

**Submission
No 1**

INQUIRY INTO THE OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES

Organisation:

Name: Mr Bob Haebich

Telephone:

Date Received: 9/12/2005

Subject:

Summary

Memorandum

To: The Hon. Amanda Fazio MLC

From: Bob Haebich

Date: 9/12/2005

Re: Inquiry into issues relating to the operations and management of the Department of Corrective Services.

The operations and management of Corrective Services Industries.

To the extent the Charter deals with the validity of considering whether there is or should be any right or entitlement in private industry to restrict the activities of Corrective Services Industries (CSIs) in the market place and, if so, to what extent restriction best serves the overall public interest, the charter should be regularly reconsidered in the light of the competing interests of stake holders and the overriding interests of the public. It is a matter of concern that topic 1a accepts the term “unfair competition” and that topic 1c. accepts the term “unfairly disadvantaged”. The logical conclusion invited by topic 1b. seems to be that CSIs cannot conduct business activities which may cost jobs in other businesses nor may a CSI carry out work which has been previously done by other businesses eg. curtain making. Globalisation and free trade are the way business is increasingly being obliged to operate. Yet private enterprise in NSW must, apparently, be fully protected at public expense, from any activities of CSIs.

The published and hidden human and financial cost of crime, and of the criminal justice, prison and alternative systems are astronomical. Rehabilitation and minimization of recidivism would ideally be major goals of any prison system designed to benefit the community and prisoners on release. Education, training and work experience which facilitate employment, are essential to achievement of these goals. Everyone bears direct and indirect costs as a result of crime. Everyone benefits one way or another from a reduction in crime.

Not every one benefits from protecting businesses from competition from Corrective Services Industries (CSI). The investors and current staff of private enterprise benefit so long as their business is profitable. Apart from the obvious political implications of businesses and employment being endangered or lost through some advantage of a CSI, why should the community lose the benefits of a CSI in order to maintain the vested interests and of a small minority of the community and avoid the political ill will of that minority? If the argument is that there is not a level playing field, answer

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must be: there is no inherent moral or legal right to a level playing field, especially where the cost is to the general community. There must be an overall public benefit to justify a special deal for competitors of CSIs. What are those special benefits for the community? Apart from political implications and perceptions, by way of example, how does a CSI differ in concept from Landcom? Why do different considerations apply?

Ultimately CSIs must stand or fall on whether CSIs add value to the goals of the prison system, not on their profitability and not on their effect or potential effect on competitors.

The interstate transfer of offenders and parolees

The communications, agreements and sign offs should be uniform nationally. There should be no informal arrangements. Uniform treatment has the advantages of transparency, consistency, predictability, economy and easier administration.

Other issues: Incarceration of those with intellectual and psychological disability.

The incarceration of the disabled is a matter challenging the prison system at every turn. Nevertheless there seems little political will to face the issue. Intellectually and psychologically impaired prisoners have had inflicted on them the punishment of last resort, incarceration. Yet they do not deserve punishment but help and assistance. The ultimate reason for this great injustice is that government has not faced its responsibilities to this section of the community. Those imprisoned, ultimately because of their disability, have little power or political influence. Institutional care is now considered inappropriate for many people with such disabilities yet the disabled are sent to prisons which of their very nature do not exist to address and treat such disabilities. Jail must be a place of special but unjustified suffering for the disabled.

Please note: I have no vested interest in any of the matters I have raised in this submission to your inquiry.