

MEDIA RELEASE

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REPORT OF AN ANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF KARNET PRISON FARM

The third inspection by the Inspector of Custodial Services of Karnet Prison Farm has reinforced the position of the prison as a consistently good performer.

In releasing the report from the February 2010 inspection, the Inspector, Neil Morgan, said that Karnet had performed well as a facility preparing prisoners for release back into the community despite the pressure of high prisoner numbers and under-investment in its infrastructure and other resources.

'Three years ago, when this Office recommended that Karnet's good performance warranted an expansion of operations and a concerted investment in its future, this was not supported by the Department.'

'Despite this, in 2010 we found that the prison population had increased by 40 per cent [to 256] and the prison was earmarked for further accommodation expansion. This will almost double its size since 2007.'

'This rapid expansion is a great opportunity for a solid, stable well-performing prison. However it also presents potential risks if not managed carefully. It is essential that there is adequate investment in new and existing infrastructure, resources and staffing to ensure that services match the increased numbers,' Professor Morgan said.

He said that one of the most significant challenges would be for the prison to maintain its achievements in providing prisoners with meaningful employment, training and educational opportunities.

'To date, the environment, culture and operational philosophy at Karnet have given all prisoners the chance to take part in real work, associated with real training. The prison also enjoys strong local community support. As its population increases, careful forward planning and significant investment in industries, educational facilities and staff are required if these positive achievements are to be maintained.'

Neil Morgan

7 September 2010

Neil Morgan will be available for comment from 10.00a.m. on Thursday 9th September and can be contacted on **9212 6200** or **0427 426 471**.

The full Report will be available on the Inspector's website (www.oics.wa.gov.au)