

## 5. FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

### 5.1 The Business of Prisons

Queensland's prisons have been starved of funds for years and it now shows. As I said earlier in this report the system is running on the goodwill of its staff and I do not think this can last much longer. Fortunately, the funds required are not great. A staff training college has now been built. The farm and Women's Prison at Townsville were handed over last year. This together with the \$81 million provided for the new prisons will provide an adequate basic physical infrastructure on which to operate for the time being. What is needed now is a better financial framework for the people who run the system in order to provide the inmates with some chance of leaving the system as better people, not worse. This is in the public interest.

The extra funds that are needed are not for higher wages or holidays for staff. They will not go in providing prisoners with the opportunity to "do their time easy". Hundreds of submissions from prisoners, staff and the community as well as the Prison Service called for additional funds. Without exception they sought better and more training for staff, decent equipment for riot control, the provision of improved and enlarged community facilities for community offenders, the provision of drug rehabilitation programs, basic literacy classes for prisoners and the opportunity for prisoners to work and earn at least enough money to be able to afford toothpaste and underpants.

Fundamental to the whole issue of what funds are required is the question "what business are we in?" The philosophy of corrections is so important I will be setting aside a major part of the final report to that issue. It is clear from the submissions I have received that there is a firm view broadly based and supported throughout the community about what is required.

Simply put, the view is that society is in the business of Correctional Services to punish and deter offenders for the good of society. Some offenders can be adequately punished and supervised in the community. Others need to be locked away in prison.

We provide reasonably humane confinement conditions for most of our prisoners. But, this is not enough. Our society has rightly rejected capital punishment, torture, starvation and deportation for offenders. Only a handful of those we place in corrections are going to die locked away. All the others return to society. As one submission from a Welfare Officer pointed out; that apart from punishment, rehabilitation is not solely what the service is about—many prisoners have never been habilitated in the first place. And it is this that society needs to understand and to attempt to deal with. We need to provide drug rehabilitation therapies, we need to teach the many illiterates in prison to read and write, we need to provide some basic skills for the unemployed in the prisons and we need to provide counselling for child abusers.

Prisoners write to me saying: "We are here as punishment not for punishment". I understand this quotation comes from a Swedish criminologist. Personally, I find it misses the point a bit.

Prisoners are punished every minute of every day. The worst punishment of all, for most, is the deprivation of their liberty; their loss of freedom and choice. Then comes their loss of respect and self esteem; the loss of their loved ones and friends, their jobs, their marriages, their children; the loss of hope, the waste of their lives.

They are punished when they are locked up in their cells, when they are woken, when they are locked in yards and cages, and when they farewell their families.

The system punishes very well indeed. But, it desperately needs more money to do other things in addition to punishing. It is unbalanced. It punishes—it rarely corrects. Yet—we call it “Corrective Services”.

Having come into contact with the system only recently and having been forced to think deeply about the issues I now feel strongly about them. I know there is a similar strong feeling in the informed community.

We have, in Queensland, a system which is inhibited from reaching even a reasonable potential because of lack of operating funds. In the rest of this section I will explore the need for funds.

## 5.2 Under-Funding In Queensland

It is symptomatic of the state of Corrective Services in this State that I have been unable to obtain a totally comprehensive statement of the financial requirements. I have sought comparisons with inter-state services to provide some basis for consideration.

Such comparisons are fraught with difficulty because of different accounting frameworks. For instance in Queensland most education services for prisoners are funded through the prison budget. In some other states such services are provided through the Department of Education budget.

The data obtained is shown in Table 1:

TABLE 1  
AVERAGE FUNDS PROVIDED PER PRISONER PER YEAR  
(1987/88 )

—	QLD	VIC	N.S.W.	W.A.	S.A.
Total Budget	\$48.8m	\$59.6m	\$152.1m	\$68.8m	\$48m
Daily Average No. of prisoners (Jan. 88)	2301	2033	3887	1596	784
Annual Cost per prisoner	\$21,208	\$29,316* (\$33,500)	\$39,130	\$43,1077	\$61,224

\* The figure shown for Victoria is based on custodial budget only. Head office and professional staff costs are not available. It is estimated the total annual cost per prisoner in Victoria is in the vicinity of \$33,500.

Clearly Queensland is substantially under funding its prisons or every other state is extremely wasteful or a bit of both. Queensland is seeking \$57.8 Million for the 1988/89 year.

Based on current prisoner numbers this will result in an average cost per prisoner next year of \$25,120. This will still be significantly lower than any other mainland State in Australia, either this current year or next.

Moreover, it seems that in several areas of operations in other states significant additional funds are provided from other Departments. For instance, in South

Australia \$326,000 was available from the Department of Education for prisoners; in Victoria all psychological counselling services are provided by the Health Department. In Queensland they are provided from the Prison's Budget.

The impact of the present level of financing is discussed in the points below.

### 5.3 Education

With an annual budget allocation for each prison of less than \$1,000, there is little the Education Officer can do to implement worthwhile programs. Some 7,000 prisoners enter the Queensland prison system each year. The allocation for education programs, therefore is less than 83 cents per prisoner per year!

The total amount presently spent on prisoner education in Queensland compared with other States is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
COMPARISON OF FUNDING FOR PRISONER EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
(1987/88)

State	Expenditure \$	Prisoners (No.s)
Qld	\$5,825	2301
Victoria	\$30,000 (library costs only)	2033
N.S.W.	\$29,000 (An additional \$212,00 is spent by the Dept. of Education on prisoner education)	3887
W.A.	\$199,000	1596
S.A.	Nil from budget (\$326,000 spent by Dept. of Education)	784

### 5.4 Drug Programs

Queensland's share of the Commonwealth funded Drug Program for Prisoners is \$150,000 per year. Victoria has received \$500,000 for 2 years. N.S.W. has received \$1,616,000 for 2 years.

### 5.5 Computing

The Prisons Department is technologically in the "Dark Ages". A submission from the Manager, Management Services illustrates the problems.

"9.2 *Cause:* The Department has had few computer literate staff—and probably none of these are custodial. Consequently funds have been non existent.

9.3 *Effect:* The Department can not respond rapidly to changes in inmate trends. It is not aware of those trends. It can not locate inmates. It has no quick tracking system. The Department runs, slowly, on paper. The paper gets lost.

9.4 *Action:* The Prisoner Administration System which has been designed and tested in a pilot study, should be funded, finalised, and introduced as a matter of urgency. Savings of \$1.9 million over 3 years for an expenditure of \$1.5 million (over *all* prisons) have been estimated.

“(Submission from Management Services)

The new prisons are designed to use computers and the Department has plans in hand to computerise fully. The modest extra budget being sought includes the necessary funds. I endorse those plans and urge that they be implemented immediately.

## 5.6 Research

The research capacity of the Department is woeful. International and inter-state corrective services systems are not monitored. Statistical data from within the system is not collated and analysed. Too often it would seem that when policy decisions need to be made or initiatives taken, evidence which would assist materially in those processes is inaccurate, unavailable or difficult and time-consuming to obtain. Programs are not and cannot be monitored for effectiveness.

The present establishment of one (1) resource officer cannot be expected to cope with all the legitimate research demands of the Department. My own simple requests for data on prisoner numbers and growth rates remain unmet. I find it incredible that the Department lacks its own library resources.

## 5.7 Security

Many officers have written to the Commission advising of their concerns with the equipment provided for them to manage riots. They are critical about the situation, for example:

“The standard of equipment that is issued to the three back up squads is a laugh, that is if you like to laugh at a death warrant. The helmets are so old that if worn and have to stop a sharp blow, they would cause more damage than if the Officer had not been wearing one, the helmet issued to me last time had no lining and the screw was protruding inside, the visor might as well not have been there as one could hardly see through it. There is always a lack of long batons, and as for gas masks forget it there is not enough. The plight of the new Officer who gets taken on to the team is pathetic he has to fight like mad to get overalls, and as for a decent pair of boots forget it most Officers buy their own.”

(Prison Officer's submission)

The Prisons Department submission confirms the problems:—

“The funds available for all security matters in the past financial year amounted to \$50,000. This is insufficient. The Department cannot purchase riot gear in quantity and quality . . . Riot helmets are gradually replacing an older style helmet which is ineffective. Rubber truncheons are gradually replacing dangerous wooden batons. It can not all be done because of lack of funding.

Personal duress alarm systems are in use in some prisons only. They should be in use in all prisons and all staff should have access to their use. Funds are not available for this purpose . . .

Communication systems are of a disgraceful standard in the Prison System. In situations of crisis, lines are jammed and it is useless to try to contact the prison concerned or the section concerned. The radio system's use can only be described as Mickey Mouse. They are poor quality with poor reception. Their range is limited and they have a signal that can be intercepted on the prisoners' ordinary FM band radios. The radios are not connected to field vehicles. Escort Vans are not always able to be in radio contact in the South East Queensland area because of range difficulties. Escorts to the north do not have the benefit of radio contact.

Prisons' security and staff safety are clearly crucial areas and it is out of the question to continue to skimp on the area of communication which is central to the safety/security issue . . .

All prisons should be equipped with numbers of hand held metal detectors . . . A walk-through metal detector should be available in visiting areas . . . The walk-through metal detector at Brisbane Prison does not operate . . . Funds are not available for purchases for the whole State.

The capacity to examine mail (envelopes or parcels) and any other containers entering the prison or travelling within the prison without opening and inspecting would save a lot of time and annoyance. Equipment exists that does the job. It is beyond Prisons Department's present capacity to consider for purchase because of its cost.

The use of video camera is currently rare . . . these methods should be used to surveil at all times all visiting areas. Contact visits are a contraband risk and all measures must be adopted to prevent this. This is not currently undertaken. No funds are available for unit purchase . . .

The Department is committed to the use of dogs in Prisons for crisis control, drug detection, secure escorts and escape follow up. Lack of funds has prevented the Department from making an appropriate commitment to Dog Squads . . . "

(Prisons Department Submission)

The security training is inadequate according to the Department. The debrief of the 1987 riots undertaken by the then Deputy Under-Secretary, Mr Jack MacNamara and the Superintendent of Townsville Prison, Mr Nelson Glindemann, points to a very serious lack of control over the prison that arose because staff and prison management are not adequately trained in riot response and management. The Comptroller-General informs me the recommended training cannot be implemented because of lack of funds.

The security staff in the Comptroller-General's office compare their budget for security equipment of \$53,000 with other states:

"New South Wales Special Response Unit has a budget of \$499,584 (1987-1988). To date, that Unit has spent \$631,000 plus \$13,700 in radio licence fees . . . Western Australia Metropolitan Security Unit, which services Fremantle Gaol, has a budget of \$141,000 (1988-1989). This financial year, they were allocated a further \$160,000 to purchase new radio equipment which met the military specification for long life and durability.

Western Australia have estimated that this financial year the expenditure for the Metropolitan Security Unit will be \$275,000 . . . "

(Submission by Deputy Superintendent (Security))

The relative expenditure is shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3  
EXPENDITURE ON SECURITY EQUIPMENT  
(1987/88)

	\$
N.S.W.	644,700
W.A.	301,000
Queensland	53,000

### 5.8 Other Services to Prisoners

There is a strong expectation in the community that prisons should be providing rehabilitative services. The Bank Employees Union whose members include serious victims of crimes provides the argument:

"In more recent years we believe there has been a shift in the type of person convicted of armed robbery. Greed and the need solely for monetary gain has been replaced by the need to maintain a drug habit. We are therefore now punishing bank robbers for their habit as well as their subsequent actions (according to police information, at least 80% of armed bank robberies are now drug related).

We therefore believe that if the primary reason for the robbery is a heroin addiction then rehabilitation could prevent future crime."

(Australian Bank Employees Union)

The reality of rehabilitation in prison is quite different. The rehabilitative services to prisoners are not satisfactory because there are almost no funds for this purpose. Again, submissions make the point well:—

- "6.1 It is a well known fact that rehabilitation cannot be forced upon a prisoner. It is also an unfortunate fact that a proportion of prisoners are not interested in being rehabilitated. However, notwithstanding this, the period a prisoner serves in prison should be utilised to benefit him/her for reintroduction into society. Almost all prisoners with very rare exceptions, will one day be released into the community.
- 6.2 Upon visiting a prison it is evident that prisoners' physical requirements are well catered for. In the main they enjoy good health. It is said this is so because of the regular life and in some instances the lack of alcohol and drugs.
- 6.3 With the introduction of the Program Teams in all prisons, it was intended that each prisoner would be treated as a separate case. In this way prisoners would have a program individually tailor-made for them as they proceed through the prison system. In theory the right programs are already in place but unfortunately up to the present time funds have not been available to introduce the programs in their entirety."

(Dept. of Corrective Services and Administrative Services.)

and

"Presently there is little to motivate a prisoner to be involved in rehabilitation. The Department can not guarantee to fulfill its end of the bargain. There is no certainty that funds will allow a program to be

completed. There is no assurance that participation in the program will not be interrupted by transfer to another wing or prison where the program is not available. There is no guarantee that the prisoner will be permitted access to the books or writing material to undertake the program he commences. There are not necessarily programs available that are suitable for the prisoner's needs in the first place. He or she see no consistent and fair progress through any plan—his/hers, or the Department's. Progress through to discharge is governed by space availability, resource availability, crisis occurrences in certain prisons, unpredictability of release mechanisms etc. Largely it is a question of scarce resources which prevents proper program presentations."

(Prisons Department Submission)

The Police Department's submission made a very strong request for programs to be provided:"

"Numerous child abuse matters are investigated by the Child Abuse Unit as a result, a large number of adult offenders are prosecuted, often resulting in their being sentenced to periods of imprisonment.

Often, during this period of imprisonment, little, if any, work is done from a rehabilitative point of view, with often tragic results for the children and family of the offender. Often, all that is achieved during this period of incarceration is that the offender serves an "apprenticeship" in respect of avoiding detection and subsequent offending and not leaving any tell-tale evidence. This has an effect on police by virtue of the recidivism and the difficulty in carrying out a statutory duty to protect children from abuse and neglect. If such treatment were undertaken during this period of imprisonment, as is carried out in a number of overseas countries very effective work can be effected with resultant benefits to the child victim, family and the community . . .

Much effective child protection work has been achieved in this State by virtue of the Government's policy of multi-disciplinary management of child abuse cases with Health, Welfare and Police working in close co-operation. Involvement of the Prison service in this area will greatly assist proper assessment being made in relation to the "change" in the behaviour of the offender prior to his return to the family situation if put in place, effective monitoring mechanisms to ensure the child's protection." (Police Department Submission)

I need say no more.

## **5.9 Staffing and Training**

The Queensland Prison Service's budget for staff training 1987/88 is \$85,000. This includes the running costs of the Staff Training College plus the cost of providing courses by internal resources or by use of external organisations. This budget is exclusive of salaries of training staff. The budget of \$85,000 for this essential task is a farce and nothing short of scandalous.

A comparison of the training budgets of other States, excluding salaries, is shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4  
TRAINING BUDGETS IN AUSTRALIAN STATES

—	Expenditure (\$)	Staff Establishment (numbers)
Qld	85,000	1288
Victoria	598,000	1485
N.S.W.	1,001,900	2955
W.A.	separate budget not available	
S.A.	260,000	1120

(Source: Comptroller-General's Office)

### 5.10 Financial Resources Required

It is fairly easy to confirm that Queensland is severely underfunded compared to other States and more importantly against any reasonable standards this State ought to adopt irrespective of the situation elsewhere.

I have examined the Prison Service budget for the current financial year 87/88 which was originally \$47.622 million and which is now revised to \$48.8 million.

Staff training has a total budget of \$85,000. It requires at least \$500,000. Prisoner Programs including education, home detention and counselling services has a budget of \$90,000. It requires \$1.3 million.

Staffing salaries and expenses has a budget of \$40.3 million. It needs \$42 million. Security has a budget of \$50,000. It needs in 88/89 \$500,000. Plant and equipment has no budget this year. \$400,000 is required. Computerization has a budget of \$300,000. It requires \$1.5 million. Case management, travel, procedure manuals, consultancy services, medical supplies, prisoner expenses, telephones, uniforms, laundry, stocks of clothing, footwear and blankets are all either underfunded or not funded at all. The Home Detention Program has no budget and is operating on funds cut from the Prisoner Programs budget. Budgets have not kept pace with rapidly rising prisoner numbers, inflation and wage increases. The actual expenditure for 86/87 was \$45.53 and for 87/88 will be \$48.8. The Prison Service estimates it will need a budget of \$57.8 million for 88/89 to operate the service satisfactorily plus an estimated \$8.9 million to open and operate the three new prisons for six months. It is possible that the opening of the new prisons may be delayed and if this is so, that amount can be reduced accordingly.

After completion of the new prisons, additional ongoing capital expenditure will be required to refurbish the prisons built in the early 1960s. By that time these prisons will be approximately 30 years old. Funds will also be needed for community based centres such as hostels.

The budget for the Probation and Parole Service for 87/88 was \$4.761 million. They are operating under difficulties. Their submission for 88/89 requires a budget of \$5.450 million to provide an acceptable level of supervision based on existing staff numbers and operations. They argue that they will require additional resources if the service is to be expanded. I believe that the integration of the Probation and Parole Service with the Prison Service into a single Corrective Service will enable savings to be achieved. It is very difficult to quantify these savings accurately at this stage and as a consequence I am reluctant to make a specific recommendation.

I believe that if the funds for works expenditure were allocated directly to the Q.C.S.C. then continuation of present level of funding for maintenance would be



adequate. My assumption is based upon my expectation that a Commission would be considerably more efficient by better knowing the priorities, by more cost effective use of funds in the market place and by using prison labour where appropriate.

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

*It is recommended that Government provide, over and above the present level of funding for Prisons and Probation and Parole—for the next financial year—an additional sum of \$9 million, in addition to the extra funding that will be required to open and operate the new prisons presently under construction.*

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