

Submission
No 324

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

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially Confidential

1. I believe a privately run prison weakens accountability, why would a private prison report incidences of assaults on inmates or staff, or disciplinary breaches knowing that it would be used against them and lessen their chances of renewing their contracts. A private prison needs to keep costs down in order to make profits so the incentive to cut costs at the expense of standards and increase the length of stay to maintain their profits must be a priority, after all it is a private business.

Privately run Junee only has minimum to medium classification inmates, hard to manage inmates and mental health inmates are never classified to Junee. How can you compare the running costs, safety, rates of assaults, disciplinary breaches, staffing levels etc when Junee doesn't have the higher classification, harder to manage inmates and due to commercial sensitivity Junee does not have to show their costs per inmate thereby maintaining 'corporate secrecy'.

2. Private prisons have a fixed fee regardless of actual numbers. For example if the gaol capacity is 682 and there are only 641 inmates housed, the private prison is paid for 682 regardless of actual numbers. Costs cannot be compared when the private prison does not contribute to the transport of inmates to court or inter gaol transfers, they do not house the high maintenance mental health inmates or the terrorists or maximum security inmates thereby lessening their staffing levels associated with these issues.

3: Private prisons are not obliged to report or give statistics due to the commercially sensitive nature of their operations as they are in competition with other operators around Australia.

4) The private security companies do not have the same stringent police and background checks that exist in DCS. Their employees could have associations with gangs, bikies and ex inmates. How can you arm them and put them in a truck transporting inmates (the department is going to privatise transport and court security) to court or other gaols when private security companies can't even keep a hold of their own weapons in an armoured vehicle transporting cash.

5) So far the private company patrolling the perimeter of the gaols and manning the boom gates have gone shopping in the patrol vehicle leaving the perimeter unpatrolled, rolled a vehicle and let an inmate walk out the gate (this is denied by the commissioner).

6) It is my understanding that the Victorian experience with their female gaol in private hands was to take it back into the public hands.

7) The constant comparisons to the privately run Junee gaol are unacceptable, inadequate and misleading. Costing accountability and information on assaults, disciplinary breaches etc are not made public as the operator is a private company in competition with other operators in Australia and the information is commercially sensitive. When a private company can hide behind corporate secrecy the legitimacy of any comparisons must be challenged and refuted.

At every opportunity the department 'leaks' information on so called roting to enhance the departments' move to privatise. This so called roting of overtime is a little confusing to me when overtime can only be approved by management. Why is the department blaming the lower staff for the inability of the managers to manage.

Why not look at the number of assistant commissioners the department now has against the number there was when the current commissioner was an assistant or the massive number of General Managers, SAS's, AS's that there are in the department. I'm sure that a considerable amount of money could be saved by reducing these numbers. How many of these staff actually work weekends, public holidays, afternoon and night shifts?

There is nothing wrong with the 'way forward' from my observations except for some staffing levels, so if it was touted as such a grand plan why hasn't it been implemented and is it not a sign of mismanagement that the strategies have not been implemented.

I draw your attention to the following papers, they make for interesting reading:-

Public Accountants Committee - Value for money from NSW Correctional Centres
Report no. 156 Public Accounts Committee
Parliamentary paper no. 13/53

Contracting out Community Corrections: The Judicial Perspective
Justice Frank Vincent-Supreme Court Victoria

Working paper series, from the School of Accounting and Finance, University of Wollongong -
Value for money neo-liberalism and New South Wales Prisons
Jane Andrew, Damien Cahill