

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I am writing in the hope of making you aware of the serious concerns I have with the benchmarking, currently taking place within CSNSW.

Benchmarking in and of itself, can be a powerful and productive method to revitalise an organisation. I personally have no issue with benchmarking when done in a professional and consultative manner. This has hardly been the case with CSNSW. Staff has constantly been lied to, given unrealistic targets to meet and are losing experienced staff. Benchmarking appears to be nothing more than a smokescreen to privatise prisons.

I work in a small prison and have seen experienced Officers being displaced and replaced, by inexperienced Officers. This is and will be a huge security risk not only for staff but Inmates that we are responsible for. Yet Government will not admit this, constantly stating that prisons will have more Officers than ever before. They fail to say that Officers straight out of the academy will replace the very experienced Assistant Superintendents. Some prisons such as Bathurst and Goulburn are actually losing a large number of staff.

Already this has been seen at John Maroney CC. I have a relative who works at JM and what I am hearing is appalling. I am constantly worried about his welfare. Inmate assaults each other and staff at high risk of assaults because of cost cutting and inexperienced Officers being the norm there now. Most of the incidents that have happened recently there, are covered up or downplayed by management.

Apparently CSNSW are benchmarking against the privately run Parklea prison. Parklea has an appalling track record and as you are fully aware, is currently under Parliamentary inquiry. How can this happen? Surely benchmarking should be placed on hold until the inquiry is complete.

We have had little to no consultation with Management throughout this process. They are unwilling to sit down with staff and answer questions yet the Commissioner is constantly telling the press and anyone who will listen, that staff has been consulted throughout the whole benchmarking procedure. This is not true. The Offenders Services and Programs department is in a shambles. The Centre I work in is about to be "signed off" and this is when the bean counters in head office will start the benchmarking. Head officers given us unrealistic targets to meet. I have personally been told by my manager, "we are not going to meet the KPI's so don't worry about it". If this is the case, why are we not given achievable goals that staff can focus on? If targets were achievable, staff would be motivated and work towards a common goal but instead are lost and apathetic. We are being set up to fail. Numerous times, my colleagues and I have asked OS&P management, how we are suppose to reach the targets/KPI's and we are berated told not to worry about it. SAPO's have to compete with the new HIPU's and IDAPT units for inmates that are eligible for programs. The HIPU's are priority because of the money that has been spent on them. At the time of writing this report, to my knowledge, there is only nine inmates at the Windsor HIPU. There has been millions spent on this. I ask, is this a good use of taxpayers money?

I as a taxpayer, am appalled at this waste of money. The HIPU is the latest in a long line of disasters made by top level management. For example, Outer Metro. Millions were spent on buildings in recent years that have never been used as they were made with fire hazard materials. Instead of cutting budgets within the prisons, staff losing their jobs and security being diminished, why not look at the waste of money Head Office approve. Our Commissioner has a lot to answer too. Why isn't the money being used to support staff and upgrade existing buildings?

I have worked for CSNSW for close to seventeen years. In this time I have experienced the highs and lows of working in this environment. I have had to deal with numerous incidents some of which come to mind being, the murder of one inmate by another inmate within my Centre, fatal drug

overdose, transporting an Aboriginal Inmate who had just given birth to a stillborn child to the airport, ect. Thought the numerous issues I have had to deal with, I have always had the backup and support from my fellow staff. Officers with a wealth of experience, have always had my back. Now I see my professional colleagues disheartened and at a loss of how to deal with this benchmarking debacle. This is not ideal for staff's mental health or best practice for the management of Inmates.

If the Government wants to cut costs to prisons, a good work practice would be to consult with the frontline workers instead of staff/management who sit in head office making these decisions and who have NO experience working within a gaol. Gaols are dangerous and unique workplaces. The consequences of cost cutting and job losses could be dire. Unless you have experience working on the frontline in a prison, you really should not be making these outlandish and dangerous decisions. If Government wants to cut costs, surely they should take a long hard look at upper management. Thank you.