualified facilitators and in 2021 only managed to complete one program. A facilitator flew from Perth each week to help run the course. The follow table refers only to programs completed in 2021.

Table 13: Prisoner outcomes for programs finishing in 2021 at Roebourne Prison

Course	Completed	Not Completed	Total
Cognitive Brief Intervention	7	2	9
Connect and Respect	9	1	10
Pathways Program	19	1	20
Total	35	4	39

Women consistently complain about the lack of programs available at Roebourne. But there were never more than two or three Pilbara women needing these programs, so they could not be run locally. Women told us they did not like having to choose between transfer away from country and family verses going away to do programs and improve their prospect of parole. Three women had refused a transfer for a program they needed. While it was positive that a brief intervention program was provided, it did not meet the needs of those sentenced women who needed a more intense program for addictions such as Pathways, or a general offending program such as Choices, Changes and Consequences.

Women told us they should be able to do programs remotely. For years this office has been prompting the Department to find innovative solutions to this dilemma, including use of video-conferencing technology, self-paced on-line learning, use of reading materials and very short-term transfers for intensive delivery blocks (e.g. one week) (OICS, 2019, p. 49; OICS, 2018).

The following table shows the program needs of Roebourne prisoners who had been assessed as requiring a program (as at 7 February 2022). Just over two thirds had either completed the program they needed or had been enrolled to undertake their program. Eight refused to do a program or be transferred to do a program. Just under a quarter had no opportunity to do the program they were assessed as needing. It was especially concerning to see prisoners with sexually-based or violence offences who were missing out on programs they needed.

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Table 14: Program needs status of Roebourne prisoners at 7 February 2022

Program category	Completed	Booked	Refusal	Unavailable	Total	Success
Addictions offending	21	16	3	11	51	72.5%
Cognitive skills	1	0	1	0	2	50.0%
General offending	2	0	3	1	6	33.3%
Individual psychological		1	0	0	1	100.0%
Sex offending	2	2	1	5	10	40.0%
Violent offending	12	14	0	8	34	76.5%
Total	38	33	8	25	104	68.3%

'Unmet treatment needs' was one of the reasons cited by the Prisoner Review Board for 35 prisoners in the Roebourne population who had been denied parole. In 23 cases this was because their sentence was too short or had been backdated leaving insufficient time to be assessed. Five prisoners had commenced but failed to complete a program and three had completed a program but were reported by facilitators as having made insufficient treatment gains. This was likely due to a mismatch between individual needs and learning styles and the programs provided and the places they are provided. For example, Pathways, the main addictions program, is steeped in the realities of urban USA from an earlier generation, requiring considerable adaptation for presenters at remote Roebourne. It also requires a higher level of literacy than many of its participants possess. None of this is news to the Department which received a draft comprehensive review of its criminogenic program delivery in 2019 (Tyler, 2019).

The CBI that was run as a one-off for women in 2021 is a suitable intervention for short-term prisoners and remandees and we believe it should be consistently available to men and women together at Roebourne and elsewhere in the prison system.

Roebourne has over the years offered some valuable voluntary programs, including, for example, short programs on addictions and family violence run by Pilbara Community Services Limited (PCSL), the re-entry provider.

It was also good to hear that Mission Australia was now offering some mental health and Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) workshops. And for the first time in several years, one-to-one counselling for addictions was being provided to prisoners by Yaandina Community Services. Pilbara Community Legal Service had also just commenced financial planning workshops and counselling for individuals needing to put their financial affairs in order.

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Recommendation 11

- 1) Identify or develop more culturally responsive addictions, family violence and general offending programs for delivery in the Pilbara.
- 2) Develop a delivery methodology to address the program needs of Pilbara women without requiring time out of country.
- 3) Provide Cognitive Brief Intervention or a similar intervention for male and female remandees and short-term sentenced prisoners at Roebourne on a regular basis.

8.3 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

A new education team were finding their feet

Roebourne has a small team devoted to prisoner education and training, comprising:

- an Education Campus Manager
- two Prisoner Education Coordinators (PECs)
- a casual tutor
- an Aboriginal Education Worker (AEW)
- an Education Clerk.

There has been a significant level of instability in the education team over recent years. Only the part-time casual tutor had worked consistently at Roebourne for an extended period. She provided art programs and helped with access programs such as New Opportunities for Women.

The substantive Campus Manager has been on extended leave with the position filled for the past few years by two acting PECs. The acting Campus Manager came to act in the role in early 2022 from Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison where she was a PEC. She transferred into the vacant PEC position at Roebourne when it became available.

An educator with strengths in adult basic education started as one of the two PECs in early 2021, but the other PEC left in mid-2021, resigning some months later. The second PEC position had been allocated to Roebourne to support the work camp, but that role was left uncovered. The Education Clerk was also very new but had already been active in renewing IT equipment for the centre and taking on room coordination.

This office has long encouraged involvement in education by Indigenous staff to better engage Aboriginal prisoners in education and training. Roebourne has had an AEW position for some years but never managed to retain an AEW for more than a few months at a time. Attention will be needed to both the selection and retention of a suitable person for this role.

The following enrolment and completion numbers were reported for the education centre from 2021. Education staff taught most of the adult basic education units, which includes an introductory workplace health and safety unit for all new prisoners. TAFE lecturers

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provided most of the vocational units through student contact hours allocated to the prison. A private training provider taught the 24 hospitality traineeship units completed by just two prisoners. A large proportion of the vocational units were short courses undertaken by prisoners in the work camp who had many more training opportunities.

Table 15: Education and training participation at Roebourne in 2021

Delivery area	Total unit enrolments	Distinct students	Units current enrolment	Units completed
Adult basic education	613	192	39	462
Vocational education	513	290	7	459
Traineeship units	27	5	0	24

The other three traineeship units, which were not completed, were in construction. We were told that traineeships require 30 hours per week work experience which is only possible within the main prison in the kitchen given the prison's structured day. Traineeships should be a greater focus in the work camp where longer hours can also be sustained.

Adult Basic Education and training lacked consistency

Ideally, prisoners assessed as 'educationally at-risk' need a sustained basic education program over at least six to 12 months, involving a range of learning areas and delivery modes to make real progress in their literacy and numeracy. But Roebourne has never managed to sustain that kind of education program due to a combination of remand and sentencing factors, and inconsistent programming and staffing.

The education centre can accommodate up to 20 students and there were short periods in 2021 when between 10 and 17 prisoners were listed as being employed in full-time education. But most were doing short courses and student engagement in either general education or vocational education was not prolonged.

Prison officer staffing absences have also significantly impacted on student access to classes over time, although programs facilitated by external lecturers have been the least disrupted. Northern Regional TAFE has been an excellent partner for the prison over the years, but they have also had their own staffing challenges and COVID-19 policies that affected delivery at certain times.

It has been some years since women could study alongside men in most basic education classes. Women instead have occasionally been offered access to programs such as New Opportunities for Women, or art classes which include elements of basic education. A few women were able to join certain vocational short courses as well.

We found a significant degree of frustration about education and training among prisoners, along with appreciation by those who had benefited. As one said:

It is hard to get onto courses/work as there is not enough work [and] educational services are spare so basically 80 per cent of the prisoners are locked in the blocks all day.

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Others said they needed more access to education and training to better their chances of employment on release. One wanted to finish high school and another remarked that 'options for university for prisoners with long sentences could help with recidivism'. There were no direct questions in our survey of prisoners about education and training, but we did ask if they thought their time was spent doing useful activities in this prison. In 2019, 52 per cent said yes, but in 2022 only 39 per cent agreed.

We believe there is scope within existing resources to develop more consistent offerings and engage more prisoners in basic education and elements of work-relevant training. There also needs to be options available for self-paced learning by those wanting to pursue their own secondary or tertiary level studies.



Photo 16: Abundant public art

A new radio studio was one element in exciting new possibilities

Positively, we found the new education team thinking creatively about opportunities to engage more prisoners in education and training. The team surveyed prisoners in late 2021. Barista training, which runs in most prisons, and hairdressing were two ideas being considered. Ideas identified by staff were community services, conservation, and land management. We also believe that Aboriginal history and languages would be a rich area for studies at Roebourne. Traffic management and fitness studies would also be highly relevant.

Ngarda Media have received funding to create a mini radio and music recording studio at Roebourne which will provide an excellent basis to couple music and arts industry skilling with basic education. Community arts agency Big hART continues to engage with prisoners in music and related arts which will add value to the project.

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It will be difficult for the team to fully progress without filling the second PEC. That position is needed to coordinate and promote prisoner involvement in training in both the main prison and the work camp. Many prisoners wanting industrial tickets or to complete skillsets towards other training qualifications, lack necessary literacy or numerical competencies. Remedial classes are required in the work camp and the prison to address this need.

As discussed below, there are many opportunities for prisoners to step into work or work-ready programs post-release, or even pre-release as part of the Prisoner Employment Program (PEP). Filling the second PEC position will be critical in maximising these opportunities. A committed and confident AEW can also make an enormous contribution to Aboriginal participation in all aspects of learning and skilling.

Recommendation 12

Recruit and appoint to all of the positions in the education and training team at Roebourne so that prisoners can reliably access core programs and other suitable courses.

8.4 PREPARATION FOR RELEASE

Transition Management was a stand-alone role, at least for now

A Transition Manager (TM) was employed on a 30-hour per week casual contract. This achieved separation from the Employment Coordinator role which was working well, but the arrangement was temporary. A new permanent position is very much needed.

The TM aims to see all new remandees and sentenced prisoners to inform them about transition services and voluntary programs. Eligible sentenced prisoners are referred to PCSL, the Department's contracted re-entry provider in the Pilbara. They offer case management services to prepare for release and up to 12 months support in the community post-release. The TM also helps remandees and others not involved with PCSL, with: obtaining birth certificates and other identification documents; fine conversions; Centrelink applications; Medicare cards; and banking arrangements before release. The TM also refers anyone needing assistance with transport home on release to PCSL who operate the Transport Options Program.

Prisoner engagement with re-entry services was limited

Roebourne has long benefited from having re-entry staff embedded in the prison. But like many Pilbara-based services, PCSL have struggled to attract and retain staff. In-prison positions had been vacant for over 12 months. Their Wickham-based manager has often had to spend extended periods in the prison dealing with referrals and running workshops and programs as was the case at the time of the inspection. The agency hosts parole workshops, and runs brief alcohol and other drug education courses, alternating with a family violence program. The men's version of the latter program called Strong Men Strong Families ran more often. PCSL also ran some well-received yarning sessions with

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women about family violence the week before the inspection as part of the International Women’s Day celebration.

In talking to people who had experienced re-entry support in the community, there was praise for the efforts of PSCL workers. But we also spoke to a number of prisoners in their last days or weeks before release, and none of them said they were involved with the re-entry service. Some may indeed be involved without yet fully understanding or this could be a result of reduced services due to staffing issues mentioned above. According to information supplied by PCSL in the table below, the number of prisoners referred to the agency and taken up as clients had declined in the last half of 2021.

Table 16: Referrals and clients – Pilbara Community Services Ltd. – Jul 2020 to Dec 2021

Period	Referred for pre-release services	Pre-existing / other clients	Total pre-release clients	Became post-release clients
Jul – Dec 2020	57	174	231	57
Jan – Jun 2021	69	87	156	69
Jul – Dec 2021	34	43	77	34

Some great new throughcare supports were available

KJ Rangers have strengthened their involvement with Martu prisoners at Roebourne, offering their leadership program over two days every month addressing family links, culture, right thinking, relationships, drinking and making good plans. In 2021, their *Yiwarra Kuju* program received a new funding grant. For people on probation or prisoners on parole, this entails compulsory residence in a ‘dry’ Martu desert community, employment in the Martu Ranger program and participation in leadership and alcohol-awareness sessions.

Other Aboriginal language group agencies, notably the various native title trusts, were increasingly being relied upon for support by prisoners in their transition back to the community. Some pay out accumulated royalties, provide grants for studies or training, assistance setting up a home, and assistance in obtaining employment.

As mentioned above, we were pleased to see Yaandina Community Services providing throughcare addictions counselling which can continue post-release. It also runs the Turner River Rehabilitation Centre which has accepted some released prisoners. This was proving especially helpful in strengthening the case for parole for prisoners with short sentences or otherwise unable to access Pathways, the official offender program.

Red Dirt Driving Academy have long provided theory training and testing to Roebourne prisoners so they can obtain a learner’s permit on release. In 2021, it started providing driving lessons to a few work camp prisoners which can continue after release. The sheriff provides workshops and helps address outstanding fines.

Roebourne was also selected to take part in the Parole-Inreach-Program (PiP). This involves partnering with a community agency to provide a group transition program focused on

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addictions before release, and also providing support afterwards. While this has a run successfully at Wooroloo, a suitable Pilbara-based partner agency could not yet be identified.

Action was needed to utilise excellent employment and training opportunities

The Superintendent, the former Employment Coordinator (EC) and other senior managers have developed some good links with agencies and companies who are keen to engage prisoners close to release, or those already released, in employment or work-readiness training.

One of these is the *Walking Together* program coordinated by the Ngarluma Yindjibarndi Foundation Ltd (NYFL). This involves a number of other local agencies and companies who have received funding to employ prisoners pre- and post-release in a selection of work experience and training placements.

Work camp prisoners were formerly involved in the transformation of the iconic Victoria Hotel in Roebourne to the Ganalili Centre undertaken by the Yurra Construction company in partnership with the Geraldton Building and Services Company. An additional phase of the program was planned to start mid-2022 which will include construction of social housing, potentially including units reserved for released prisoners who remain in employment. Work camp prisoners are eligible to join this project as trainees or paid employees as part of PEP.

Other companies have already accepted or are happy to accept additional released prisoners into their work ready programs. Woodside organised a special question and answer session in Roebourne for selected work camp prisoners with some of their Aboriginal staff which was well received.

As these links developed, the hopes of work camp prisoners were raised, and they were led to believe their PEP applications to undertake paid work in specific local businesses would be considered. But it had recently come to light that these applications had not been progressed. This is a missed opportunity that we urge Roebourne and the Department to address. A new EC had only just started in the role, but we hope he will be provided with effective support and direction to help the prison and individual prisoners make the most of these opportunities.

8.5 THE TOWN WORK CAMP

The work camp made great contributions to the community

The Town Work Camp is located outside the prison fence and offers contemporary donga-style accommodation, a good range of activities and resources for prisoners, and excellent workshops, tools and vehicles for work offsite. Surrounded only by a high fence, it accommodates minimum-security prisoners, many of whom are trusted to work in the community.

The COVID-19 pandemic shut down section 95 work in the community for a year or so from early 2020 and again in early 2022 in anticipation of a resurgence when the Western Australian border opened. Even during these times, work camp prisoners produced

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furniture and other materials for the prison and community groups, including picnic tables for units in the prison, and an impressive boardroom table for the new Ganalili Centre.

The biggest community project since the last inspection was work at the Nor West Jockey Club and the Roebourne Race Course. Work camp prisoners helped repair the course perimeter and built stools and tables and ornamental gates. Officials say the work camp was decisive in preparing for the 2021 race round and showed their appreciation by naming one of the races on 24 July 2021 the Roebourne Work Camp Handicap.

At the time of the inspection, the work camp was gearing up to create a new community garden in Wickham for the use and enjoyment of the whole community. It was being planned and overseen by a committee from the community. The work camp was planning to install and plant 80 self-wicking garden beds using modified intermediate bulk containers.



Photo 17: Day-bed for Juluwarlu

The work camp has a key role in preparing prisoners for release

The work camp is generally able to operate independently from the main prison, although the skills officer was often asked to work in the prison kitchen, and Senior Officers had occasionally been asked to assist when staffing was especially stretched. The camp's own staffing was stable other than the tragic loss of a popular staff member at the beginning of the year.

The camp accommodates people preparing for release who are able to access the standard re-entry supports. Two prisoners were attending an offender program inside the prison. One man was progressing his pre-release program, and a prisoner being

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managed under the *Criminal Law (Mentally Impaired Accused) Act 1996* was brought out to the work camp on a daily basis. As mentioned above, the loss of the dedicated PEC had reduced work camp access to basic education. And training opportunities through TAFE had also slipped because of the latest COVID-19 mandates. Prisoners could not attend courses at TAFE such as the small machinery course as they did before. And prisoners were very disappointed that opportunities to undertake paid employment through PEP had not been realised.

The work camp was underutilised

We reported that at the time of our 2019 inspection that ‘the work camp had consistently held over 20 prisoners since mid-2018, and had often been full [25], as it was at the time of the inspection’ (OICS, 2019, p. 54). Unfortunately for much of 2021 and early 2022, numbers were consistently under 20 prisoners. There were only 15 at the time of the inspection, although three others had been approved to go there, but were held up by a technical fault on the TOMS system.

This underutilisation is a missed opportunity given there were 24 other minimum-security prisoners at Roebourne and many more elsewhere. We are not sure to what extent work camp numbers had slipped due to unfavourable assessments, security considerations, COVID-19 restrictions or the general drop in prison populations. But Roebourne should do all it can to maximise the use of a facility which was originally built with a capacity to accommodate 30 people.



Photo 18: Park-like work camp

Chapter 9

FEMALE PRISONERS

9.1 THE WOMEN'S PRECINCT

Rather cramped, but the women's precinct has some good features

Women at Roebourne were accommodated in a small triangular enclosed yard known as Wing 4 which has eight cells and 12 beds. The yard had good shade and Aboriginal art painted on walls with some pot plants. Cells were air-conditioned as was the day room which had a well-equipped kitchen with tables and chairs.

This yard adjoins a wedged-shaped outdoor area between Wings 4 and 5 which contains an activity donga, a small garden bed, lawn, BBQ and access to an ensuite cell in Wing 5 configured as a mother/baby cell. This adds two beds to the capacity of the women's precinct.



Photo 19: Women's yard

9.2 STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES

Women were better paid, but had fewer opportunities

The prison employed all women as Female Unit Workers on Level 3, unlike many of the men who remain unemployed on Level 5 or worked at Level 4. Most were given in-unit cleaning or gardening roles but two were working in Level 1 cleaning jobs in administration and one was a Level 1 peer supporter. All were also encouraged to participate in staffing the kitchen on Friday afternoons and Sunday mornings. Until recently there was a position looking after the prison library, but that was lost in the recent reform of gratuity levels.

While women received higher gratuities than men and all had some work to do, they were disadvantaged as they could not access industrial activities in other parts of the prison,

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such as in maintenance, grounds, laundry, workshops or recreation. Their time spent in the kitchen was limited, and they were not exposed to the range of responsibilities there that could sustain meaningful work experience or training.

Nor could women become full-time students or join any ongoing program of education or training. We heard they had attended an education open day in late January 2022 about courses they could enrol in. These included healthy eating on a budget, maths, basic computer skills, warehousing and hairdressing. The women were initially buoyed by these opportunities but by mid-March had heard nothing further. Although a Cognitive Brief Intervention course was offered in 2021, women would have to transfer out for the more substantial offending programs they needed, taking them away from family and culture in the Pilbara.

Women lacked access to anything similar to the work camp where men enjoyed better conditions, better work and training opportunities, including working in the community, and recreation activities away from the camp. At times, women have done some section 95 work in the community, but this has been rare in recent years.

More positively, women have been provided opportunities to participate in art and other special programs. For example, in the week before the inspection, the prison arranged three activities to celebrate International Women's Day:

- A morning tea following which a Pilbara Community Services representative initiated some sharing discussions about family violence.
- A 'dress for success' style fashion walk using op-shop clothes to assist women to plan and prepare for job interviews.
- An afternoon tea with inspiring talks from three local female business leaders.

9.3 CUSTODIAL MANAGEMENT AND ACCESS TO SERVICES

Neglect too often defined the women's experience in Roebourne

While the women's precinct has some good resources, their access was inconsistent. There was a gate in the back corner of the residential yard which was often left locked by staff. At those times women could not use their gym equipment, their lawn, garden or activity donga. Considerable periods were spent by women confined in their residential yard. Only a few women came and went from their precinct on a day to day basis. Use of the recreation quadrangle or recreation hall was scheduled only twice a week and, on the weekend, not seven days per week like the men, and this was often cancelled due to staff shortages. Nor had there been there any regular access to the oval for walking or other sports. In addition, lack of staffing had sometimes prevented women from attending the kitchen when scheduled or attending classes in education.

A few years ago, the prison was funded to have a Wing 4 officer as part of the Unit 2 staffing. In theory, this meant a dedicated officer to meet the needs of women. In practice, if the prison runs understaffed, that officer is unable to act as wing officer for women, and cannot assist with movements outside the unit, facilitate recreation, address individual

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welfare needs and unlock the rear gate. As such, especially when there was no Women's Support Officer (WSO) available, the experience of women in the unit was characterised by neglect, activity restriction and confinement.

When available, the WSO works with the women to plan activities and programs that interest them and helps address their individual needs. She opens the donga for craft or other activities, helps facilitate access to recreation outside the yard, offers cooking in the day room, and helps arrange special activities, work or training opportunities with the other staff or outside agencies.



Photo 20: Women in kitchen

The substantive WSO had been on long term leave and her position had only been filled for a short time since she left; for much of 2021 there was no one in the role. She formally resigned from the position in the month following the inspection. An Aboriginal prison officer was seconded into the role shortly before the inspection commenced and at that time was still familiarising herself with the role's requirements. Unfortunately, she too resigned shortly after the inspection and the WSO position was once again vacant. The WSO is an essential role for the women and should not be left unfilled. However, if this is the case, the prison must ensure that the Wing 4 officer is available to provide a more consistent and supportive service to the women.

9.4 THE FUTURE OF THE WOMEN'S PRECINCT AT ROEBOURNE

Change is needed for Pilbara women in custody

The discussions above prompt the question of what the future holds for the women's precinct at Roebourne. A number of staff we spoke to during the inspection expressed concern that women at Roebourne were neglected. Some suggested the work camp be used as an alternative means of accommodation. Others suggested that Greenough Regional Prison (Greenough) could be a possibility as it was due to reopen a fully developed 80 bed women's precinct in which health, support and program needs for women could be more effectively met. There was also mention of the Department's consideration of the new Broome Regional Prison being the 'hub' for the Kimberley and Pilbara regions and the base for services such as program delivery.

We believe it would be a mistake to simply displace incarcerated women from the Pilbara to another region. The Pilbara is a vast and diverse region with several Aboriginal cultures and language groups that are distinct from those represented in other regions. One of the most important considerations is the distress we saw shown by women at the idea of being sent away from children, family and culture in the Pilbara. Many we spoke to preferred to remain in Roebourne even if it meant they spent longer time in custody.

A full-service facility in the Pilbara would better meet the needs of the region's women including some of those already displaced to Perth or other regions. This could potentially be a new unit within the perimeter fence of the prison, or it could be a standalone facility on adjacent land at Roebourne or another suitable site.

In the meantime, the Department should consider how best to meet the needs of women at Roebourne. Provision should include work experience, education, training, health, recreation, personal development, offender programs, release preparation, family contact, counselling and support needs. Consideration should also be given to whether additional dedicated positions should be established for some of these purposes. Ideally there should be dedicated Senior Officer to oversee the women's precinct and champion the needs of female prisoners.

Recommendation 13

Plan for a more suitable facility for incarcerated women in the Pilbara.

Recommendation 14

Review staffing to provide for more consistent, effective and comprehensive provision of services to and custodial management of women at Roebourne.

Appendix 1

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Appendix 2

ABBREVIATIONS

AEW	Aboriginal Education Worker
AOD	Alcohol and Other Drugs
ARMS	At Risk Monitoring System
ASOS	Assistant Superintendent Offender Services
AVS	Aboriginal Visitors Service
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CBI	Cognitive Brief Intervention
CMC	Case Management Coordinator
CNM	Clinical Nurse Manager
COPP	Commissioner's Operating Policies and Procedures
DoJ	Department of Justice
DDU	Drug Detection Unit
EC	Education Coordinator
ECG	Electro Cardio-Gram
EVTU	Education and Vocational Training Unit
IMP	Initial Management Plan
KJ	Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa Rangers
MAP	Management and Placement Plan
MHAOD	Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs
NYFL	Ngarluma Yindjibarndi Foundation Ltd
OICS	Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services
PCSL	Pilbara Community Services Ltd
PEC	Prisoner Education Coordinator
PHS	Psychological Health Services
PiP	Prison Inreach Program
PRAG	Prisoner Risk Assessment Group
PSO	Prison Support Officer
SMR	Senior Medical Receptionist
SMT	Senior Management Team
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TM	Transition Manager
TOMS	Total Offender Management Solution
VJ	Visiting Justice
VSO	Vocational Support Officer
WSO	Women's Support Officer

Appendix 3

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE RESPONSE



Response to OICS Draft Report:

2022 Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison

October 2022

Version 1.3

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE RESPONSE

Response to OICS Draft Report:
2022 Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison

Response Overview

Introduction

On 3 November 2021, the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS) announced the commencement of the 2022 Inspection of Roebourne Regional Prison (Roebourne).

As per the standard process, the Department of Justice (the Department) facilitated the provision of a wide range of documentation, including policies and procedures, as well as access to systems, facilities, staff, prisoners and contractors upon OICS' request for the purpose of the inspection.

On 6 September 2022, the Department received the draft inspection report from OICS for review and comment. The draft report has highlighted key findings and made 14 recommendations. The Department has reviewed the draft report and provides further context, comments, and responses to the recommendations as below.

Appendix A contains comments linked to sections in the report for the Inspector's attention and consideration when finalising the report.

Review Comments

Roebourne manages a culturally diverse prisoner population of both male and female sentenced and remand prisoners with varying security classifications. It is situated in the Pilbara region that is dominated by the resources sector and faces the most significant recruitment challenges.

As evidenced by the OICS inspection, the location of the prison continues to impact Roebourne's ability to recruit and retain staff, resulting in staffing shortages. Infrastructure and maintenance projects are also impacted due to the inability to source qualified tradespersons from within the Pilbara region.

Despite the recruitment and resourcing challenges, Roebourne continues to make improvements in many aspects of its operations through good governance and strong leadership.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has become more stable through the permanent appointment of several key positions since the inspection took place. The establishment of the Assistant Superintendent Offender Services (ASOS) in December 2021 and its subsequent permanent appointment has expanded Roebourne's ability to deliver services to prisoners. The Security Manager position has also been filled permanently since the inspection, and the Superintendent position is anticipated to be filled permanently following the completion of a Superintendent pool recruitment process that is currently underway.

Although there are positive outcomes in relation to the SLT appointments, recruitment across Roebourne is not without its challenges. The issue of staff shortages in the regions has been highlighted by OICS in several of their inspection reports and unfortunately is an enduring challenge that is commonplace in regional WA. It should be noted that recruiting to the regions is an issue faced by both the public and private sector.

Barriers to successfully recruiting staff to regional areas are often beyond the Department's control. These include shortages of Government Regional Officer Housing (GROH), and limitations in the provision of additional incentives for regional based employment under available public sector employment provisions and

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conditions. The recruitment of staff to regional facilities remains a priority for the Department and the Department continues to work with its Human Resources and Public Affairs Branches to develop creative and attractive recruitment campaigns in attempt to address this issue.

The OICS Inspection Report notes that staff indicated increased concerns about poor or inappropriate behavior between staff members including verbal abuse, physical abuse and racist remarks. The Department has clear policies and procedures including the Code of Conduct which outlines the behavioral expectations of all Department employees. Behaviours such as bullying, unlawful discrimination or harassment in any form based on grounds such as national origin, race, culture, appearance, language, gender, sexual orientation, age, place of residence, belief, religion, political affiliation, social, economic or health status, family responsibilities or marital status are not tolerated and should be reported to the Department's People Culture and Standards Division for assessment of the conduct and disciplinary action as required.

The Code of Conduct and the expectations of the Director General are reinforced to staff through mandatory Accountable and Ethical Decision-Making online training and mandatory face-to-face training sessions conducted by the Department's Management Engagement and Intervention Team. These sessions are delivered at all Corrective Services worksites including Roebourne.

The Department acknowledges climate control in the mainstream accommodation in Roebourne has been a recurring issue raised by OICS. Roebourne continues to monitor the situation and has progressively implemented improved heat mitigation strategies, including the prisoners' access to the air-conditioned units and facilities as required.

Previous attempts to secure funding to implement the infrastructure required to facilitate air-conditioning at Roebourne have not been successful, however, the feasibility of providing air-conditioning at Roebourne continues to be under consideration.

Roebourne has a large percentage of remand prisoners who opt to remain at the facility as a way of maintaining family and cultural connections. The Department acknowledges services to remand prisoners are limited due to the uncertainty surrounding their length of imprisonment. Prisoners however have access to basic education and other voluntary programs as applicable. All prisoners, both sentenced and remand, are offered employment and commence at the same remuneration level with the opportunity to progress to high levels of gratuity based on their performance and work ethic.

In relation to work camp placements for remand prisoners, the Department's priority is community safety and prisoners must have a minimum-security rating to be eligible for placement at a work camp. Remand prisoners are rated as maximum-security until sentenced. Following sentencing their security rating may be reduced to minimum which then makes them eligible for assessment against the eligibility criteria for work camp placement.

It is pleasing to note OICS' acknowledgement of the successful management of COVID-19 at Roebourne, including the high degree of training staff were provided through preparedness exercises, to ensure COVID positive prisoners and those suspected of being positive to COVID-19 were managed in a safe and risk averse manner.

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OICS is also complementary of the Roebourne Work Camp that has successfully been providing prisoners with enhanced opportunities to improve their rehabilitation prospects by participating in programs and skills that help the Roebourne community through conservation, maintenance and construction projects.

The Department has supported most of the recommendations made by OICS, noting that some are supported in principle as there may be practical impediments to their implementation, e.g., may require research, additional resources (human, financial and physical), and cooperation from external stakeholder/s. Nevertheless, the Department will continue to look at ways to improve services and outcomes for staff and all prisoners at Roebourne.

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Response to Recommendations

1 The Department should develop a more effective system to support prisoner access to basic legal knowledge and information.

Level of Acceptance: Supported
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

Roebourne will develop local processes for all prisoners to enable access to legal knowledge and information. This will include support to prisoners requiring assistance in the use of technology to access the information as required.

2 Roebourne should trial the use of Aboriginal interpreters for key interactions with prisoners from a particular language group.

Level of Acceptance: Supported in Principle
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

The Department supports and encourages the use of interpreting services for non-English speaking prisoners and will explore a potential arrangement with Aboriginal Interpreting WA (AIWA) for the provision of interpreting services at prison facilities.

3 Restore in-situ lunch breaks to maximise participation for those prisoners engaged in constructive activities.

Level of Acceptance: Not Supported
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

Implementation of in-situ lunch breaks is not feasible at the present time due to the current recruitment and resourcing challenges at Roebourne. The Department does however support greater access to constructive activities and Roebourne will explore other means of enabling this to occur.

4 Extend and promote access to e-visits at Roebourne.

Level of Acceptance: Supported in Principle
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

Connecting prisoners with their families remains a priority for the Department. Roebourne will engage with the Department's infrastructure and technology branches to assess the feasibility of installing additional e-visit terminals at the facility and promote the use of e-visit through the provision of assistance and support as required.

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5 Roebourne and the chaplaincy service should ensure regular religious services and effective processes for pastoral care.

Level of Acceptance: Supported – Current Practice / Project
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

The Chaplaincy Service has re-commenced in full at Roebourne following the removal of COVID-19 related restrictions. All prisoners are informed of the availability of the service and encouraged to attend.

6 All residential and special cells at Roebourne should have effective climate control.

Level of Acceptance: Supported in Principle
Responsible Division: Corporate Services
Responsible Directorate: Procurement, Infrastructure and Contracts

Response:

The Department continues to improve its heat mitigation strategies and to assess the feasibility of installing climate control systems at Roebourne.

Previous attempts to secure funding to implement the infrastructure required to facilitate air-conditioning at Roebourne have not been successful, however, the feasibility of providing air-conditioning at Roebourne continues to be under consideration.

7 The health centre should be refurbished and extended to make it fit for purpose; this should accommodate general health, telehealth, mental health, allied health, dental health, disability access, health education, officer station, internal waiting room, crisis care and medical observation.

Level of Acceptance: Not Supported
Responsible Division: Corporate Services
Responsible Directorate: Procurement, Infrastructure and Contracts

Response:

The recommendation involves major reconstruction of Roebourne's health centre which will require a substantial redesign in consultation with the Department of Health and major capital works requiring significant government funding. Due to the pressing demands on the Department's resources and other significant funding priorities, there are currently no plans to construct a new health centre at Roebourne.

The Department's Long Term Infrastructure Plan is reviewed each year and critical infrastructure works are determined and prioritised as part of the plan.

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8 Ensure regular access to dental services for prisoners at Roebourne, including for basic preventative and restorative care.

Level of Acceptance: Noted
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Offender Services

Response:

Dental care to prisoners is provided by the Department of Health's Dental Health Services (DHS) and is in line with community standards. The current average wait time for public dental care is approximately 12 months. The Department continues to liaise with DHS to increase and improve dental care services to the prison population.

9 As a matter of urgency, the Department should recruit and appoint a PSO and AVS staff for Roebourne Regional Prison.

Level of Acceptance: Supported in Principle
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Offender Services

Response:

A recent recruitment process for the Prison Support Officer (PSO) at Roebourne failed to attract interest in the role. The Department will continue to undertake recurrent recruitment for vacant PSO positions across the state.

In the absence of a PSO at Roebourne, The Department's Prison Support Services (PSS) team continue to work closely with Roebourne's senior management team to provide ongoing support and management of the Peer Support Program. Remote services are delivered by a Senior Prison Support Officer via Teams where PSO referrals can be actioned.

As with the PSOs, recurrent recruitment processes to fill vacant Aboriginal Visitor positions across the custodial estate are ongoing. Previous attempts to recruit to the Aboriginal Visitor position at Roebourne failed to attract interest in the role. Support continues to be made available to prisoners via the PSS.

10 Quarantine at least one report writer position to fully engage in assessments.

Level of Acceptance: Not Supported
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

The Department does not support the quarantining of prison officers solely for the purpose of conducting assessments. Prison officer duties are prioritised based on the individual and unique operational needs of each facility to ensure the safety and security of prisoners and staff.

The Department is however continuing its efforts to improve the assessment process, including the resourcing required to meet the demand.

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11 1) Identify or develop more culturally responsive addictions, family violence and general offending programs for delivery in the Pilbara.

2) Develop a delivery methodology to address the program needs of Pilbara women without requiring time out of country.

3) Provide Cognitive Brief Intervention or a similar intervention for male and female remandees and short-term sentenced prisoners at Roebourne on a regular basis.

Level of Acceptance: Supported in Principle
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Offender Services

Response:

The Department has two FTE based at Roebourne who facilitate criminogenic programs. Roebourne's program delivery schedule reflects the current greatest demand being family and domestic violence and alcohol and other drug programs.

Roebourne also has limited infrastructure available for program delivery with only one room available to facilitate groups. Criminogenic programs would have to be cancelled to schedule regular Cognitive Brief Intervention for either male or female remand prisoners.

The Department is committed to building a suite of contemporary and evidence-based treatment programs that are responsive to the needs of the WA offender cohort and is currently developing a Continuous Improvement Framework that will provide structure and transparency around the review of treatment programs.

Improvements will include the "what", "how" and "when" of program delivery as well as improvements to the governance around these services. The services will be driven by data on the needs of the WA prisoner cohort.

12 Recruit and appoint to all of the positions in the education and training team at Roebourne so that prisoners can reliably access core programs and other suitable courses.

Level of Acceptance: Supported
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Offender Services

Response:

The delivery of education and training at Roebourne has been impacted due to absences. The substantive Education Campus Manager is scheduled to return from leave in November 2022, and the acting Campus Manager will revert to their substantive Prison Education Coordinator position.

Recruitment is underway to fill the vacant Aboriginal Education Worker position.

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13 Plan for a more suitable facility for incarcerated women in the Pilbara.

Level of Acceptance: Not Supported
Responsible Division: Corporate Services
Responsible Directorate: Procurement, Infrastructure and Contracts

Response:

The planning for a suitable facility for incarcerated women in the Pilbara is not within the current scope of the Department's Long-Term Custodial Infrastructure Plan.

The Department, however, is currently mapping out specific and targeted services required for women across the women's estate, including for women in regional prisons.

14 Review staffing to provide for more consistent, effective and comprehensive provision of services to and custodial management of women at Roebourne.

Level of Acceptance: Supported – Current Practice / Project
Responsible Division: Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate: Adult Male Prisons

Response:

The Department has committed to undertake a staffing review through the Prison Services Evaluation project. This will identify essential services and staffing requirements to support service delivery for male and female prisoners across the custodial estate.

Appendix 4

INSPECTION DETAILS

INSPECTION TEAM

Eamon Ryan	Inspector
Natalie Gibson	Director Operations
Lauren Netto	Principal Inspections and Research Officer
Liz George	Principal Inspections and Research Officer
Kieran Artelaris	Inspections and Research Officer
Cliff Holdom	Inspections and Research Officer
Jim Bryden	Inspections and Research Officer
Aaron Hardwick	Inspections and Research Officer (Justice secondee)
Joseph Wallam	Community Liaison Officer

KEY DATES

Announcement letter	9 November 2021
Community consultation	8 February 2022
Prisoner surveys	9 February 2022
Staff surveys	9-21 February 2022
Start of on-site inspection	13 March 2022
Completion of on-site inspection	17 March 2022
Presentation of preliminary findings	5 April 2022
Draft report sent to Department	6 September 2022
Response received from Department	12 October 2022 (amended version 28 October)
Declaration of prepared report	28 October 2022

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



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