

Submission
No 120

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

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially Confidential

The Hon Amanda Fazio
MLC
Chair
General Purpose Standing Committee No 3
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

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Dear Ms Fazio

RE: INQUIRY INTO THE PRIVATISATION OF PRISONS AND PRISON-RELATED SERVICES

I request that as I am a current employee of the Department that all contact details of mine be withheld.

I would like the general purpose standing committee No 3 to consider, as part of its report into the proposed privatisation of prisons and prison related services in NSW the following issues

Overtime has had a significant focus as well as staffing levels. Does the committee consider the amount of overtime spent for managing offenders in Correctional Centres versus overtime approved and worked by other sections of the Department. The Commissioner stated in his presentation on Monday 23rd that staffing had increased proportionally with the increase in inmate numbers.

How is this possible in a Correctional Centre setting when the Commissioner is on record for advising that staffing is being transferred to provide services in the community setting instead. This is certainly the message we have been given as staff and have been advised that positions are being transferred to provide such a service. As such does the Committee look at the staffing levels in the actual areas under review i.e. staffing at the actual correctional centre and courts and the levels that were there in the past versus the actual staffing to offender ratios that exist today. Will the committee be considering the information based on actual staffing levels taking into account vacancy levels or the staffing profile and changing offender profiles at the centre.

With the introduction of more programs and industries for offenders there has been a marked decrease in the incident of assault on offenders and staff within correctional centres than the level of this that occurred in the early 1990's. As the Department was able to do this within existing staffing with workplace reform including negotiations and consultation with the union why has management failed to implement a proposal that was put to staff as early as 2003 and has had significant management resources including senior staff of the department taken from their normal duties so that they could implement this. It seems strange that the components negotiated and still not totally implemented is the change of the governor and deputy governor of the various centres to become General Managers and Manager of Security in a cluster management arrangement in which the Department has not kept the clusters solely to what was originally stated instead employing more senior staff at this level in some of these clusters to manage the centres instead. The new award for the Senior Assistant Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents where management created substantive vacancies by filling these positions for an extended period of time on temporary appointments,

prior to the commencement of this arrangement. Since the agreement has been reached management still have not achieved the stated agreed savings, although they have employed more staff permanently at these staffing classifications, because they have not implemented the Way Forward package.

Since the original announcement of the Way Forward there has been significant changes within Correctional Centres including a compliance group that review all publicly owned correctional centres for the implementation of current correctional centre work practices. The Department has significantly increased the use of technology within centres and will continue to do so. Since the Department is able to achieve this, why with the co operation of staff, instead of the exclusion of feedback from staff until management have finalised everything, is it beyond senior management to work with the staff to achieve the changes that all government agencies need to implement. The mini budget was not unique to the Department of Corrective Services, and whilst it seems intent on some aspects of changing work practises it is currently operating on a silo system instead of an inclusive multi disciplinary approach to achieve its goals of streamlining and efficiencies. It seems to treat staff as island groups and will only talk to the unions and staff if they are in the correct pecking order to warrant this. This is evident with the negotiations that have already occurred, whereby it is implemented on a piecemeal process.

It would seem strange that the Department is stating because of costs that it needs to privatise to come in on budget. As far as I am aware private sector industries are created to make profits. It seems wrong for any government to actively encourage the private sector to benefit from the most vulnerable in the state being those who have lost there liberty. Surely instead the government should be

instructing the Department to sit down with all the relevant stakeholders and find solutions to resolve this just as the government must be doing with the electricity instead of the proposed power sell off.

It seems odd that rather than manage, the most senior management in the Department want to absolve themselves of their own accountability of the position the Department is now facing. If it was any other organisation you would look at the top of the Department in relation to the leadership it has given to all sections of the organisation as to why it is not achieving its targets. As part of this it must include resource management which includes budget management.

I am sure that the Department's costs are forwarded for review through avenues including the reporting to Treasury and in its Annual Report. It would be good if this could be reviewed taking into account that the Department has now also announced that Junee staff will commence providing some of the reporting that employees of the Department have been providing on program delivery for some period of time. It would seem to dispel the notion that the monitor officer and reports submitted for meeting contractual requirements of the privately run facility of Junee can be compared to information that is already being provided now to the department of delivery of services within Correctional Centres. It would imply instead that the Department as part of its contract management is unaware of the real level of service delivery instead. Another important aspect to be considered with this privatisation is that it will be piecemeal also with the nominated centres as Departmental staff will be required to work there for the program delivery of violence and sex offenders that are proposed. The private sector is not seen as having the ability to deliver these to the standard required by the Department.

This really begs the question as to why privatise anything at all. Instead review and make changes to position the Department to deliver its requirements in line with the State Plan and within the resources that are already available to it without the need to provide profits for a small group of private investors, before offenders and so enable the Department to also address the lead agency requirements of reducing recidivism by better management of other programs so that there will not be the need to incarcerate so many men and women in the future.

Yours sincerely