

**Submission
No 1**

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

Organisation: Grafton Branch, Country Women's Association

Name: Mrs Judy Richardson AM

Date received: 27/09/2011

SUBMISSION TO SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRING INTO AND TO REPORT ON THE CLOSURE AND/OR THE DOWNSIZING OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES NSW FACILITIES IN GRAFTON NSW.

This submission is made on behalf of the Grafton Branch of the Country Women's Association of New South Wales.

- a) Mention is made by the Community as a whole of the lack of information, documents and records made available to the Minister eg financial analysis upon which to base an overall opinion;**
- b) The necessary Rural Impact Statement was completed prior to the decision to close or downsize any rural facility resulting in biased information being accepted;**
- c) It is our understanding that adequate time was not taken in considering the decision and conveying same to the stakeholders which includes Local Government, Chamber of Commerce, representations from Industry, Prisoner Welfare Groups and their families and staff;**
- d) As mentioned above the financial repercussions to be felt throughout the facility and Community on the downsizing and loss of this section of the Grafton township and will be an ongoing tragedy from which the town may never recover;**
- e) Of serious concern is how this upheaval will affect the staff, their families in particular those indigenous families who are not always readily relocated;**
- f) The heritage value of the buildings, which without the necessity for use, will as we all know fall into a state of disrepair. Where are the details of the consideration of these buildings and the ongoing maintenance?**
- g) Perhaps the most telling of omissions is the lack of consideration of the staff, some with many years of service, who have purchased their homes and to all intents and purposes would acknowledge Grafton as their "home" town together with their spouses and children. Relocation at any time is difficult however, this is greater than that, it is the movement of the working parents from their input to the**

Community and the loss of students from the schools resulting in lower class numbers and loss of teachers and amenities;

- h) As the weeks pass and the situation is allowed to remain as an “incomplete” problem, from which a community of this size cannot of itself repair, the most certain factor to emerge will be the permanent loss of a whole section of the Grafton community as though a part of the town was cut away and the haemorrhage caused cannot be healed;**

It is noted that the call for input by the Select Committee calls for “any other related matters”. There can really be nothing in the Community as a whole that is somehow an unrelated matter, so large is the problem.

We, the Country Women’s Association of New South Wales, Grafton Branch respectfully request that the whole process be again approached in a business like manner and serious consideration be given to our concerns for our Community which will require legitimate meetings with stakeholders for a “Community” solution.

**Judy Richardson CPA, AM
President Grafton CWA
(former NSW State President)**