

**Submission  
No 22**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OR DOWNSIZING OF  
CORRECTIVE SERVICES NSW FACILITIES**

**Name:** Ms Allison Sommer

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# Inquiry into the Closure or Downsizing of Corrective Services NSW Facilities Community Impact Survey



RECEIVED

7 NOV 2012

LEGISLATIVE  
COUNCIL

Name:

Email:

Postcode:

Phone:

What is your connection to the **Grafton Gaol**? (eg, employee, town resident)

Concerned town resident

Why is **Grafton Gaol** important to the community of Grafton?

The Grafton gaol is extremely important to the Grafton community. It was one of the last biggest government employers left in Grafton and provides thousands of dollars to the local economy. Grafton has recently suffered many major employers leaving town including 108 Telstra jobs and 200 abattoir workers. A small community like Grafton cannot survive when major job losses, including the goal restructure occur. The disappointing fact is that an economic impact statement was not done because if it was there is no way the near closure would have occurred. The town simply cannot survive without this employment. The knock on effect to the local economy including shops, schools, services also was not taken into the account by the government.

Historically Grafton is a gaol town. The gaol has operated here for many, many years. It is part of the nature of Grafton. At one point there was talk of a new goal for Grafton but I guess this went to Kempsey and Cessnock. Political decisions rather than the best option. The Grafton gaol and its employees are a vital part of the Clarence Valley community.

The other very disappointing aspect is that the government just made a decision without any consultation any negotiation. Option to close other costly gaols like long bay and Cooma were not considered. Apparently Long Bay is staffed mostly on casual employment. The people of Grafton were treated like trash by the NSW government. The truck drivers who came to take the prisoners away had no respect for the local people and someone could have easily been injured or run over. Instead of listen to the people of the community Mr O'Farrell would rather send the riot squad and squash a community.

Many of the inmates were from an aboriginal background and now no longer can have visits from family.

## How will the closure or downsizing of Grafton Gaol affect employment opportunities in your community?

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## How will the closure or downsizing of Grafton Gaol affect local business and the local economy of Grafton?

Loss of millions of dollars from the local economy  
Loss of value of real estate because many properties need to be sold  
Loss of services due to less money in community  
Loss of students at schools  
Loss of participation in sporting clubs

**Clarence Valley Community Unions Contact: Sharryn Usher 0417 497 701  
or email to [clarencevalleycommunityu@gmail.com](mailto:clarencevalleycommunityu@gmail.com) subject line: submission**