

**Submission  
No 16**

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

**Name:** Mr Brett Dodds

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Inquiry into the closure or downsizing of Corrective Services  
NSW facilities.

Submission by

Brett Dodds Assistant Superintendent Dept Corrective Services.

To the Committee.

As stated I am employed by the department of Corrective Services. I was previously employed at Berrima CC until it's closure in Oct 2011. I am currently employed at South Coast CC. I would like to submit the following.

**In reference to Section C.**

To my knowledge there was no consultation with staff regarding the closure of Berrima CC. There was only rumour and gossip until all the staff were called to a meeting in the conference room and told of the centre's closure. Staff were previously told that if we made saving of approximately \$270.000 we would be safe. These savings were met which at the time gave the staff a sense of security. When the announcement was made that the centre was to close, it was met with shock due to the savings that had been made.

To my knowledge no consultation was made with the local Council which to me is not in the interest of the local community as the centre provided labour for the local Moss Vale Showground Society, Bundanoon Showground and Robertson Showground and the up keep of the local National Trust building, Harpers Mansion as well as many other community projects.

**In reference to Section E**

The closure of Berrima CC caused great angst amongst the staff at Berrima, being Custodial Officers, Administration Officers, Teachers, Welfare workers and Drug and Alcohol counsellors. Many of us still have children at school and who's lives are in the Southern Highlands, we all have mortgages to pay, we put money into the local

economy and are involved in local activities, eg , my Wife is a local Girl Guide Leader.

Berrima's geographical position was also of benefit to the inmates as many of them were from southern Sydney, Wollongong or the southern parts of NSW. This assisted their families in visiting them to maintain family contact and support.

**In reference to Section H.**

A number of officers took up positions at Goulburn, Long Bay and South Coast CC, These were the only choices or apply for a position within the CCMG or Probation and Parole. A number also were in no other position other than to take redundancy as there were no positions for them. I was placed at Goulburn CC, after 4 weeks I was informed that a mistake had been made and there was no position for me at Goulburn. All officers of my rank were informed that we would have to apply for a position at Goulburn, this placed me in an untenable position as I was the catalyst for the issue. I then asked HR were there any other positions available, I was then offered a position at South Coast. I believe the whole redeployment of staff was poorly handled by HR and caused a lot of anxiety and emotional stress to all the staff at Berrima.

**In reference to Section I**

Berrima CC had recently had major capital expenditure. A new staff car park had been completed. The inmate's bath room had been refurbished with all new fittings and tiling. The inmates activities area was refurbished, approximately one third of the cells had been refurbished, The kitchen was a fully functioning commercial grade kitchen which was teaching the inmates valuable skills. The electronic security systems had been upgraded at considerable expense. There is a large secure work shop which was a profitable print shop with a large customer base.

Berrima was and is a viable and secure Correctional Centre. I believe the centre

assisted the tourist trade as I believe that people came to Berrima to see the Gaol and it's beautiful gardens and also were fascinated that it was a working Gaol and were quite pleased to know of all the community work the inmates were involved in.

### Summary

The closure of Berrima caused considerable emotional and financial stress to many families of people who were employed at Berrima CC, not least of all my family. My wife was employed as a Nurse with Justice Health at Berrima with 3 other Nurses both full time and part time. All but one were made redundant, this put considerable financial and emotional stress on my family.

I believe that Berrima CC is a secure and viable correctional centre. I believe the gaol is one of the reasons tourist come to Berrima to see the gaol and it's beautiful gardens And were fascinated to know that it was a working gaol and were quite pleased to hear of all the community work the inmate were involved in.

Finally I would like to add a personal issue. I attach a letter I sent to my local Member Ms Prue Goward. I sent it both as an email and a hard copy which I hand delivered to her office. Both went unanswered.

Regards

Brett Dodds