

INQUIRY INTO JUVENILE OFFENDERS

Organisation: Kariong Juvenile Correctional Centre
Name: Mr Jack Walker
Position: Former Official Visitor
Telephone:
Date Received: 13/05/2005

Subject:

Summary

My three visits to Kariong were on 4 March, 18 March & 1 April 2005.

Visit one was a tour through the centre with Governor Marr. What I saw and was told that the centre has changed from Juvenile Justice to the Correctional Services Policy. Repairs were being carried out on the centre. Education programs are in place and almost all inmates attend.

My second visit was conducted by myself. I first got all inmates from one unit together and I spoke of the duties of the official visitor and that any complaints should be directed to the official visitor. I asked if there were any complaints, the main complaints were of the early lock down and access to the telephone to contact legal people and their families. I told the inmates I would speak to the Governor about these issues. I then spoke to the second unit and they too had the same complaints. After my visit with these boys I spoke to the Governor who said that the early lock downs will be discussed with Head Office and that the boys get extra phone calls with the Welfare Officers.

My third and last visit was mainly to say good bye. Before I left the centre I spoke to the Governor about classification. I suggested that when classification comes to the centre that they should classify some inmates to camps eg. Koori boys could go to Brewarrina or Ivanhoe where they are educated and they can learn a trade in tractor operation etc. The department should look at a camp similar to these, so the koori boys be sent there instead of the main prison system. If this happens these boys would learn a lot in these type of centres.

From 30 years experience visiting prisons, 80 to 90% of Koori inmates started in Juvenile Centres. So if the department can get these boys in education and/or trade programs this would reduce the high population in our state prisons. I also believe that any complaints that are received now should wait until the change over from Juvenile Justice to Correctional Services to be resolved.