



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CLOSURE OR DOWNSIZING OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES NSW FACILITIES

UPPER HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORTS ON PRISON CLOSURES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

14 June 2013

The Chair of the Select Committee on the Closure or Downsizing of Corrective Services NSW Facilities, the Hon Paul Green MLC, today tabled the Committee's report on the Inquiry.

Mr Green said: "This Inquiry was established to consider issues relating to the closure and downsizing of correctional facilities. However, the vast majority of evidence received by the Committee related to the Government's decision to downsize the Grafton Correctional Centre. The announcement of that decision on 29 June 2012 resulted in community unrest and anger including rallies at the site of the Gaol. The downsizing resulted in significant social and economic impacts on staff and their families, inmates and particularly on the Grafton community."

"The Committee was concerned that Corrective Services NSW did not adequately consider the likely community impact of downsizing the facility. However, the Committee notes that the Government responded to community concerns by reallocating appropriate functions and positions to the region."

"The Committee found that, notwithstanding the failures in the process, the reasons upon which Corrective Services NSW base its decisions to downsize or close facilities are justified. These reasons included a fall in the inmate population; the need to ensure that correctional facilities provide the best opportunities for inmate rehabilitation and outcomes and are reflective of best practice in contemporary corrections; and, that the delivery of corrective services offers value for money for the State."

"The Committee has made 9 recommendations designed to improve the process of downsizing or closing correctional centres, including that rural impact communities statements be undertaken, and that the NSW Government develop and implement economic growth strategies in these areas."

"The Committee received 53 submissions and heard from 17 witnesses. The Committee also conducted a site visit to the Grafton Correctional Centre and held a public forum where members of the local community shared their personal stories. The Committee thanks the submission authors, witnesses and forum participants for their important contribution to the Inquiry."

To obtain a copy of the report either visit the NSW Parliament website at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/correctiveservices, or contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 9230 3504 or email csclosure@parliament.nsw.gov.au

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on 9230 3484*