

Submission
No 426

**INQUIRY INTO THE PRIVATISATION OF PRISONS AND
PRISON-RELATED SERVICES**

Organisation: NSW Teachers Federation
Name: Mr John Irving
Position: General Secretary
Date received: 9/03/2009



NSW TEACHERS FEDERATION

TEACHERS FEDERATION HOUSE Locked Bag 3010 Darlinghurst NSW 1300

Please address all correspondence to
THE GENERAL SECRETARY

9 March 2009

In reply please quote: TA/6-11 PDG/mh

Rachel Simpson
Director - Committees
NSW Legislative Council
Macquarie Street,
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Ms Simpson

**Re: Legislative Council - General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3 - Inquiry into the
Privatisation of Prisons and Prison-Related Services**

The New South Wales Teachers Federation is pleased to make a submission to this Inquiry, as attached.

For further information contact Federation Officer, Peter de Graaff on 9217 2309.

Yours sincerely

John Irving
General Secretary

Att.

NSW Teachers Federation Submission to the NSW Legislative Council - *Inquiry into the privatisation of prisons and prison-related services*

An Overview of Educational Delivery in NSW Correctional Centres

NSW Teachers Federation members are employed as Senior Correctional Education Officers, Correctional Education Officers and Teachers by the Department of Corrective Services (DCS) Adult Education & Vocational Training Institute (AEVTI) in all publicly managed correctional centres across NSW. All of these educators are permanent employees of the Department in either full-time or fractional positions.

These members are covered currently under the *Crown Employees (Education Employees Department of Corrective Services) Consent Award 2006*. The Federation and its members in Corrective Services are currently seeking a new Award, and salary increases commensurate with those received by its members in schools and TAFE and to bridge the salary gap with educators in those sectors.

The Consent Award provides that all teachers and education officer classifications employed by the Department's Adult Education & Vocational Training Institute are required to hold qualifications in education such as a degree or a graduate diploma in education from a recognised university, as well as qualifications in a discipline other than education.

The Consent Award provides that the duties of educators are not limited just to teaching and duties related to teaching, but also includes participation in case management meetings, throughcare initiatives, etc. Many of these staff have long experience working in the correctional system, and of working in multi-disciplinary teams with other employees that comprise Offender Services & Programs (OS&P).

The Teachers Federation and its members working in Corrective Services have a long history of actively seeking to improve the level of provision, breadth of delivery and access of inmates to quality educational courses. Clause 18 of the Consent Award, Education Quality states:

"18.1 In line with the Department's commitment to reducing re-offending, AEVTI is committed to providing adult education programs to inmates and to identified disadvantaged groups within the inmate population.

18.2 The provision of educational courses shall be in the form of nationally accredited training equivalent to that available in the community. This standard will be maintained by the employment of professional educators within the system.

18.3 Education programs aim to contribute to good order of correctional centres and to the overall well being of inmates.

18.4 Education programs aim to assist inmates to develop skills and aptitudes to improve their prospects for post release reintegration into the wider community.

18.5 These programs will include classroom subjects, vocational education, creative and cultural activities, physical education and sports, social education

and library facilities.”

The Department of Corrective Services website states that:

“AEVTI is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) within the NSW Department of Corrective Services. Courses provided to offenders are accredited and qualifications gained by offenders who successfully complete modules or certificates are nationally recognised.”

...that,

“The aim of AEVTI is to improve the literacy, language and numeracy skills of all offenders in custody to a level equivalent to the school Year 10 standard, and to provide further education and vocational training for offenders who need to improve their skills and qualifications for post release employment.”

... and that,

“AEVTI adapts ... curricula to suit the needs of the individual learner and to provide preparation and support for those offenders participating in programs to address their criminal behaviour.”

The National Training Information Service website lists AEVTI as a Registered Training Organisation with the items listed below on the scope of its delivery:

BCG10103 Certificate I in General Construction
BCG20103 Certificate II in General Construction
BSB40401 Certificate IV in Business (Small Business Management)
BSB40407 Certificate IV in Small Business Management
CUS10101 Certificate I in Music Industry (Foundation)
CUS20101 Certificate II in Music Industry (Foundation)
CUV10103 Certificate I in Visual Arts and Contemporary Craft
CUV20103 Certificate II in Visual Arts and Contemporary Craft
CUV30103 Certificate III in Visual Arts and Contemporary Craft
ICA10105 Certificate I in Information Technology
ICA20105 Certificate II in Information Technology
ICA30105 Certificate III in Information Technology
RTF10103 Certificate I in Horticulture
RTF20603 Certificate II in Horticulture (Wholesale Nursery)
RTF20703 Certificate II in Horticulture (Parks and Gardens)
91347NSW Certificate II in Skills For Work And Training
91349NSW Certificate I in Access To Work And Training
91350NSW Certificate III in Employment, Education And Training
91418NSW Course in Preliminary Spoken and Written
91421NSW Certificate I in Spoken and Written English
91422NSW Certificate II in Spoken and Written English
91423NSW Certificate III in Spoken and Written English Expiry
CUVPRP02A Develop understanding of own Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander identity

A small number of TAFE Teachers also visit correctional centres to deliver specialised vocational training that is not included in AEVTI's core curricula.

The Federation understands that AEVTI has recently been audited by the NSW Vocational Education & Training Accreditation Board (VETAB), met the compliance requirements and is registered until 2014. An email sent to AEVTI staff recently from the A/Principal AEVTI stated that:

"The VETAB report is very positive about the continuous improvement strategies AEVTI is demonstrating: in particular:

- i) the customization of units in the AEET Framework and the focus this year on delivering short courses to meet defined learner needs in each stage of sentence;
- ii) the development, implementation and continuous review of the Core Skills Assessment and its pivotal role in determining priority of need in the target groups;
- iii) the comprehensiveness of the OS&P data reporting system and Head Office reporting and recording systems; and
- iv) evidence of centre planning in the form of Semester Plans and course outlines.

The report comments positively on AEVTI's commitment to providing the best possible education and vocational training to adult learner groups who have multiple needs and disadvantages."

Educational Data, Benchmarks, Budget, Reducing the Risk of Re-offending – Doing a Lot with Little

Data from the Department's Annual Reports give indications of the educational attainment of inmates incarcerated within NSW:

"...approximately 85% of the inmate population did not complete Year 10 at school" (*Annual Report NSW Department of Corrective Services 1997/98*);

"At least 65% of inmates entering the correctional system have low to non-functional literacy, numeracy and communication skills. Research indicates a correlation between low levels of literacy, low economic status and imprisonment" (*Annual Report NSW Department of Corrective Services 2000/2001*).

"In 2004/05 there were 3,286 inmates enrolled in education courses. Of these, 23% were in adult basic education courses from foundation to Certificate 3 level; 21% were in vocational education and training courses; and 1.5% were in higher education via distance delivery" (*Annual Report NSW Department of Corrective Services 2004/2005*).

The *Report on Government Services 2009* published on the Australian Government

Productivity Commission website provides detailed information in Chapter 8 on Corrective Services. According to data contained in the report, the daily average prisoner population in NSW has increased from 6358 in 1997-98 to 9634 in 2007-08, an increase of over 34 per cent in ten years. Data in the report is compiled according to a range of indicators. It states that:

“Education’ is an indicator of governments’ objective of providing program interventions to reduce the risk of re-offending, including providing access to programs that address the causes of offending and maximise the chances of successful reintegration into the community.”

...and that,

“Education’ is defined as the number of prisoners participating in one or more accredited education and training courses under the Australian Qualifications Framework... Education figures do not include participation in non-accredited education programs, or a range of offence related programs that are provided in prisons such as drug and alcohol programs, psychological programs, psychological counselling and personal development courses.”

Table 8A.21 in the *Report on Government Services 2009* provides national data on the education of inmates. In 2007-08, 32.3% of prisoners in NSW participated in education courses. That was higher than the national average of 30.2%. Of these, 1.7% participated in Pre-certificate Level 1 Courses compared with 2.9% nationally, 15.8% in Secondary school education equivalent courses compared with 6.7% nationally, 24.9% participated in Vocational Education and Training compared with 24.1% nationally, and only 1.1% participated in Higher education compared with 1.7% nationally.

Correspondence to the Teachers Federation in October 2008 from the then Minister for Justice, John Hatzistergos stated that:

“The amount allocated for inmate education in 2008-09 is \$23 million which represents 2.52% of the amount allocated in the State Budget to the Department of Corrective Services.”

Although the *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act and Regulations* permit that the Commissioner may provide for education and vocational training, the legislation does not guarantee the provision and the access of inmates to education, vocational training and libraries, nor a legislative right for inmates to participate.

The Federation has been campaigning for legislation which guarantees the provision and access to education and training courses for inmates in the NSW correctional system, and which provides a legislative right for prisoners to participate in such programs.

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that:

“Everyone has the right to education.”

Consistent with this, Article 6 of the United Nations Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners states that:

“All prisoners shall have the right to take part in cultural activities and education aimed at the full development of the human personality.”

Recommendation No. R(89) on Education in Prison from the Council of Europe states that:

“All prisoners shall have access to education, which is envisaged as consisting of classroom subjects, vocational education, creative and cultural activities, physical education and sports, social education and library facilities.”

...and that,

“Special attention should be given to those prisoners with particular difficulties and especially those with reading or writing problems.”

The complete set of recommendations developed by the Council of Europe provide benchmarks against which the effort of member states in regard to education in prison can be assessed. Prisoners in Europe are able to seek redress from the European Human Rights Commission.

The Corrections Education Association in the US has developed a set of standards against which correctional systems can be audited with regard to their provision of education to prisoners. The first standard is that there is a legislative basis for the provision of education in prison.

The Australian Senate report on Education and Training in Correctional Facilities recommended that education and training of offenders be promoted as a right, not a privilege.

Recent correspondence to the Teachers Federation from the new Minister for Corrective Services John Robertson on 29 February 2009 states:

“The United Nations *Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners* states that “the ongoing education of prisoners is to be facilitated.” Consistent with this principle, the Department of Corrective Services already strongly supports educational programs within correctional centres and offers basic educational opportunities to all offenders.

The Department, through its Adult Education & Vocational Training Institute (AEVTI), provides a range of accredited education programs such as literacy and numeracy and vocational training. Qualifications gained by offenders who successfully complete modules or certificates are nationally recognised.”

The Minister in the same letter then went on to say however,

“While the value of improving the level of education amongst inmates is acknowledged, it should be noted that the Department’s primary focus in addition to managing offenders in a safe secure and humane manner is to reduce the risk of re-offending. To this end, the Department’s resources are directed at programs and activities that address the offending behaviours including, for example, programs that address drug and alcohol addiction,

anger management and the development of life skills.

It is essential that the provision of education and programs remains flexible to and responsive to research findings, regarding the best way of addressing all the needs of offenders and assisting in their rehabilitation. This could not be achieved if educational programs were to be prescribed in legislation.”

Given that the Education Quality clause contained in the Consent Award (cited earlier) clearly enunciates that the provision of education and vocational training is in line with the Department’s commitment to reducing re-offending, given the scope of AEVTI’s delivery and the educational needs of the inmate population, and given that the provision of education and participation levels are national indicators, the Federation is surprised that the Minister appears to have repudiated the importance of the delivery of education to inmates in reducing the risk of re-offending.

Minister Robertson concluded that letter of 29 February by repeating the argument that legislation to guarantee the provision and access of inmates to education, vocational training, libraries and a right for inmates to participate would remove the discretion of the Commissioner.

The Federation believes that it is precisely for this reason that legislative guarantees are required. The Federation believes that the provision and access of inmates to education and vocational training has not kept pace with the substantial increase of the prison population in NSW. Impediments to inmate participation in education include lockdowns, time out of cells, and the choices which inmates are required to make between work in industries, and other “behavioural programs” which appear instead to be mandated and prescribed by legislation or the State Plan in addressing the risk of re-offending to meet parole or other offender review requirements.

Prior to the 2007 State Election the Federation wrote to and met with the then Minister for Justice, Tony Kelly concerning State Government commitments to education in the NSW Correctional system. Minister Kelly advised the Federation in writing that the Department of Corrective Services was to be the lead agency for achieving the State Plan objective of reducing re-offending. He acknowledged that access by inmates to appropriate education, vocational education and libraries would be critical to meeting the State Plan target.

The Commissioner Ron Woodham wrote to the Federation on 8 August 2008 and stated:

“The Government supports the principle of education as a basic right for all. The Department of Corrective Services’ mission statement makes reference to the management of offenders in a safe, secure and humane manner, encompassing respect for the rights of offenders. Accordingly, the Department offers basic education to all offenders including those held on remand.”

The Federation believes that the protection of rights, including access to education is more than a principle, and should be encompassed in more than the Department’s mission statement. While it is laudable that this has occurred, such rights should be protected by legislative guarantees securing provision and access of inmates to education, vocational training and libraries, and need to provide a process for redress. At a time when there is a high level of internal contestation within the

Department for resources the Federation believes that this is the best way to ensure that all inmates have access to a wide range of quality education and vocational training courses consistent with other sets of standards, including the recommendations on education in prison of the Council of Europe. Although the Department reports against a limited set of educational indicators as described in the *Report on Government Services 2009*, the Federation believes reporting should occur against a broader set of indicators such as those benchmarks described in the recommendations of the Council of Europe. This would have a greater influence over Departmental planning, effort and the management of human and physical resources particularly in the operation of correctional centres and the structured day of inmates.

In 2001 a report by Steurer, Smith and Tracey was released called the Three State Recidivism Study. This study was prepared for the Office of Correctional Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, of the U.S. Department of Education. The Executive Summary of the Report states:

“The study was designed to see if education, independent of other programs, could have significant impact on the behavior of inmates after release. Data on about 3,200 inmates, who were released from Maryland, Minnesota and Ohio prisons in late 1997 and early 1998, are reported in this longitudinal study. The research design, which uses educational participation while incarcerated as the major variable, measures the impact of education while incarcerated on post release behavior, primarily recidivism and employment. The states pooled their data in a format that allows for individual state as well as aggregate reports. Within each state the correctional, parole and probation, education and work force agencies cooperated in the data collection. When the study began each state determined 1,000 or more people about to be released from their state prisons. This type of research design, called a release cohort, provides for a framework with internal control groups.”

...and concludes,

“The analysis of the data indicates that inmates who participated in education programs while incarcerated showed lower rates of recidivism after three years. For each state the three measures of recidivism, re-arrest, re-conviction and re-incarceration were significantly lower. The employment data shows that in every year, for the three years that the study participants were followed, the wages reported to the state labor departments were higher for the education participants compared to the non-participants.”

The conclusion to be drawn from the report is that education and vocational training reduces the risk of re-offending. Moreover, the government clearly needs to invest more than 2.52% of its Correctional Services budget in education and vocation training.

Further, the Federation believes that it is important that education and vocational training courses delivered to inmates are nationally accredited and equivalent to that available in the community. It is important as inmates move in classification from maximum security to minimum security, that there is both consistency and contiguity in the courses provided at the various locations across the correctional system so inmates are able to complete courses, that learner pathways are in place, and that teachers are able to assess progress. Movement through the correctional system by

inmates can be extremely disruptive for inmates, and it is vital therefore that they are able to continue the same courses when moved.

The long experience of Teachers Federation members working in Corrective Services is that education and vocational training strongly contributes to the good order of correctional centres, and the well being of inmates by humanising the penal setting, and through providing second chance education that improves prospects upon release for successful reintegration into the community.

Privatisation

The NSW Teachers Federation is opposed to the privatisation of Parklea and Cessnock Correctional Centres. Federation members at a number of other Correctional Centres have passed resolutions that they have sent to the Minister. Federation members have also joined in actions with the Public Service Association to protest against the privatisation.

At its meeting on 24 February 2009, the NSW Teachers Federation Executive carried the following

“The NSW Teachers Federation opposes the privatisation of Correctional Centres at Cessnock and Parklea, and the extension of these plans to Grafton. We call on the Minister John Robertson to bring this privatisation to a halt and to work with Unions to achieve the best outcome for NSW and for the rights at work of those currently employed there, including teachers and education officers.

The Federation is deeply concerned that after having achieved permanency for educators in Corrective Services after many years of campaigning by members, that education staff at these centres risk losing their job security, pay, conditions and other entitlements as frontline workers in the public sector.

These changes will mean that the work of teachers will be replaced by outsourced provision and lead to lesser conditions of employment, including the casualisation of permanent employment. Due to the location of Cessnock many members will be unable to move due to family commitments and community ties.

The Federation is concerned that the privatisation of correctional centres will jeopardise inmates' access to education and vocational training, and undermine the potential for their rehabilitation. Further, these privatisation plans will make goals a 'for profit' industry at the expense of the job and rights at work of public sector workers.

1. The Federation will give consideration to lodging a dispute in the Industrial Relation Commission to protect the rights of members at Cessnock and Parklea.

2. The Federation Senior Officers will monitor developments and authorise appropriate industrial action.

3. The Federation will seek to give evidence before the Upper House Inquiry.

4. The Federation will seek support from Associations to write letters of protest to the State Government.”

A resolution carried by Teachers Federation members in the Corrective Services Teachers Association at Cessnock on 23 February said in part the following:

“We condemn the decision of the Government of NSW to privatise this Correctional Centre.

We are longstanding government employees with skills and expertise in delivering education and training to inmates.

The decision to privatise the Centre will mean that most of us will lose our rights at work as we will lose our job security and the conditions afforded to us as public sector employees working with some of the most difficult members of our community.

Privatisation means that the programs that we offer will be most likely delivered by other training providers whose employees are working under inferior conditions than currently exist in all correctional centres throughout NSW.

Due to the geographical location of Cessnock Correctional Centre many of us will not have the option of moving to other centres due to family and financial commitments, and the greater travelling distances involved.

These new demands are causing many of our members sleepless nights, and affecting relationships with partners and children.

We are angry that the Department has taken little account of our situation.”

The Federation believes that the privatisation of Cessnock and Parklea Correctional Centres will have a negative impact on the provision of existing education and vocational training courses to inmates. It is important that as inmates move across the correctional system that they are able to access the same types of courses and be able to progress in them. The educational and vocational training experiences of inmates should be built upon as inmates move through the correctional system.

Cessnock, for example offers a wide variety of courses to inmates. Education courses include Literacy, AEET – Literacy/Koori, ESOL, Numeracy, Pre-Employment Skills, Info Tech, Music, Aboriginal Art, Aboriginal Dance, Aboriginal Mentor, Pacific Islanders, Pottery, Tutorial Assistance, and Art.

Vocational training courses include OHS Induction, First Aid, Traineeship General Construction Cert 11, General Construction Cert 11, Asbestos Sheet removal, Painting & Decorating, Welding, Cert 1 Kitchen Operations, Food Hygiene - Hospitality, Industrial Cleaning, Appliance Repair, Small Business, and Fork Lift & Crane Driving.

Employment programs at Cessnock with which the vocational training courses are linked include Repair and Rebuilding Demountables, Carpentry Shop, Building Maintenance, Ground Maintenance, Metal Fabrication, Upholstery, Kitchen Internal, Asset Maintenance (Cleaners).

Many of the courses listed at Cessnock are delivered within the framework of

courses listed on the scope of AEVTI as a Registered Training Organisation on the National Training Information System. Teachers customise some of the generic competencies described in these courses to meet the needs of individual inmates as well as a range of cultural groups.

Education staff at Cessnock Correctional Centre have for over ten years implemented Traineeships that are conducted in the Corrective Service Industries (CSI) Demountables business units. Trainees perform tasks in the workplace, as directed by their overseers, are trained by an AEVTI teacher and are then assessed for competency by a teacher from TAFE. A strong partnership has been developed by AEVTI teachers employed by the Department and their colleagues in TAFE. Trainees achieve a Certificate II in General Construction and a certificate of completion from the Department of Education and Training. In 2007 seven of the nine trainees successfully completed the program. In 2008 ten trainees were in the Demountables.

Nangy Kungar is an Aboriginal vocational training program devised at by Education staff at Cessnock enabling up to 10 inmate students to achieve Certificate II in General Construction. Aboriginal students are employed in the Demountables and receive on-the-job training in that work location. Aboriginal students who work in the Demountables for more than twelve months may be considered for a Traineeship in General construction. Students in this program also participate in Aboriginal cultural courses. The Nangy Kungar program is also multi-disciplinary with the participation Departments Alcohol & Other Drug Workers contributing.

Students from the Nangy Kungar program undertaking the Traineeship in General construction have been nominated and were finalists in the NSW State Training Awards.

Pre-Employment is a mandatory program for every inmate in minimum security at Cessnock Correctional Complex prior to employment by CSI. It provides an induction to the Centre and includes: one day of OHS Construction Induction Statement of Training; one day course in "Identify Own Essential Skills" from Certificate I in Access to Work and Training (AEVTI); literacy/numeracy assessment; and an introduction to Offender Services & Programs and Chapel services at Cessnock Correctional Complex. This provides all inmate workers in the Demountables with the WorkCover training required by OHS legislation.

At Parklea there is a similarly wide range of provision and integration of courses with CSI Business Units. For example, use is made of the print shop to provide inmates with vocational training experience.

The Federation fears that the privatisation of Cessnock and Parklea will mean that the work which these staff have undertaken to develop sophisticated programs to benefit inmates will be lost if these Centres become for-profit operations run by private enterprise.

The Federation is deeply concerned that its members in these Correctional Centres face losing rights at work that they have fought for and campaigned to protect. Educators in Corrective Services are frontline public sector workers engaged in an extremely difficult task: changing the minds of prisoners about criminal behaviour in a demanding environment and improving their prospects for reintegration into the

community upon release. Many of the Federation's members at these locations are long standing employees of the Department whose valuable experience may be lost. Many believe they will be disadvantaged if the privatization of their work proceeds.

At a time when the world economy is turmoil, many of those at Cessnock believe they will be unable to transfer to other locations due to family commitments, ties to the local community, changes which will impact on their children. They would be forced to sell their houses at a time when the housing market is falling.

It is shameful that this Government is considering outsourcing the work, rights and job security of education staff through privatisation, which will most probably mean their jobs will be casualised if delivered by another provider.

The Federation is concerned that the privatisation of prisons, which is in itself the handing over of the State's power of coercion over individuals in the administration of sentencing to private corporations is a retrograde step. The Federation believes that this power should not be concealed behind commercial-in-confidence arrangements or dictated to by the demands of corporations to produce profits for their shareholders.

The privatisation of correctional centres will mean a loss of transparency, and the use of commercial-in-confidence arrangements to conceal changes to the level of provision and access of inmates to education, vocational training and other rehabilitation programs. The Federation believes that comparisons between public and private conditions are difficult to make given that relevant data is often hidden due to commercial-in-confidence agreements.

The Federation notes that at Junee Correctional Centre over the life of its operation there have been a number of changes to the provision of educational delivery. Initially, the operator employed a number of teachers directly but then dismissed them at a time when those employees were commencing to campaign for better pay and conditions. Delivery in recent years has been provided through East Gippsland TAFE from Victoria, and the Federation understands that Riverina Institute NSW TAFE is commencing operation and delivery within that Centre. It is likely that educators employed by Riverina Institute will be temporary or casual employees, as the Federation understands it is unlikely to make a commitment to employing permanent staff there as delivery will be provided at Junee under a commercial contract.

All education staff employed by the Department's Adult Education & Vocational Training Institute are permanent. Federation members in Corrective Services campaigned for many years to end the long-term casual employment of teachers and for appointment to permanency. It was argued that job security provides a greater contribution to dynamic security in a correctional setting as casual employees were more open to threats and manipulation by prisoners and unlikely to report it. Casual employees often feel that they are outsiders, whereas permanent employees feel that there are a part of the Department and contribute in greater way to the development of esprit de corp. Importantly, permanently employed education staff in Corrective Services contribute directly to case management, classification of inmates, provide reports for offender review and parole, and contribute to throughcare, whereas casual education staff did not.

The Federation believes that the massive growth of prison populations in English speaking countries under the guise of criminological theories of "incapacitation" and "warehousing" criminals in ever expanding prison/industrial complexes is an inevitable corollary of the profit principle driving corporations.

The massive growth in prisoner numbers across the English speaking world, including NSW, has come at a considerable cost to the community as government funding and capital expenditure is diverted from areas such as education, health and transport to the correctional system.

The morality of having prisons run by private firms must be questioned. Private companies, to survive, must return a dividend to their shareholders, or put simply, must make a profit. Turning over the running of prisons to private corporations means that these companies will have a vested interest in imprisonment rates increasing rather than decreasing.

The NSW prison population has rapid expanded alongside the demands of the 'law and order' mindset that has gripped politicians and the tabloid media over recent years. Surely, the aim given the massive budget afforded to Corrective Services should be to reduce the prison population, not expand it through cheaper private operators. All political parties needs to look at ways to reverse the law and order auction that became so fashionable in recent elections.

On the on 12 January 2009, the *San Diego Union Tribune* ran a story that two judges had taken kickbacks amounting to \$2.6 million to send teenagers to privately run youth detention centres. Many of those incarcerated had not been represented in court, and had committed petty offences.

Whilst this is an extreme case, it is clear corporation operating privately run correctional centres have an interest in promoting and expanding their business. It turns on its head the old adage, "Crime doesn't pay." For such companies, it can pay.

The Federation is extremely concerned at reports in the Sydney Morning Herald on 5 March 2009 concerning donations made to the ALP and Labor MP Paul McLeay from the GEO Group. The paper further suggested that the GEO group was favoured by Government to takeover Cessnock and Parklea Correctional Centres.

It is indeed appalling, if true, as reported in the Sydney Morning Herald that,

"GEO donated \$2000 to Mr McLeay's personal campaign on August 28, 2005 when the member for Heathcote was vice-chairman of the Public Accounts Committee that was looking into whether the private Junee prison was providing value for money compared to public jails."

Given that the jobs of employees at Cessnock and Parklea Correctional Centres, including education staff have been put at risk by proposals to privatise, such reports provide a tragic commentary on government in NSW and the morality of prison privatisation and its justifications.

Conclusion

The Federation believes that privatisation of Cessnock, Parklea or other Correctional

Centres will have a negative impact on the prospects of inmates for successful reintegration to the community upon release. Inmates at both Cessnock and Parklea Correctional Centres are currently provided with high quality courses that are integrated with delivery across the rest of the system and allow inmates to progress along learner pathways. Education staff at these Centres also developed innovative courses allowing inmates to undertake traineeships whilst working in Corrective Service Industries Business Units.

If Cessnock and Parklea are privatised this will have a deleterious impact on the education staff at these locations. Many at Cessnock risk losing their job security, rights and conditions as frontline public sector workers. Many already are experiencing anxiety and sleepless nights as result of the proposed changes. Due to the current world economic crisis and the slump in real estate prices, those at Cessnock will be unfairly impacted upon, especially if seeking employment elsewhere in the Department. If Junee is taken as the model, then educational provision is likely to be further outsourced and educators will be employed on a temporary or casual basis.

The Federation believes the Department needs to invest more in the delivery of educational, vocational training, and libraries. Moreover it needs to improve inmate access to such courses, and ensure inmates have a right to participate in education and vocational training, and have access to well stocked and resourced libraries. Further, the Government if it is serious about meeting an objective in the State Plan to reduce the risk of re-offending must begin by acknowledging that provision of education and vocational training to inmates is an essential part of this effort and not merely discretionary.

For the reasons outlined in this submission the Federation not only opposes the planned privatisation of Cessnock, Parklea or other Correctional Centres but also believes the Parliament should guarantee the provision and participation rights of inmates to access education, vocational training and libraries consistent with international benchmarks such as those developed by the UN or Council of Europe.

Attachments

"Former Inmate is a top training award finalist" *Corrective Services Bulletin*, 14/11/04

"Teamwork – the key to traineeship success" *Corrective Services Bulletin* 16/4/06

awards

Brush Farm Academy



Congratulations to Class 04/04, who graduated from Certificate III in Correctional Practice at the Brush Farm Academy on 24 September.

Leonardo Canao of Parklea
John Canty of Goulburn
Brian Carvalho of John Morony
Aaron Cunico of Broken Hill
John Eustace of Trainees
Warren Freebody of Goulburn
Carl Geurts of Goulburn
Daryl Gugich of Mannus
Dale Howard of John Morony
Andrew Jarrett of John Morony
Shon McArthur of Oberon
Darren McPhillips of Silverwater
Damien O'Mahony of Grafton
Geoffrey Swannell of Lithgow
Warren Shore of Mannus
Kirk Tuivaga of Long Bay Hospital
Paul Yeomans of Parklea



Former inmate is a top training award finalist

By Alex Apostolatos, Manager, Offender Services & Programs, Cessnock Correctional Centre

There was plenty of excitement at the Darling Harbour Convention Centre when Cessnock education staff members attended the Department of Education & Training's 2004 NSW Training Awards.

They were hoping that finalist Ross Davis, a former inmate at Cessnock Correctional Complex, would be declared the NSW Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year.

In August 2002, Mr Davis commenced a traineeship in general construction at Cessnock Correctional Centre.

He went on to complete Certificate III in Carpentry & Joinery through the Nangy Kungar 'Listen and Think' program, and participated in a range of other education, cultural and alcohol and other drugs programs offered by the centre.

Not satisfied with that, he enrolled in a

distance education course in Certificate IV Building Studies Residential, which will be completed very shortly.

Mr Davis competed with adult learners from across the state and was one of three finalists in this very prestigious award.

While he did not take out the award, he received well-deserved recognition for the effort he put into his studies in the past two years.

Mr Davis was released in August this year,



Ross Davis (centre) with education staff (left to right): Lillian Gordon, Helen Morgan, Peter Quaas and Sara Turner.

just before the awards evening. He will soon be interviewed for employment with a building construction company.

Thanks go to the Cessnock Education team who provided the training and tireless support to make Mr Davis's success a reality.

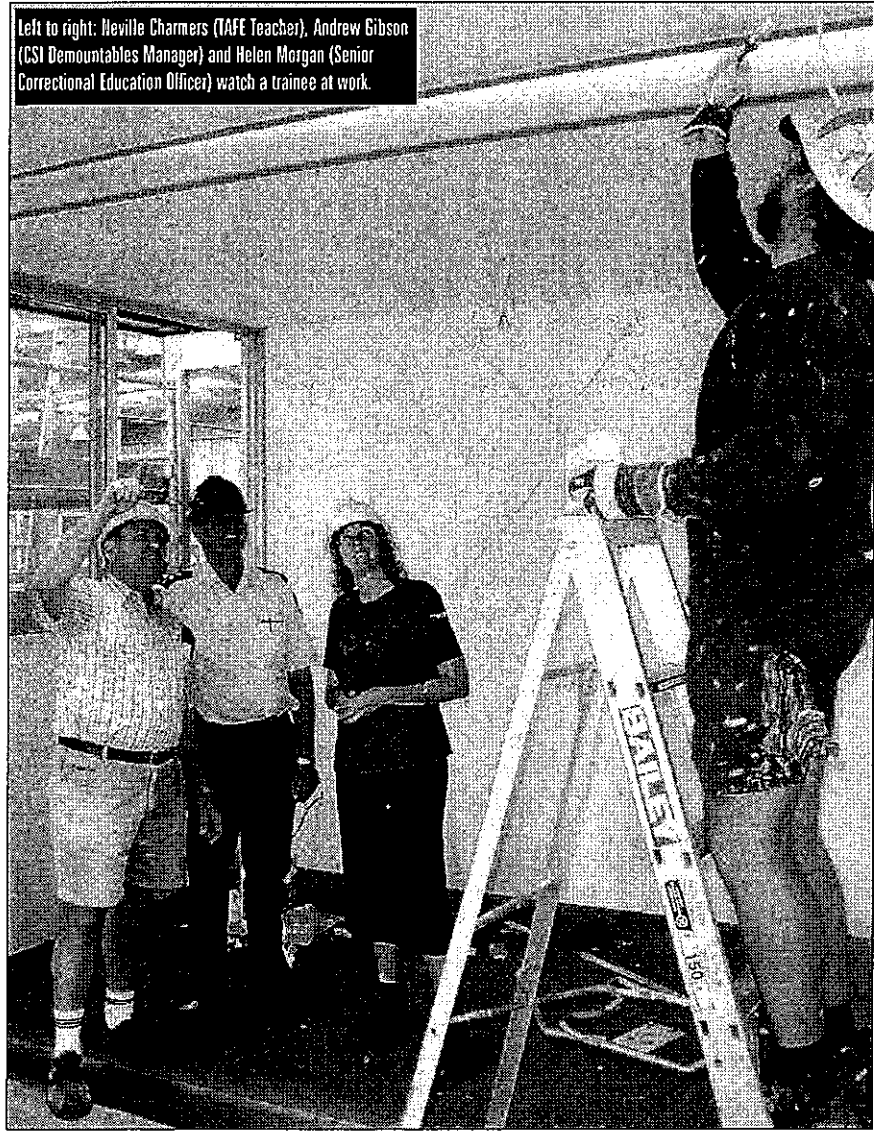
Congratulations to teachers Peter Quaas and Lillian Gordon, Correctional Education Officer Sara Turner and Senior Correctional Education Officer Helen Morgan who attended the evening with pride.

Special thanks to Pat Maurer and the Aboriginal Support & Planning Unit, who over the past seven years, have strongly supported the Nangy Kungar Program. The unit's Director, Pat Maurer provided strong financial assistance that has enabled the Nangy Kungar Workshop to be fitted out and well equipped.

Well done to all those involved. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by your students as well as by the centre's management.

Teamwork - the key to traineeship success

By Helen Morgan, Senior Correctional Education Officer, Cessnock Correctional Complex



Left to right: Neville Charmers (TAFE Teacher), Andrew Gibson (CSI Demountables Manager) and Helen Morgan (Senior Correctional Education Officer) watch a trainee at work.

It takes teamwork to accomplish on-the-job flexible workplace traineeships, as proven recently when eight inmate trainees graduated from their Traineeship in General Construction.

The trainees spent the past twelve months working and receiving on-the-job training in the CSI Demountables refurbishment business unit. Their achievements are a credit not only to their own effort but also to the staff who have participated in the training program.

It truly was a team effort with all the staff maintaining high levels of cooperation. Correctional Education Officers, Helen

Morgan and Sara Turner, facilitated the overall program while CSI Overseers (Darrell Cox, Andrew Gibson, Steve Jarman, Alan Provenzano, Clive Simpson and, Mark Smith), AEVTI Construction teacher, Greg McSparran, provided on-the-job training. Neville Charmers, a TAFE teacher regularly visited the Centre to validate evidence of training.

The General Manager, the Manager of

Industries and the Manager of Offender Services and Programs were extremely supportive. The program was enhanced by the support of many other officers and staff that, although not directly involved in the training, assisted in small but important ways.

Everyone benefited from this program: the trainees achieved certificates; AEVTI and TAFE witnessed program success; whilst CSI was able to retain valuable, key workers who provided stability to the workforce and enhanced performance.

According to George Hunt, Manager of Industries, "The Demountable business unit represents a typical construction site employing 75 inmates in a vast array of trade functions. The introduction of the traineeships has allowed this business to develop its skill base which has improved the productivity and demonstrated to all inmates the benefit of taking ownership of their work environment. All of the trainees have been promoted to reflect their contribution and most are now leading hands giving instruction to fellow workers. In a transient centre where the average stay is less than five weeks we were struggling to meet our commitment to DET to deliver a quality product within a prescribed time frame. This nucleus of skilled workers has enabled our staff to focus more on the planning, scheduling and administrative responsibilities of the business unit and this has contributed to the improved productivity. Congratulations to all the trainees and my thanks to the Demountable staff who have been a key element in the success of this program."

Steve Thorpe, CSI Operations Development Manager, said "It's a credit to these trainees on their achievement, and to AEVTI and Industries staff at Cessnock that facilitated the traineeships."

David Gould, State Manager Vocational Education and Training, was also impressed and offered "Many thanks to the AEVTI, TAFE NSW and CSI personnel involved in Traineeships at Cessnock Correctional Complex for helping these inmates achieve these wonderful results."

Thank you to all the staff at Cessnock Correctional Complex for making the 2005 Traineeship program a resounding success.