

Submission
No 20

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

Name: Mr Paul Falzon

Date received: 13/02/2009

In my experience in visiting commercially run Immigration Detention Centres, run by ACM, the standard of care provided by the detainees was quite poor. Several instances of suicides and many cases of depression and mental illness were documented by human rights groups visiting around 2003-2007.

In my opinion privately run jails maybe more convenient for the government, but i believe it is a function of the state to provide for the incarceration of dangerous individuals and also to provide for their rehabilitation.

The profit motive of corporations means that they have a conflict of interest which they view prisoners as potential profit. It has been estimated that it costs \$180-300 per day to keep a person in prison.

I believe that if the government wants to save money, it is a better investment in supporting people to not enter a life of crime with anti-poverty strategies. Surely this has to be a better way to approach this problem. I draw the committee's attention to the peak community organisation for NSW, the NSW Council of Social Services (www.ncoss.org.au). There are many practical and cost effective ways to reduce poverty and drug related crime.

I acknowledge that there will always be a need for jails, but they should be accountable to the minister and not be sold into private ownership.

I feel very strongly about this issue and believe that private prisons are not in the best interests of the people of NSW.