

Given the impact of violence against women on health and wellbeing, how are your agencies responding to the high levels of violence against Aboriginal women?

Response

DCS programs funded under the Two Ways Together initiatives are designed to address offending in Indigenous communities.

The funding for Yindyama La also included separate funding to develop and implement a parallel program for victims of Aboriginal male family violence (Yindyama La Vinaa). Accordingly, DCS prepared and advertised a tender for this project in the local Dubbo and Koori press in March 2007. No applications were received in response to this advertisement. DCS then conducted an information session in Dubbo, which was well attended by the local community, later in 2007 and re-issued the tender. Again, no response was received. Finally, DCS sought ideas from the local community on how this funding (\$32,000 in total) could be used to assist women who were victims of Aboriginal family violence. No suggestions have been received to date, however, informally, DCS has been advised by the local community that the funding is insufficient.

DCS successfully applied for funding under the *Two Ways Together* initiative. *Two Ways Together* is the NSW Aboriginal Affairs Policy for 2003-2012, which responds to the findings of the Productivity Commission's *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage – Key Indicators 2003* Report and establishes a new framework for a wide range of Government agencies to work with each other and with Aboriginal communities to improve the lives of Aboriginal people.

DCS has provided funding to respond to Recommendation 81 of the NSW Interagency Plan to Tackle Child Sexual Assault in Aboriginal Communities.

In partnership with NSW Health and the Department of Community services, DCS is coordinating the development of a DVD resource to raise awareness, to target the causes, and address the consequences of child sexual assault. The DVD will build on existing programs including prevention, education, community development and healing programs.

The DVD will include:

- a) Providing Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities with an understanding of the indicators of child sexual assault so that they can readily recognise children in their communities exhibiting these behaviours, and to know how to report suspected abuse;
 - b) Providing Aboriginal communities with targeted information on the roles of NSW Government agencies and on the type and nature of services that may be provided to children and families who have experienced sexual assault;
-

c) Teaching Aboriginal children and communities protective behaviours to prevent abuse from occurring. Giving Aboriginal community members skills and knowledge to effectively support children and families who have experienced abuse; and

d) Local information resource kits on the dynamics of sexual offending and grooming behaviours.

COS received a total of \$3.8 million for the four-year period from July 2004 to June 2008 under the *Collaborative Approaches to Indigenous Family Violence and Child Abuse, and Reducing Incarceration* initiative. This funding is administered across three locations, as follows:

Rekindling the Spirit (Lismore and Tabulam)

The Lismore Rekindling the Spirit program was developed in 1998, through inter-agency collaboration. Rekindling the Spirit targets Aboriginal males and Aboriginal females and their families and provides a range of support services to address the cultural needs of Aboriginal families, with specific attention to family violence, drug and alcohol abuse and child abuse and neglect within the family.

The Two Ways Together funding meets the costs of COS offenders participating in the program either at the established Lismore centre, extending the program to the neighbouring community of Tabulam and documenting the program. The program seeks to address the underlying causes of offending behaviour thereby reducing family violence and re-offending. Parallel programs for Aboriginal female perpetrators and their families have also been established at both Lismore and Tabulam.

In the past year the program documentation has been completed, partnerships forged within the communities for the extension of the program to Tabulam has progressed, and the working relationship between COS and Rekindling the Spirit has been strengthened.

Yindyama La Family Violence Project (Dubbo)

Originally, this program was a twelve-month pilot funded by the Attorney General's Office of the Status of Women and was completed in March 2004. The aim of the project was to develop a collaborative model for working with Indigenous men, families and communities to address issues of family violence in regional communities. The focus was on male perpetrators of violence and the development of an inter-agency approach, working closely with services for victims, and children in collaboration with the community.

The project built on both established services, and the knowledge of respected Aboriginal community members in the Dubbo area. The male (perpetrator) and partner's program built on Aboriginal knowledge, experience and terms of reference and was passed to COS, Probation and Parole Service for further development and implementation in conjunction with the Dubbo Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee.

With the successful funding grant, COS has now been able to firmly establish the program.

Walking Together Project (Newtown/Redfern)

The *Walking Together* program was originally developed to address the problems of loss and lack of cultural identity that affect many urban Aboriginal offenders. The funding has provided COS with the opportunity to review, refine and extend the original Walking Together program. The revised *Walking Together* program will more specifically target family violence. At the same time, a parallel program for Aboriginal female offenders is being developed. The female Walking Together program will also address family violence but will emphasize the need to protect children and include issues relating to speaking out against violence towards women and children in the family and in the community.

While both Walking Together programs are to be based on empirical evidence of “what works”, the programs are being re-developed in consultation with the local Aboriginal community and will incorporate a culturally appropriate framework of knowledge and Aboriginal social values. The local Aboriginal community will be involved in both the development and delivery of the program strategy.

The whole of government submission referred to three programs operating in a number of locations – Newtown, Redfern, Lismore and Dubbo (page 22). What factors are inhibiting a broader roll-out of successful local programs across the State?

Response

DCS has developed considerable and recognised expertise in working with Aboriginal communities to address offending behaviour. Major learnings that have evolved from this experience are that the development and implementation of programs to address offending behaviour within Aboriginal communities requires:

- projects which involve the community,
- community “ownership” of the project,
- community sharing in the intellectual ownership of the project,
- projects run over the medium to long term rather than short-term or pilots,
- programs which add to existing programs rather than being developed independently,
- that project development should be fluid so as to fit the needs of the local community in which it is occurring, and that can capture new cultural knowledge,
- that Aboriginal programs should be built on local Aboriginal knowledge, experience and cultural terms of reference.

Accordingly, community partnership programs that have been developed to date have not been portable. For example, a program developed in

partnership with the Dubbo local Aboriginal communities cannot be implemented in other parts of the state since it is based on the knowledge of the local Dubbo Aboriginal communities and owned by the local Dubbo Aboriginal communities.

Two Ways Together funding has provided the Department with an opportunity to develop a new model for Aboriginal programming that is based on the evidence-based “what works” literature and, at the same time, meets the needs of the local Aboriginal communities for involvement, local cultural content and flexibility.

The new Aboriginal program will incorporate the research knowledge on Aboriginal offending and the offence-related needs of Aboriginal offenders that has appeared in the academic literature over the past few years. The new model allows for an evidence-based model of behaviour change based on Western mainstream psychology and the ‘what works’ literature to be combined with an Aboriginal cultural component which will be developed and delivered by the local Aboriginal communities in each area of implementation. A further advantage of this new model for Aboriginal programs is that the model requires strong community partnerships to be forged and maintained.

While Aboriginal programming in the past has suffered from poor portability, it is anticipated that this model will have the flexibility to be implemented in other areas of the state, both in custodial and community correctional settings. Further, this new Aboriginal program model will be based on an evidence-based model of behaviour change which will allow full evaluation of the components of the program and the outcomes of the program.

Detailed briefing documents have been prepared and Requests for Proposals have been advertised in the Sydney, national and Koori media. However, response has been poor, mainly due to the movement of individuals with appropriate skills to the Northern Territory. However, work on this project continues.

The department monitors contact between community members and people in custody through visits and telephone calls. Visitors are screened for AVOs and ADVOs to ensure that contact complies with requirements of these orders and telephone contact is also restricted if there are current AVOs etc that specify levels of permissible contact. The department is mindful of the possibility of threats to inmates from outside contacts and works to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to prevent conflict or violence.

How is the Department supporting Aboriginal people to complete community sentences?

Response

DCS, Community Offender Services (COS) employs a number of Aboriginal Client Service Officers (ACSO) assist and support Aboriginal offenders to successfully complete their court and parole orders. The role of the COS ACSO is to provide advice and support to Probation and Parole Officers in the

case management of Aboriginal offenders and to assist in meeting the needs of Aboriginal offenders in a culturally sensitive manner. The role consults with correctional centre and mainstream rehabilitation centre staff regarding pre and post release planning for Aboriginal offenders. The ACSO also acts a resource within the COS District Office to develop effective culturally appropriate offender programs as well as identifying and building collaborative community networks and partnerships to improve the effectiveness of community based offender programs.

TABLE 1: LOCATION OF ABORIGINAL CLIENT SERVICE OFFICERS IN NSW

LOCATION OF ABORIGINAL CLIENT SERVICE OFFICERS (ACSOs) STATEWIDE	OTHER DISTRICT OFFICES SERVICED BY THE ACSO
Newtown	City and Burwood on request
Kempsey	Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Taree
Tamworth	Armidale, Narrabri, Gunnedah
Lake Macquarie	Newcastle, Maitland, Muswellbrook, Cessnock
Bourke	Nil
Coonamble	Nil
Broken Hill	Nil
Bathurst	Orange, Lithgow
Dubbo	Wellington
Grafton	Casino, Glen Innes
Moree	Inverell
Mount Druitt	Penrith on request
Wagga Wagga	Albury, Griffith, Junee Tumut (including Mannus Correctional Centre) – attends each office two to four days each month. Deniliquin – attends less frequently on an as needed basis
Wollongong	Nowra, Bateman's Bay, Bega, Queanbeyan (limited involvement over last 12 months).
Lismore *	Murwillumbah, sometimes Casino depending upon workload dynamics
Forbes *	Forbes & Young.

* Locations where ACSOs are funded under Drug Summit

The two ACSO positions (located in Forbes and Lismore) are funded under Drug Summit 2 and provide support to offenders:

- for the duration of any residential rehabilitation period
- to reintegrate into mainstream society after completion of a rehabilitation program
- to identify and access community resources prior to completing the rehabilitation program and through the transitional period in the community. This also includes identification of Aboriginal community networks and support for offenders on community-based orders by assisting them to identify and access community resources.

The Department is actively working with interagency taskforces to expand opportunities for housing and accommodation, and employment for Aboriginal

offenders and their families. Some examples of these interagency collaborations are:

Employment - Job Network Connections & “Work Release” program

The Department has worked with the Australian Government’s Department of Employment & Workplace Relations (DEWR), now the Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations (DEEWR). The collaboration is guided by the Government’s *Pathways to employment* initiatives and by this Department’s inmate employment needs strategies. Eligible inmates who are approved for Work Release are introduced to Job Network Providers. These providers develop an assessment, an employment needs profile and they assist the inmate to locate employment.

One example of this collaboration was the Silverwater Men’s Correctional Centre “Employment Expo” held in 2007. All eligible inmates, including significant numbers of Aboriginal offenders, met a variety of Job Network providers, along with Centrelink and other employment related agencies. Eventually four Job Network Providers began work inmates in this program.

In brief, the Department is working with Job Network Providers and government agencies to:

- 1) Identify barriers to effective employment;
- 2) Assess and identify needs or risks related to those barriers; and
- 3) Link inmates to specialized services, programs and funding to address the identified needs.

Housing and Accommodation

The Department’s focus is assessing housing and accommodation needs and seeking referral opportunities. The Department’s officers are working in the following collaborative work groups:

Housing Accord with Housing NSW, Community Housing and the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO). The focus of this collaboration is twofold:

1. To develop and implement the Housing Accord’s complex housing needs screening tool; and
2. To explore the opportunities under the Housing Accord to develop shared access trials. The goal of such shared access trials is to provide a linked/integrated service which includes accommodation, case management support and employment

All three participants (Housing NSW, Community Housing and the Aboriginal Housing Office) are becoming more aware of the specific housing and housing support needs of Aboriginal offenders and their families. As this collaboration develops there will be increased opportunities for appropriate housing placement and support.

The DCS/Housing NSW Liaison Committee

This liaison committee functions as a reference group for operational matters regarding housing for offenders. It has senior level Aboriginal participation and the Department is looking to include other housing bodies on this reference group eg. The Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO).

Community Offender Support Program Centres

A recent initiative of the Department has been to establish accommodation facilities at multiple location across the state that will provide accommodation and support services for offenders in transition into the community having served a custodial sentence and also for offenders on community based orders in crisis. Renovations have now been completed on 3 facilities with a target of in excess of 500 beds when the scheme is fully operational. It is expected that Aboriginal offenders may require greater assistance from these centres.

How is the Department responding to health problems of Aboriginal inmates, including drug related problems and mental health problems?

Response

DCS play a major role in supporting research to quantify health issues and different intellectual disabilities.

In addition, DCS has undertaken a number of initiatives in recent years, which have greatly assisted in firstly identifying the health problems of Aboriginal inmates, including drug related problems and mental health problems, and then making the appropriate referrals to address the identified health problems and provide the required support.

Significant initiatives include:

Improvement of Reception, Screening, Induction and Assessment processes

The Department's enhancement of its initial offender Reception, Screening, Induction and Assessment processes has greatly enhanced the Department's ability to identify the health problems of Aboriginal offenders from the time that the offender first enters the custodial environment. Departmental screeners are required to ask offenders (including Aboriginal offenders) a range of questions, including questions relating to mental health status, which has helped in the early detection of the health problems of Aboriginal offenders, as well as enabling the Department to identify Aboriginal offenders who are under duress and may be at risk of inflicting self-harm.

An extremely important element of the Reception Screening, Induction and Assessment process is the health assessment that is undertaken by Justice Health, the corrections arm of the NSW Department of Health. These assessments are undertaken by qualified medical staff, who are based on-site at each of the DCS reception centres throughout NSW. The health

assessments undertaken by Justice Health staff are not only integral in identifying health problems, including drug related problems and mental health problems, but are also important in determining the placement and case management of Aboriginal offenders within the correctional environment.

The recent establishment of a world class mental health screening unit at the Silverwater Women's Correctional Centre now ensures that women presenting with any indications of mental health problems can be placed in a special unit staffed by mental health professionals where a full assessment can occur. Ideally women with serious mental illness can be diverted from the correctional system. The opening of a new forensic hospital later this year will ensure that forensic patients become the responsibility of health professionals.

Creation and establishment of Aboriginal Assessment and Support Officer positions.

Another recent development is the creation and establishment of four Aboriginal Assessment and Support Officer positions. The Department acknowledges that there may be certain barriers between non-Aboriginal staff and Aboriginal offenders which can distort the information gathered during the reception, screening, induction and assessment process. For this reason the Department created Aboriginal Assessment and Support Officer positions. The role of an Aboriginal Assessment and Support Officer is to engage an Aboriginal offender in the early stages of being incarcerated, to undertake a cultural assessment of the offender. Information gathered by the Aboriginal Assessment and Support Officer is used to make any referrals that are required and are inputted into the case management plan of the Aboriginal offender. Non-Aboriginal staff involved in the Reception, screening, induction and assessment process can refer an Aboriginal offender to an Aboriginal Assessment and Support Officer at any time. Aboriginal Assessment and Support Officers are located at Bathurst, Grafton, Goulburn and Dillwynia Correctional Centres.

Alcohol and Other Drugs

Other than the Namatjira Haven Drug and Alcohol Healing Centre, the Department does not conduct any Indigenous specific, alcohol and other drugs projects/programs, but offers offenders a range of generic, therapeutic alcohol and other drugs programs that all offenders can access and participate in. These programs are designed to address the offending behaviour of offenders, and are accredited by the Department's Offender Programs Unit. A significant number of Aboriginal offenders are currently participating in these programs. The programs are:

1. Alcoholics Anonymous
2. Criminal Conduct and Substance Abuse Treatment (Milkman and Wanberg)
Drug and Alcohol Addiction Program
3. Drugs: The Impact of Dependence
4. Getting S.M.A.R.T.

5. Narcotics Anonymous
6. Relapse Prevention Program
7. SMART Recovery Maintenance Groups
8. Sober Driver Program
9. Bolwara House – A major target group being, but not specifically for, Aboriginal women, with serious alcohol and other drugs issues
10. POISE – A twelve week intensive residential alcohol and other drug program for women at Emu Plains Correctional Centre
11. Phoenix – An intensive residential alcohol and other drug program for men at Cessnock Correctional Centre
12. Ngara Ngura – A four month residential pre-release program for men with alcohol and other drug issues, conducted at Long Bay Correctional Complex at Malabar
13. Biyani – A residential diversionary program for women with severe mental health and alcohol and other drug issues.

The Department also employs nine Aboriginal Alcohol and Other Drugs workers in correctional centres across NSW. These employees participate in the delivery of programs to offenders, effectively enhancing the cultural appropriateness of the Department's programs. The Aboriginal Alcohol and Other Drugs workers provide an effective, specialist cultural role in the delivery of the Department's alcohol and other drugs programs.

How has the increasing number of female Aboriginal inmates impacted on the Department, and how are you responding?

Response

Table 6 (above) shows the trends in the female Indigenous inmate population as at 30 June each year from 1997 to 2007. The table shows that the Indigenous female population increased from 66 in 1996 to 214 in 2007.

Figure 1: Trends in the female Indigenous full-time custody population; 1996 to 2007

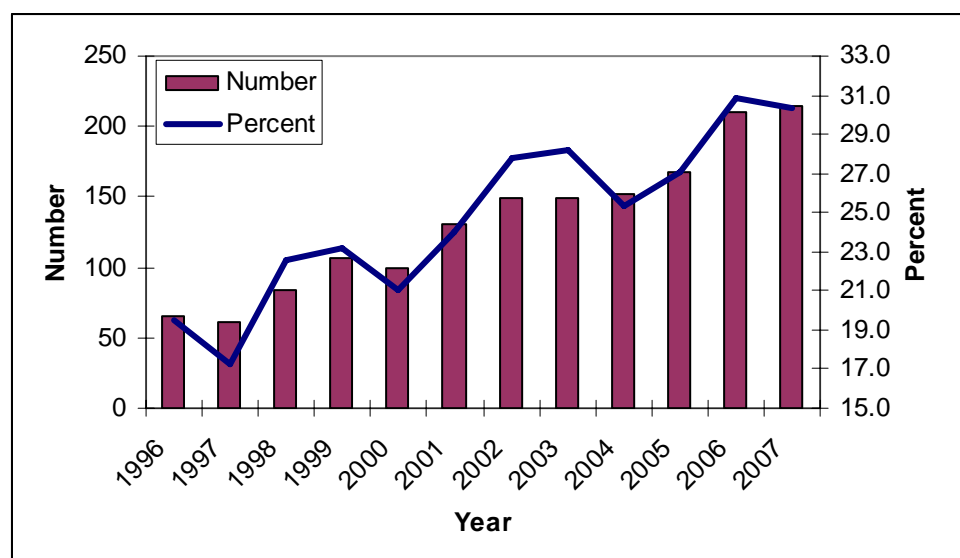


Figure 1 shows that between 1996 and 2007 both the number of Indigenous females and their percentage of the total female population increased fairly consistently.

Table 7 and Figure 2 show that whilst the female Indigenous inmate population was increasing, the non-Indigenous female population was also increasing. Between 1996 and 2007, the Indigenous inmate population increased from 66 to 214 (or 224%) whilst the non-Indigenous female population increased from 272 to 491 (or 81%). Therefore, there is some evidence that over this period the growth in the female Indigenous inmate population was more significant than the growth in the non-Indigenous female population. This is also reflected in the growth in the Indigenous females percentages which increased over that period from 19.5% to 30.4%.

The table also shows that the increase in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous was not consistent, whilst the overall trend for both was an increasing trend. For example, the largest increases in the Indigenous female population were in 1999, 2001 and 2006. The non-Indigenous population increases were most marked in 1999 and 2004.

Table 7: Trends in the female Indigenous full-time custody population; 1996 to 2007

Year	Indigenous females	Non-Indigenous
1996	66	272
1997	61	293
1998	84	288
1999	107	354
2000	99	371
2001	130	412
2002	149	387
2003	149	380
2004	152	447
2005	168	453
2006	210	470
2007	214	491

The Department has increased its capacity for female inmates generally and at the same time has had regard to the specific circumstances of Aboriginal women. This has included the creation of a designated Aboriginal female Assessment Support officer position, a female Regional Aboriginal Programs Officer (RAPO) a full time Aboriginal teacher position. The Department has also actively recruited Aboriginal female custodial Officers to work with this group.

The Department has significantly increased accommodation options for women in the correctional system. In addition to a purpose built facility for women at Windsor (Dillwynnia). The Department has also included Women's units in all new regional facilities including Wellington and Mid North Coast correctional centres. A women's unit was also created at Broken Hill Correction Centre. Further, Emu Plains and Berrima Correctional Centres originally designated for men have been converted to women's centres. The location of these facilities in regional areas has is intended to provide more opportunity for female offenders particularly indigenous women to remain closer to their communities.

Dillwynnia Correctional Centre

The Dillwynnia Correctional Centre at Berkshire Park is the first purpose built correctional facility for women in New South Wales. The Centre accommodates sentenced and unsentenced women (with remand periods longer than 7 days) of variable security ratings. It opened to inmates in October 2004 and today can take up to 200 inmates. A thirty (30) bed unit, called the Independent Living Unit, is located outside the perimeter fence for women in the pre-release phase who also work outside the centre either on the work release program or in the nearby Corrective Services Industries.

Unsentenced women who fit the criteria are received from the Silverwater Women's Correctional Centre once they are stabilised and have undergone the reception screening and induction processes. Sentenced offenders may be transferred to Dillwynnia Correctional Centre from Emu Plains, Berrima, Kempsey, Grafton and Broken Hill Correctional Centres through the normal case management and classification processes.

The design of the centre recognises the need to provide a safe, humane and supportive environment where women can maximise their opportunities for autonomy, self-determination, self-responsibility and independent decision-making. Through community living the Centre promotes respect and responsibility in the women and prepare them for release.

One of the architectural features of this new facility for women is to encourage and maintain community and family relationships, particularly those with children.

Dillwynnia Correctional Centre's design utilises internationally recognised principles of best practice in a facility for women offenders. An environment that is supportive in its physical layout and which promotes personal interaction and exercising responsible choices helps to empower women offenders. The design of Dillwynnia fosters community living ensuring that the women will be responsible for the maintenance of their living environment.

In keeping with the Department's Women's Action Plan, the philosophy and management principles of Dillwynnia Correctional Centre are based on recognition that female offenders are entitled to a lifestyle which focuses on safety, normality, cooperation, a hierarchy of privileges and sanctions, goal setting and assumption of individual responsibilities. It also recognises that

women need reduced levels of supervision, combined with access to intensive programs and services.

Careful staff selection plus staff training, team building and staff commitment are also elements that are crucial to the success of this non-traditional correctional approach.

Dillwynia Correctional Centre provides a high level of access to intensive programs and services. Program content and intensity is based on level of risk and need, are centred on effective conceptual models and be 'women centred'.

Employment opportunities are established for women, which, in addition to the acquisition of marketable vocational skills, are designed to achieve the following:

- Opportunity for earnings to support a reasonable living standard whilst in custody;
- Cost effective institutional services;
- Productive industry reflecting market reality and pursuing corporate reparation goals;

TWT Programs

DCS has expressed concerns over the overrepresentation of Aboriginal female offenders and the need to provide courts with sentencing alternatives to incarceration or providing programs to address the offending needs of Aboriginal female offenders who are on supervised parole orders.

Two Ways Together funding has provided for a new Walking Together program for supervised Aboriginal female offenders to be developed. In addition, the Two Ways Together funding provided for funding for Rekindling the Spirit to be extended to Aboriginal female offenders and their families both in Lismore and in Tabulam.

What percentage of Aboriginal inmates has access to drug rehabilitation programs?

Response

In 2003 the Department established an Offender Programs Unit within the Offender Services and Programs branch. The rehabilitation framework and philosophy of the Department is based on the international "What Works" literature. Guided by this, the core business for the Offender Programs Unit is to reduce the risk of re-offending through behaviour change as a result of program intervention and rehabilitation.

The Offender Programs Unit has responsibility for the review, development, accreditation and evaluation of programs addressing criminogenic need. As drug and alcohol issues are a significant area of criminogenic need, Offender Programs Unit strategies include programs relating to this domain. In addition the Offender Programs Unit is responsible for delivering approved programs, which target non-criminogenic yet still significant needs amongst the offender population.

Principal Advisors provide specialist advice on policy and programs in a range of areas. The Principal Advisor, Alcohol and other Drugs, HIV and Health Promotion has responsibility for advising on alcohol and drug programs and ensuring that they are evidence based and in line with community standards for best practice.

All offenders, including those who are Indigenous are screened by both Justice Health and DCS staff for alcohol and other drug problems on reception to custody. If required, they are then referred for further assessment and intervention. Each offender's case management plan addresses their criminogenic needs including, where applicable, therapeutic programs to address AOD problems and other risk/needs domains. This is in line with the case management model for all offenders across custodial and community based locations.

In principle all indigenous offenders with alcohol and or other drugs needs, which add to their risk of future offending are potentially eligible to be referred to a relevant program at the appropriate stage in implementation of her or his individual case plan. The following statistics will however provide further clarity on this issue.

From October 2007 to February 2008, 20% of participants attending AOD intervention programs were Indigenous offenders and 18% of participants attending Health Promotion Programs were Indigenous.

Findings from the biennial survey on sentenced inmates who are shortly to be released to freedom provide indicator data. In 2005-06, 57% of Indigenous inmates and 48% of non-Indigenous inmates had participated in the Department's AOD programs on at least one occasion during their current sentence. The prevalence rate of AOD program participation by inmates has been relatively stable over time.

A table of Aboriginal offender participation in programs and assessments for the Period July 2007 to March 2008 is included.

What is your sense of how successful those programs are?

Response

In keeping with the “What Works” philosophy, there is a strong indication these generic alcohol and other drug programs are as effective in addressing the criminogenic needs of Indigenous offenders as they are in addressing the same need across the entire offender population.

Aboriginal staff are in Indigenous identified and non identified Alcohol and Drug and mentoring positions. Where there is an identified demand, Indigenous staff deliver or co- facilitate programs to groups with a high proportion of Indigenous offenders. Groups exclusively for Indigenous participants are sometimes facilitated, in order to address responsivity issues in providing an environment to maximise learning outcomes and the uptake of positive behaviour change.

The Aboriginal Support and Planning Unit has a staff member who currently liaises closely with the Offender Programs Unit. The position-holder is based at Dubbo and is currently assessing the needs of Indigenous offenders in the Central West region of the state. The outcome of this assessment phase will assist in future delivery of culturally appropriate programs to the high Indigenous population in this and other areas of New South Wales with a comparable profile.

Since inception of the Offender Programs Unit in 2003, all accredited programs targeting criminogenic needs include robust evaluation tools. These are inbuilt in design and implementation plans for each program, including the comprehensive suite of alcohol and other drug programs.

Evaluation of this nature needs to be conducted over a significant length of time before results can be reported. At this stage it is premature for the processing of evaluative data and any reporting of measurable outcomes. In due course this evaluative data will provide a more comprehensive and evidence based picture of program success.

Establishment of the Offender Programs Unit marks a significant shift in the ways and means of program delivery across custody and the community in New South Wales. My belief, supported by the body of literature under the “What Works” banner is that this shift will result in more promising results than the ad hoc program development and delivery era of the late 1990s.

Positive outcomes have been reported in two discrete evaluations undertaken by the Department’s Corporate Research, Evaluation and Statistics division. In 2005, a randomised-controlled trial of a three-month, prison-based Drug Treatment Wing program was completed. Of participating inmates, 13% had an Indigenous background. Overall, the study found that the program was successful in reducing drug use and offending behaviour. When compared

with the control group, those in the program were significantly less likely to drop-out, use drugs, commit offences in custody and re-offend two years after release from prison. Further, program inmates were significantly more likely to enrol in further AOD treatment.

A recent quasi-experimental evaluation was conducted on a CBT group-based program with offenders supervised in the community (including parolees). Approximately 20% of program participants had an Indigenous background. Early outcomes from this program are promising. Program graduates showed significant improvements in levels of drug dependency, motivation to change and social functioning when compared with baseline results. Further, graduates showed a higher rate of successful completion of legal orders and a lower rate of re-offending when compared with a matched sample of offenders.

The Drug and Alcohol Addiction Program (DAAP) and the Relapse Prevention Program (RPP) are externally funded by the NSW Drug Summit and are delivered in the community by specially trained Probation and Parole Officers and external contractors.

The aim of these programs is to assist community-based offenders under supervision to break the cycle of drug dependency and crime. An evaluation is currently underway to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs in terms of outputs and participant outcomes.

Preliminary research results after one year of operation shows that 21% of DAAP participants and 6% of RPP participants are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent (ATSI). Completion figures show that 60% of ATSI participants completed the program/s compared with 66% overall.

...Whether you can indicate over the last half dozen years the number of prisoners on remand, both juvenile and adult, and male and female?

Response

As part of its annual statistical “census” of inmates, the Department collates data on Indigenous status, gender and legal status for all offender held as at 30 June each year. Note that the Department’s area of responsibility does not include juveniles held juvenile detention centres managed by the Department of Juvenile Justice. Therefore, the following statistics relate only to offenders held in custody by the NSW Department of Corrective Services (and include the Kariong Juvenile Correctional Centre from the time it was handed over to DCS).

Data taken from this statistical data collection showing Indigenous status, legal status and gender for the years 2001 to 2007 (i.e. last six years) is given below.

Table 1: Indigenous inmates held on remand as at 30 June, 2001 to 2007

Year	Male	Female
2001	227	38
2002	246	42
2003	301	46
2004	290	33
2005	321	59
2006	370	52
2007	397	57

On average, what length of time have those persons.....been in custody or on remand?

Response

Data taken from the NSW Inmate Census statistical series can also be used to determine the period of time spent on remand in custody for inmates held on remand as at 30 June each year. This is not, therefore, a measure of total time on remand, but is representative of the average period of time spent on remand for inmates in custody “on any given day”.

For Indigenous inmates on remand as at 30 June each year between 20001 and 2007, the average period of time on remand up to the 30th June each year was:

- 4.0 month for males
 - 2.0 months for females
-

....identifying the length of time that those persons have been on remand by reference to whether they are appearing in metropolitan courts as opposed to non-metropolitan courts?

Response

Table 2: Indigenous inmates held on remand as at 30 June, 2007 by gender, court region and time on remand

Court region	Number on remand	Average time on remand (months)
Indigenous males		
Metropolitan courts	175	6.1
Non-Metropolitan courts	222	3.4
Indigenous females		
Metropolitan courts	31	3.4
Non-Metropolitan courts	26	1.9

Table 2 shows that it appears that for both males and females, inmates on remand appearing before metropolitan courts had been on remand for a significantly longer period than remand inmates appearing before non-metropolitan courts. For example, the average time on remand for males was 6.1 months at metropolitan courts compared to 3.4 months at non-metropolitan courts.

You would be aware that a significant percentage of our Aboriginal population comes from rural and regional areas. I suggest to you that I anticipate the length of time those members of the Aboriginal community from rural and regional areas are on remand is greater than those appearing in metropolitan courts. Do you have a comment at this stage?

Response

The data DCS collates on Indigenous status for remands is not perfect. Remand inmates themselves, considering their relatively short periods of stay and having been only recently received, have higher levels of “missing data”, including data on Indigenous status.

Of the 2276 remand inmates in custody as at 30 June 2007, 19.9% were Indigenous, but a further 157 (6.9%) had an unknown Indigenous status. This level of missing data should be borne in mind when making conclusions on any analysis of results.

Table 3: Indigenous status of inmates on remand as at 30 June 2007

	Number	Percent
Indigenous	454	19.9%
Non-Indigenous	1665	73.2%
Unknown	157	6.9%
Total	2276	100.0%

Table 4 shows a broad breakdown of location of last known address for remands held as at 30 June 2007. The table shows that a higher proportion of Indigenous remands (44%) indicated that their last known address was located in rural NSW, compared to only 13.7% of non-Indigenous remands.

There is, however, a high proportion of Non-Indigenous remands with an “unknown” address (15.6%). In the unlikely event that all these “unknowns” were from rural locations, even if we added this figure to the 13.7% figure above, to estimate that at most 29% of non-Indigenous remands came from a rural location, this result is still well below that reported for Indigenous remands.

Table 4: Indigenous status of remand as at 30 June 2007; regional location of last known address

Region of last known address	Indigenous	%	Non-Indigenous	%	TOTAL	%
Metropolitan	239	52.6%	1252	68.7%	1491	65.5%
Rural	200	44.1%	250	13.7%	450	19.8%
Outside NSW	8	1.8%	36	2.0%	44	1.9%
Unknown	7	1.5%	284	15.6%	291	12.8%
TOTAL	454	100.0%	1822	100.0%	2276	100.0%

Table 5 shows a broad breakdown for remands by location of the court at which they had been remanded (for the most serious offence only). If we use the court location as another rough equivalent for area of residence, this table also indicates that a higher proportion of Indigenous remands resided in rural locations compared to non-Indigenous remands (54.6% compared to 26.3%).

Table 5: Indigenous status of remand as at 30 June 2007; regional location of court (for most serious offence)

Region of Court for most serious offence	ATSI	%	NON-ATSI	%	TOTAL	%
Metropolitan	206	45.4%	1343	73.7%	1549	68.1%
Rural	248	54.6%	479	26.3%	727	31.9%
TOTAL	454	100.0%	1822	100.0%	2276	100.0%

Since 1997, identify (by name and date of commencement) the programmes that have been implemented or continued by the Department to advance the health rehabilitation of Aboriginal inmates and/or wellbeing of Aboriginal peoples in New South Wales

Response

Early programs dating from 1999 were:

Peer Support
Harm Minimisation
Relapse Prevention – How to Stay Out of Gaol
Relapse Prevention – For Women
Drink Driving Prevention
Alcohol & Other Drugs Awareness
Anger Management
Methadone Group
Violence & Alcohol Prevention
Intellectual Disability

Aboriginal specific programs from that time were:

Stop Doing Harm
Alcohol and Violence
Grief, Loss and Shame
Women's Cultural Package
The Brain Story
Say no to Grog
Aboriginal 1 day Health Information Workshop (male and female)

More recent delivery of programs has included:

The Impact of Dependence (2007)

An AOD readiness program.

Getting SMART and the SMART Recovery Program (2005)

A peer-lead relapse prevention program.

***Criminal Conduct and Substance Misuse* by Milkman and Wanberg (2006)**

A program for offenders identified with moderate to moderate/high risk of re-offending.

Drug and Alcohol Program and Relapse Prevention Program (2005)

conducted mainly in a community setting .with offenders at moderate risk of re-offending.

The above programs are all inclusive of Indigenous offenders particularly SMART which is based on a narrative therapeutic approach.

Health Promotion programs are also inclusive of the Indigenous offenders.

The Health Survival Program (revised 2005)

A short introduction mandatory for all offenders within the first two weeks of reception into custody, identifies the risks of transmission of blood borne viruses and informs offenders what precautions can be taken to avoid risk of transmission during custody.

The Peer Supporter Program (revised 2005)

Contributes to similar outcomes to the above program but uses a peer education method, in order to get the message to parts of the offender population that may otherwise miss out on this information.

Other programs which enhance well-being include:

Hey Dad for Indigenous Dads, Pops & Uncles (2005):

A parenting program for Indigenous men developed by Centacare Broken Bay. An evaluation with positive results was completed in July 2007. All centres where the pilot took place intend to conduct the program again on a regular basis

Seasons For Growth (2006)

A grief and loss program delivered to the general population in the Department. When delivered by an Indigenous facilitator has been identified as particularly useful with Indigenous clients.

Winhangadilinya (2007)

This program is designed to assist Aboriginal offenders to address their offending behaviour to provide a culturally appropriate holistic program that increases an offender's access to employment, training, education and therapeutic program, and participation in planned recreation activities and work skills.

Following the successful program pilot at Bathurst in 2007 the program is now being submitted for formal Departmental accreditation by the Offender Programs Unit. Once the program is accredited it is planned that the program will be replicated in other centres throughout the State.

The primary outcomes for participants of the program are:

- Recognise offending behaviour and consequences;
- Develop alternative strategies to meet their needs instead of behaviours that lead to re-offending through participation in therapeutic programs;
- Identify work skills and experience, and experience work with potential career and vocational pathways;
- Develop assertive, negotiation and problem solving skills;
- Improved literacy and numeracy;
- Have identified pathways and contacts in place on release for employment within the community

Responsivity and cultural issues with all these programs are largely addressed by the facilitator at the local level at the time of delivery. The Department employs a number of Indigenous staff in Correctional Centres and Community Offender Services to deliver programs and individual services to offenders in a culturally sensitive way. The Offender Programs Unit has assisted Indigenous staff to deliver training to other departmental staff to assist them to account for cultural issues when delivering to Indigenous offenders.

Additionally, DCS runs specific residential programs that target Aboriginal offenders:

Yetta Dhinnakkal

The Yetta Dhinnakkal Program at Brewarrina is situated on a rural, farming property, where young Aboriginal offenders participating in the program are taught skills in horticulture, agriculture and a range of other practical skills, including small motor maintenance, welding, road sealing, building skills, literacy and numeracy skills and first aid.

Respected Aboriginal elders visit and instruct offenders on Aboriginal heritage and culture.

Where possible, the program actively seeks the participation of the inmate's family in their case management.

In addition, offenders attend courses aimed at specific problematic behaviour, including courses targeting substance abuse, relapse prevention, anger management, domestic violence and drink driving.

Warrakirri

The Warrakirri Program, based at Ivanhoe Correctional Centre, is primarily an employment based program and undertakes many work based projects in the community. While the Department has not undertaken a formal evaluation of the program, a study of the recidivism rates of participants in the Warrakirri Program, covering the period 20 August 2001 to 11 February 2008, compares favourably to the recidivism rate of all Aboriginal offenders in the NSW correctional system over the period 2004-05.

The program has the support of the Ivanhoe community, and other communities in the region. The program has completed some work projects for the community which have earned the community's support. The Aboriginal offenders working on the program have indicated the sense of achievement they have felt from participating in the program.

Bolwara House

This program targets Aboriginal women with a high risk of re-offending, and provides an intensive accommodation program that targets issues associated with alcohol and other drug use in the period prior to release.

Vocational programs include:

Girrawaa

The Girrawaa Creative Work Centre develops the artistic and employment skills of Aboriginal inmates. The Centre provides a unique balance of cultural, educational, vocational, workplace and business management skills for Indigenous inmates. It is anticipated that inmates will acquire skills that will contribute to their economic independence and their successful return to the community, as well as supporting Aboriginal inmates to develop their own cultural and personal identity.

The Centre is funded through the profits of Corrective Services Industries (CSI). The target group is young Aboriginal offenders with poor literacy, numeracy and vocational skills.

Fifteen Aboriginal inmates are continually employed under this program.

Expenditure of the program for the 2006/07 financial year was \$126,000.

In regards to program evaluation, workplace programs such as Girrawaa, are evaluated against CSI key performance measures on a monthly basis. These measures include security, safety, commercial, customer service standards, training participation, and employment levels against targets.

Nangy Kungar

Nangy Kungar is an integrated and holistic training program for up to sixteen indigenous inmates at Cessnock Correctional Centre. Students undertake a twelve month Traineeship with a legal indenture through the Department of Education and Training (DET), New Apprenticeships Centres.

On completion the trainees achieve full trade training and practical experience towards becoming registered tradespersons (Carpentry). They achieve Certificate II in General Construction and Certificate III in Construction Carpentry. They also receive documentation which outlines the competencies gained through their work experience on local community projects and building projects within the Centre. They receive Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) education and Welfare, numeracy and literacy support.

Coordinated and managed by Adult Education and Vocational Training Institute (AEVTI) and delivered by AEVTI, TAFE and other disciplines at Cessnock Correctional Centre, it is funded by Department of Corrective Services (DCS) and DET.

Educational and Vocational Training

Aboriginal offenders access the education and training programs targeting the needs of the general offender population, and specifically targeting the needs of Aboriginal offenders, delivered by NSW DCS Adult Education and Vocational Training Institute (AEVTI) teachers.

They also access TAFE NSW vocational training courses targeting the needs of the general offender population and TAFE courses specifically targeting the vocational and cultural needs of Aboriginal offenders, which are delivered by TAFE NSW Institutes.

In 2005/2006 a monthly average of 747 Aboriginal offenders were enrolled in education and vocational training programs in correctional centres across NSW. This constituted 24.5% of the total population of offenders participating in education and vocational training programs.

In 2006/2007 a monthly average of 764 Aboriginal offenders were enrolled in education and vocational training programs, equating to 26% of the total number of offenders participating in education and vocational programs.

In 2005/2006 Aboriginal offenders enrolled in Aboriginal specific basic education programs taught by NSW DCS employed Aboriginal teachers successfully completed a total of 139 modules at Certificate I & II levels.

In 2006/2007 the number of modules completed increased to 347.

Through the Memorandum of Understanding between TAFE NSW and the Department of Corrective Services, most correctional centres offer a range of courses specifically for Aboriginal students. TAFE NSW provision focuses on a variety of learning outcomes that include Aboriginal art and cultural practices and vocational programs customised to meet the learning and training needs of Aboriginal offenders, including horticulture, agriculture and construction.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding, TAFE NSW delivered a total of 18,000 hours of training in NSW correctional centres during 2006-2007, almost 6,000 of which were identified for the provision specifically targeting the needs of Aboriginal offenders

In regards to program evaluation, program implementation includes mechanisms for on going evaluation and gaining participant feedback to maintain the quality of programs and to ensure that they are responsive to the needs of participants.

For the period 2005/06, Aboriginal offenders enrolled in Aboriginal specific basic education programs taught by NSW DCS employed Aboriginal teachers successfully completed a total of 139 modules at Certificate I & II levels. In 2006/07 the number of modules completed increased to 347.

DCS, COS provides group based interventions which directly target offending behaviour. While an additional effect of such programs may be in terms of health improvements this is not the main aim of the programs, nor is data collected on the health outcomes or the wellbeing of offenders.

COS Program Support Group has been involved in the commencement of the Yindyama La program in the Dubbo area for Aboriginal male perpetrators of family violence. The program has run twice each year from 2004-2005. In

addition, COS Program Support Group has been involved in the commencement of the revised Walking Together program for Aboriginal male perpetrators of family violence in the Newtown area and also for the commencement of the Walking Together program for Aboriginal female perpetrators of family violence.

Funding under the Two Ways Together initiative has also allowed for both Aboriginal male and Aboriginal female perpetrators of family violence in both the Lismore and Tabulam areas to be referred to the Rekindling the Spirit programs.

In respect for each such programme, identify the costs of each such programme for each financial year in which the programme operated

Response

PROJECT	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	TOTAL
Rekindling the Spirit (Lismore) and Rekindling the Spirit (Tabulam)	\$472,000	\$464,000	\$464,000	\$464,000	\$1.864 M
Dubbo Family Violence Program, Yindyama La/Vinaa	\$183,000	\$183,000	\$183,000	\$183,000	\$0.732 M
Walking Together (Newtown)	\$303,000	\$299,000	\$299,000	\$299,000	\$1.2 M
TOTAL	\$958,000	\$946,000	\$946,000	\$946,000	\$3.796 M

The cost of programs conducted for offenders in custody were absorbed into the mainstream program budget of each Centre.

Since 1997, identify (by name and date of commencement) the programmes that have been terminated or completed by the Department to advance the health rehabilitation of Aboriginal inmates and/or wellbeing of Aboriginal peoples in New South Wales

Response

From 1997, the department provided a range of programs and services intended to be culturally appropriate.

Aboriginal sessional specialist employees presented Health Information Workshops to male and female offenders. The Health Promotion Unit, which no longer exists (having been subsumed into the Offender Programs Unit) consulted with the various Aboriginal communities in writing and editing

programs. This was with the intention to ensure that these programs more readily reflected Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander culture.

Since 2003, programs delivered are in line with the DCS Compendium of Programs, a copy of which is included.

In the case of each such programme terminated or completed, identify the reasons for each such termination or completion, and the date of such termination or completion

Response

Since establishment of the Offender Programs Unit in 2003 the department has pursued the new directions detailed above. Existing alcohol and other drug programs for Indigenous offenders were assessed against the accreditation framework criteria. As a consequence of this assessment, none were included in the suite of programs to be conducted in DCS from that time forward. This was because none of these programs were developed using an evidence base. Staff at that time reported that these specific programs were not well attended, Indigenous offenders preferring to join in mainstream program sessions. It was considered better practice to ensure all programs were developed to take into account responsivity issue for all offenders, such as, literacy issues, adult education principles and peer support factors.

What is the proportion of Aboriginal inmates in the NSW corrective services system and how has this changed annually since 1997?

Response

DCS published annual statistical data on the representation of Indigenous inmates in NSW prisons. This information is published in the DCS Annual Report, the Productivity Commissions' *Report on Government Services* and the DCS annual publication *NSW Inmate Census*.

The following table is an extract from the (yet to be published) *NSW Inmate Census 2007*, and details the number and proportion of Indigenous inmates held in full-time custody in NSW.

Table 6: Trends in the full-time custody Indigenous inmate population; as at 30 June 1996 to 2007

Year	Indigenous males	Indigenous males as a percent of all full-time custody males	Indigenous females	Indigenous females as a percent of all full-time custody females	Total Indigenous	Total Indigenous inmates as a percent of all fulltime custody inmates
1996	803	13.5%	66	19.5%	869	13.9%
1997	851	14.0%	61	17.2%	912	14.2%
1998	903	14.8%	84	22.6%	987	15.2%
1999	1083	15.9%	107	23.2%	1190	16.3%
2000	1068	15.5%	99	21.1%	1167	15.9%
2001	1126	15.5%	130	24.0%	1256	16.1%
2002	1276	17.4%	149	27.8%	1425	18.1%
2003	1355	17.9%	149	28.2%	1504	18.6%
2004	1377	17.2%	152	25.4%	1529	17.8%
2005	1472	17.6%	168	27.1%	1640	18.2%
2006	1705	20.2%	210	30.9%	1915	21.0%
2007	1779	20.1%	214	30.4%	1993	20.9%

Table 6 shows that the number of Indigenous inmates in full-time custody in NSW increased from 912 in 1997 to 1993 in 2007. In percentage terms, the proportional representation of Indigenous inmates has increased from 14.2% in 1997 to 20.9% in 2007.

Identify the number and percentage of Aboriginal inmates as compared to the overall prison population as at 30 June for each year since 1996

Response

Table 6 (above) shows the number of Indigenous inmates in full-time custody in NSW and their proportional representation with the total full-time custody population from 1996 to 2007. The table shows that over this period the total number of Indigenous inmates increased from 869 in 1996 to 1993 in 2007.

What support is provided to indigenous inmates upon release from prison?

Response

Aboriginal Client Service Officers (ACSO)

The role of the ACSO is to provide advice and support to Probation and Parole Officers in the case management of Aboriginal offenders in the community and to assist in meeting their needs in a culturally sensitive manner. The role consults with correctional centre and rehabilitation centre

staff regarding pre and post release planning for offenders. The ACSO also acts a resource within the COS District Office to develop effective culturally appropriate offender programs as well as identifying and building collaborative community networks and partnerships to improve the effectiveness of community based offender programs.

ACSOs are located at the following DCS District Offices:

Newtown; Kempsey; Tamworth; Lake Macquarie; Bourke; Coonamble; Broken Hill; Bathurst; Dubbo; Grafton; Moree; Mount Druitt; Wagga Wagga; Wollongong; Lismore (*); Forbes (*).

(*) Funded under Drug Summit 3.

For those Aboriginal inmates who are released from custody to the supervision of COS, Probation and Parole Service, individualised case plans are developed based on the needs linked by research to re-offending. Case plans are reviewed regularly and when major changes have occurred in the offender's circumstances.

Individualised case plans may include referral to a range of culturally specific or offence-related programs operated by COS and referral to mainstream and/or Aboriginal specific external programs and services.

COS also undertake a range of monitoring and surveillance activities during the period of supervision including home visits and contact with significant others.

Community Funding Program

Through the Transitional Support Stream of the Community Funding Program, Yulawirri Nurai Indigenous Association Inc, located in Morisset, is funded to provide a transitional support service for Indigenous women prior to and after release from custody. In 2007/08, Yulawirri will receive \$84,168 (excluding GST)

What rehabilitation programs that specifically target Indigenous inmates are there?

Response

Through the Transitional Support Stream of the Community Funding Program, Namatjira Haven Limited (NSW North Coast) is funded to provide Aboriginal male offenders who have alcohol and other drug dependence issues with intensive rehabilitation throughout the period of transition from custody back into the community and to enable them to establish appropriate networks and develop life skills in the community. In 2007/08, Namatjira Haven Limited will receive \$272,543 (excluding GST).

COS, Probation and Parole Service routinely refer Aboriginal parolees to a range of Aboriginal specific and mainstream resources to address issues relating to re-offending.

COS, Program Support Group have been involved in the commencement of two programs for Aboriginal offenders and one strategy to address the needs of Aboriginal male and female offenders and their families. These are:

- Referral to Rekindling the Spirit for male and female Aboriginal offenders in Lismore and Tabulam.
- Walking Together program for males and Walking Together program for females in Newtown.
- Yindyama for Aboriginal perpetrators of family violence in Dubbo.

With regard to the individualised exit planning strategy, what allowance is there in the strategy to cater for illiterate Indigenous inmates or Indigenous inmates with a disability?

Response

DCS Disability Services makes regular referrals of offenders with intellectual disabilities to the Department of Ageing Disability and Homecare for assessment of eligibility for disability services of that department. If accepted as eligible for direct services by DADHC, referrals are regularly made to the Criminal Justice Program of that department for post release accommodation and support. Aboriginal offenders are a priority group for that program.

8) a) How many recommendations made by previous inquiries, including previous social issues inquiries, have been implemented within your department?

Response

In context with the questions on notice referring to Aboriginal offenders and offenders with a disability see below:

b) What were those recommendations and how did you implement them?

Response

1) Social Issues Committee - Report No. 9 - Sexual Offences in NSW: Sexual Violence: addressing the crime - Recommendation No. 141 (April 1996)

"That the government allocate adequate resources to research of sexual violence in NSW and undertake a range of research strategies to provide a comprehensive picture of the sexual violence experienced by migrant and Aboriginal women, lesbians, women with disabilities, women in the state's correctional system, women in church communities, survivors of childhood sexual assault and women in rural and remote parts of the state. Relevant community based organisations are to be consulted in the process of developing appropriate and effective research strategies."

The document advises that "A government response to this report was not provided."

2) Social Issues Committee - Report No. 12 - Children of Imprisoned Parents - Recommendation No. 4 (July 1997)

"That the Attorney General, the Minister for Corrective Services and the Minister for Juvenile Justice establish a program to ensure that all options for court diversion and non-custodial penalties are thoroughly exhausted before incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders is considered. The Committee urges that this recommendation be treated as urgent and that particular attention be paid to primary carers of children."

The document advises the "Government response" to this recommendation at the time was:

"Partly implemented."

"Options for court diversion and non custodial penalties are covered in the pre-sentence report prepared by the Probation and Parole Service of Corrective Services. The Law Reform Commission is now investigating sentencing of disadvantaged people, including Aboriginaes and Torres Strait Islanders and juveniles. It is anticipated that a Discussion Paper on these issues will be released later in 1998. The Government will consider any issues arising from the discussion paper when it is released."

"In relation to young people, legislation is already in place, with the introduction of the Young Offenders Act, 1997, to direct diversion from custodial sentences wherever possible. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are not excluded under the Young Offenders Act 1997, which will commence in April 1998."

3) Social Issues Committee - Report No. 12 - Children of Imprisoned Parents - Recommendation No. 6 (July 1997)

"That the Attorney General, Minister for Corrective Services and Minister for Juvenile Justice ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders are eligible for diversionary and non-custodial programs close to their communities by providing funds where necessary for community service programs or for Youth Conference outcomes."

The document advises the "Government response" to this recommendation at the time was:

"Partly implemented."

"Options for court diversion and non-custodial penalties for adults are covered in the pre-sentence report prepared by the Probation and Parole Service of Corrective Services. For juveniles, such services are provided by the Department of Juvenile Justice. Periodic detention centres currently operate at 10 locations, with a further two centres to open at Bathurst and Broken Hill."

Community Service Orders are available throughout the State. Home detention has initially been introduced in the Lower Hunter, Central Coast, Greater Sydney and Wollongong areas. Periodic detention and home detention are not available to juveniles in NSW."

4) Social Issues Committee - Report No. 22 - Adoption Practices in NSW - Recommendation No. 10 (December 2000)

"The NSW Government should review the current funding arrangements for Link-Up (NSW) to ensure that current funding levels for support, counselling and reunion assistance for indigenous people affected by past adoption practices are sufficient."

The document advises "No specific Government response to the recommendation."

How many Aboriginal corrective services officers are employed in NSW?

Response

As at 1 April 2008, 224 Corrective Services Officers have identified themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders

What percentage of corrective services officers employed by the department are Aboriginal?

Response

3.19%, being well above the State target of 2%.

Identify the programmes implemented since 1997 by the department to increase the number of Aboriginal corrective services officers

Response

DCS has an Aboriginal Employment & Careers Strategy which outlines the Department's commitment to the employment of a greater percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across all areas and at all levels. The Strategy covers areas such as:

Consultation and liaison at the local level with Aboriginal people and their communities.

Identified positions

Recruitment initiatives including an Aboriginal Employment and Careers Officer to be a focal point of contact.

Selection Committees will include an Aboriginal representative for positions where it is known that an applicant is an Aboriginal person or for Identified positions.

Recruitment Packages designed specifically for Aboriginal people.

Identification of opportunities for Traineeships

In addition, DCS is a participant in the Elsa Dixon Program, which is administered by NSW Department of Education and Training. The aim of the program is to promote diversity, innovation and service responsiveness in the NSW workforce. As well as encouraging employment and mobility for Aboriginal people within the public service, the program aims to assist in enhancing career prospects of Aboriginal people undertaking higher education.

The program comprises five elements, which are:

Permanent employment

Temporary placement

Career development

Partnership project

Graduate work experience

How many Aboriginal non-government organisations have applied for government contracts/licences/programmes in the past three years?

Response

The Department of Corrective Service's Community Funding Program operates on a triennial basis. The current triennium ends on 30 June 2008. The Department called for Expressions of Interest in late-2007 for the next triennium, 2008/2011. There were five (5) applications received by Aboriginal non-government organisations to operate a project for male indigenous inmates, two transitional projects for both male and female indigenous offenders and one family support project. However, the majority of the other organisations that apply for funds under this grants program will also target their services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

The Department of Corrective Services also administers the Victims of Violent Crime Grants Program which aims to assist non-government organisations that provide a service to victims of violent crime. In 2005/2006, one application was received by organisations specifically set up as an Aboriginal service and in 2007/2008, four applications were received from such organisations. However, a vast proportion of the organisations that apply for funds under this grants program will also target their services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

How many have been successful in obtaining government contracts?

Response

The assessment process for the 2008/2011 Community Funding Program has not yet been finalised. However, for the current triennium, 2005/2008, three Aboriginal organisations were approved service providers under this program.

Under the 2005/2006 Victims of Violent Crime Grants Program, there was one successful Aboriginal organisation that was granted funds. For 2007/2008, two of the four applications have not been successful. However the assessment process has yet to be finalised for the 2007/2008 financial year.

How many have applied for 'mainstream' funding and how many have been successful?

Response

For the DCS Community Funding Program, Expressions of Interest were called for in late-2007 for the next triennium, 2008/2011. There were fifteen applications received by non-Aboriginal (or "mainstream") non-government organisations to operate a range of inmate, transition and family support projects.

The assessment process for the 2008/2011 Community Funding Program has not yet been finalised. However, for the current triennium, 2005/2008, seven (7) non-Aboriginal (or "mainstream") organisations were approved service providers under this program.

Under the DCS Victims of Violent Crime Grants Program, twenty-four applications were received by and funds successfully granted to non-Aboriginal (or "mainstream") organisations in 2005/2006.

In 2007/2008, sixty-one applications were received by non-Aboriginal (or "mainstream") organisations of which eighteen have been approved to date. However the assessment process has not been finalised yet for the 2007/2008 financial year.

How does each government department ensure their minimum data collection sets and definitions are consistent with all other government departments?

Response

NSW DCS participates in the national collection of correctional statistics on Indigenous offenders (custody and community) that is managed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Different disability definitions – especially in relation to intellectual disability create a range of problems within NSW especially in various areas of the criminal justice system. DCS Statewide disability services uses the same definition of disability for Aboriginal and Non Aboriginal offenders - Disability staff are aware that some disabilities are more likely to be present amongst Aboriginal offenders eg hearing impairment related to Otitis Media and vision impairment related to diabetes eg diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma.

Do they have concerns that other government departments may be measuring, collecting and analysing data utilising different definitions and data collections processes? For example, what is the disability

definitions utilised by each government department and how do they collect information regarding Aboriginal people with a disability?

Response

As DCS participate in the national collection of correctional statistics on Indigenous offenders, this ensures a national standard of definition.

For disability data collection, DCS is guided by the definition as set by the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health. This definition can be found in chapter 14 of the Report on Government Services 2008.

It should be noted that for Correctional Centre purposes relating to inmates with an intellectual disability, there is a wider definition. This is explained further below.

What are the disability rates for Aboriginal and non Aboriginal prison populations in NSW?

Response

See attached spread sheet.

This data relates to offenders who have been referred to the Statewide Disability Service of DCS when on remand or at any time during their sentence. It is not possible to give data on the number of offenders with disabilities within the NSW Prison or any other prison population.

Number listed under In are those who were in custody when this data was extracted on 3/3/08. Number listed under On database are those who have been referred to SDS whilst on remand or at any time during their sentence.

Note that across all disability areas there are a greater number of Aboriginal inmates who have been referred to SDS because of a disability than would be expected on the basis of the numbers of Aboriginal inmates in custody on that day. The exception is disabilities related to physical disability and mobility problems. (Note that I have not included those with Autistic Spectrum Disorder which is also lower as this data has only recently started to be collected.)

In 2001, Justice Health conducted an Inmate Health Survey using accepted survey and research tools. Part of the survey focused on disability.

Is this data available for the past ten years?

Response

This data commenced being collated in 2001. The more comprehensive data on spreadsheet is available since 2003.

What are the disability definitions utilised to determine disability?

Response

Disability definitions depend on the type of disability being referred to and are the same as those used in the community – same for Aboriginal and non Aboriginal inmates eg

Vision –usually defined by ophthalmological assessment.

Blind - a person has no vision at all.

Legally Blind - Less than 6/60 vision (see from 6 metres what the average person sees from 60 metres)

Very restricted visual fields (the space that can be seen when looking straight ahead) in both eyes of 20 degrees in diameter or less

A combination of both visual acuity (ability to see long and short distances and to distinguish detail and shape) and visual field loss.

Hearing –usually defined by audiological assessment

Range – mild, moderate, moderately –severe, severe, profound

Physical - usually defined by medical or allied health assessment

At times it is necessary for Statewide Disability Services to use a functional skills assessment to identify possible sensory/physical disability whilst awaiting full medical assessment and reports.

Intellectual disability

Assessed IQ within the intellectual disability range. Some departments use stricter definition where it is necessary to establish that the intellectual disability was present during the developmental period – up to 18 years. This wider definition is still needed for referral to DADHC for post release support.

Within DCS a wider definition is used with emphasis on coping skills within the Correctional Centre. Vulnerability is the main criteria used when considering any inmate for placement in an Additional Support Unit for inmates with disabilities or in decisions made regarding SDS staff contributing to case management of an offender with disabilities.

Note that for the purposes of consideration of the additional health needs of 'older persons' there is a difference in definition both of inmates and of Aboriginal inmates.

The general community definition of the older person is 65 years and above. The definition of 'older person' for the inmate population reduces the age threshold to

55 years and over for non Indigenous inmates

45 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inmates

What services are provided to the Aboriginal prison population with a disability?

Response

The needs of Aboriginal inmates with disabilities are addressed in the same manner as other inmates with disabilities in the department. Placement in an Additional Support Unit (at Goulburn and Long Bay) for inmates with disabilities is being considered, placement options to maximise visits by family is always considered as a priority. Advice has been given to DCS on addressing disability access issues in new correctional centres. In particular recommendations have been made to trial new sound field equipment which has been recommended for Aboriginal and other persons with various levels of hearing impairment but who do not necessarily wear hearing aids. This will likely be included in the design of the new South Coast Correctional Centre.

How is the success and outcomes of these programmes measured?

Response

As yet, there has not been sufficient time to evaluate.

Can we have ten year trend figures for female Aboriginal participation rates in both jurisdictions?

Response

These are not yet available.
