

**Submission  
No 13**

## **INQUIRY INTO PARKLEA CORRECTIONAL CENTRE AND OTHER OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

**Organisation:** Kairos Prison Ministry Australia

**Date received:** 31 January 2018

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ABN 55 081 496 175  
PARKLEA REGIONAL COMMITTEE

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Allison J Lang J.P.  
Manager Offender Services & Programs  
Parklea Correctional Centre

Dear Allison,

On behalf of the Parklea Regional Committee of Kairos Prison Ministry Australia, I wanted to write and thank you for the excellent cooperation and support we have had from GEO in presenting our Ministry to the inmates of Area 4.

While we are sometimes frustrated with the complexities of entering the Centre, we understand the need for security and appreciate the courtesy and patience of your officers. They are always both polite and thorough and as a result, we feel safe knowing that they are watchful and aware of risks and dangers.

In all situations, there are times when things happen that make activities more difficult. Those in charge at Parklea have always been available to hear our concerns and make alternative arrangements if possible. In cases where changes could not be made due to security or operational concerns, a satisfactory explanation has been given.

The training given to us before being approved for entry appears a little excessive being based on contract worker needs, but it does provide a thorough insight into the risks of working inside a prison and the dangers to avoid.

I love that the officers appear to be interested in and supportive of what we are doing and make our visits pleasant in spite of the necessary thorough searches of our equipment. In response, we try to keep ourselves and our equipment as ordered and visible as we can to make their work easier.

In short, it is a pleasure to present our courses and ministry in Parklea Area 4.

Keith Robards  
Chairman, Parklea Regional Committee; Leader Kairos Course #5, July 2017

#### **PATRONS**

**The Most Rev. Dr. Philip L. Freier**  
Primate, Anglican Church in Australia

**Mr Stuart McMillan**  
President, Uniting Church in Australia

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To whom it may concern,

I have been a participant within the Kairos Prison Ministry since 2001. In that time I have served on Kairos teams in many prisons as a Team Leader, Team Coordinator, musician and regular team member. I am also the NSW State Chair for Kairos and as such get to see what teams experience in most prisons within NSW.

My experience in working with the GEO Group at Parklea Correctional Centre since Kairos first ran a short course program within the prison, some three or so years ago has been one of the more pleasing experience when compared to other prisons that I have worked with.

Entering a prison can be an intimidating experience for an outsider, however, the staff of GEO managed to always convey an atmosphere of safety and a secure calm, despite the potentially aggressive setting that is common within the prison environment.

I have always found the staff to be friendly and polite, albeit totally professional in our interaction together. The staff engagement in supporting our program has always been helpful, polite and proactive, enabling us to get our job done with a minimum of fuss and a maximum of impact.

This interactive prison environment that we find ourselves in, has many potential areas that could bring us as a team unstuck and at potential risk whether it be from the inmates or from the correctional services system. Here again is where GEO's systems come to the fore. GEO's methodology of training us as a team and their ongoing checks, assists all members of the team to know exactly where they are and what is expected from them.

Whether it is the Short Course or the ongoing Journey Program, there is always a large amount of equipment to be taken into the prison as part of the Kairos activity. We understand that searches are part of the day to day norm. GEO's procedures of checks and balances prove to be interactively efficient, and still create the least amount of stress on those involved.

In conclusion I have enjoyed, and continue to enjoy working with the GEO Group at Parklea Correctional Centre because of their professional and courteous approach in all that they do.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Hale  
Chair, NSW State Council.

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Dear Sir / Madam,

25<sup>th</sup> January 2018

I am a volunteer of Kairos Prison Ministry and I have been involved in running the programs in Parklea Correctional Centre Area 4 since its inception in 2015.

I am a member of Kairos Parklea Regional Committee and I have been involved in programs in Silverwater, Parklea CDTCC and Dillwynia.

I was team leader of Parklea #3 and was very impressed with the level of help and assistance offered by Alison Lang, Jacqui Geveke and Officers in Area 4. Because of the ease in communicating with GEO staff, we have been able to sort out any issues quickly and streamline the programs that we run in Parklea. We have never had any issues entering and exiting the facility and the level of security has been very good. I have never felt unsafe or at any time threatened. The searches on entry have been thorough and professional and in no way intimidating.

We continue to run the Journey Program fortnightly throughout the year and this allows opportunity to form a level of trust with the participants and to offer them a way of life that has positive outcomes.

I am looking forward to working with GEO in the future as we run our programs.

Kind Regards,

Jonathon Williams  
*(Kairos Parklea Regional Committee – Treasurer)*

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26<sup>th</sup> January 2018

To whom it may concern,

I am a volunteer with Kairos Prison Ministry & a member of the Parklea Regional Committee.

I have been involved with GEO Group since the inception of our program in 2015, when I was the chairman of the Regional Committee.

I was involved with the initial discussions with the General Manager, Peter Maa, & the Programs Manager, Allison Lang and found them to be cooperative & helpful in arranging the introduction of Kairos into the Centre.

I found the 1-day security course & on-line e-learning very informative and felt well-trained & prepared to enter the Centre.

I have always felt safe whilst in the Centre & have always found the officers to be courteous, thorough and helpful.

The participants have been appreciative of our program & I have always found them to be courteous, friendly and engaging in the program. They love the singing!

It has been a pleasure to present Kairos in Area 4 at Parklea.

Yours sincerely

Keith Lock  
Parklea Regional Committee, Leader Kairos Course #1, May 2015.

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25 January 2018

## PARKLEA CORRECTIONAL CENTRE

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

As a volunteer with Kairos Prison Ministry Australia I have been involved with Parklea Correctional Centre (PCC) now for a number of years where we have conducted bi-annual Kairos Short Courses and fortnightly Journey Programs with the inmates in Area 4.

Before I was permitted to engage in the activities I needed to attend the PCC Induction/Security training day. I found this to be informative, thorough and professionally presented. The staff with whom I have contact strongly adhere to the facility security policies and as a result I feel completely safe when under their control and direction.

Whenever I have raised a concern with a member of staff or a manager that concern has been considered promptly and dealt with expeditiously. I have always found PCC to be very helpful and cooperative in my dealings with them. They have a hard job to do and I am always mindful of their responsibilities and conduct myself accordingly.

As the Leader of the team for Kairos Parklea Main #4 (10-13 October 2016) it was a delight to work with PCC because they were professional in their approach and execution of their duties.

Ken Moore  
Leader  
Kairos Parklea Main #4

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----- Original Message -----

To: "Alison Lang (GEO)"  
Sent: Thursday, 25 Jan, 2018 At 10:07 AM  
Subject: Kairos Letter

To the Upper House Committee,

My name is Phillip Simpson, I am writing to you about my experience with the GEO group at Parklea CC.

I am the current leader with the Kairos Prison Ministry that attends Parklea CC Area 4.

We come in under the invitation of the Chaplain and GEO to hold a 3 1/2 day course on Christian Living, twice yearly.

This is followed up every fortnight on a Tuesday at 5.30pm - 6.30pm to run a follow up program which is called the Journey.

I have been involved with this ministry in Area 4, for the past 2 years. During this time I have never felt uneasy or threatened in any way. The inmates who attend each fortnight vary from in number between 8 to 18. Their behaviour is one of courtesy and respect. They are engaged in every aspect of the program and are thankful for us being there.

Security and Training: All team members prior to being involved, attend a 1 day security course run by GEO. This is very informative and helpful for each team member to know what is expected and how to respond to different situations. This is followed up each year, as there is a requirement to do the online security course run by GEO before we enter the facility.

When we enter the facility each time, we are required to present photo ID, and names are checked against a list by a GEO officer of those who have been cleared by intel to enter the facility. Each team member has the the metal detector waved over them. All equipment which has been approved to be taken into the facility is then searched by the officers. At all times the officers have always behaved professionally and with diligence, while always being courteous and respectful.

We are always treated with respect from the Hierarchy of GEO down to the officers in charge of area 4.

Prior to each course we have a meeting with the MOS and Programs manager. At the moment these people are Jaqui Geveke and Alison Lang We discuss the details of the upcoming short course, including any security issues and submit detailed lists of equipment we can bring in to be approved by the General Manager Peter Ma'a We also have a debrief meeting a week after the course to discuss how the course went and the response of the participants, and give feedback as well as to discuss any concerns that may have arisen during the course.

The GEO management at Parklea and their staff have always been helpful, supportive and professional. I have appreciated the extent to which the Management and staff have supported Kairos, to the extent of coming in to see what we do and how the participants are responding.

Feedback we have received from the last course was very favorable. One comment from the staff in Area4 was, how the behavior in the compound had changed for the better.

I am thankful for the ongoing support of the Kairos Prison Ministry given to us by GEO.

Yours Sincerely,  
Phillip Simpson  
Leader Kairos Parklea #6  
Area 4