

**MEDIA RELEASE – EMBARGOED UNTIL 12 NOON ON WEDNESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2015**

**Report No. 94 – Wandoo Reintegration Facility**

The first inspection of the privately-operated Wandoo Reintegration Facility by the Inspector of Custodial Services found an innovative, well-functioning facility that should have a positive impact on recidivism and justice outcomes for Western Australia. However the Inspector criticised Wandoo's severe under-utilisation and called for it to be fully utilised and evaluated.

Inspector Neil Morgan said that a facility with specific programs and support targeting young adult men between the ages of 18 and 24 has been long overdue:

'I have been arguing for a long time that there are far too many young men and women spending their time in prison in mindless and unproductive ways. More needs to be done to address their needs and to reduce their recidivism rates. This is not about being 'soft on crime': it's a human, community and financial necessity.

Wandoo can only ever be one part of this jigsaw. It is a small minimum security reintegration facility and can only accommodate prisoners who meet strict criteria. It is obvious that the rest of the mainstream prison system should have geared up to help potential Wandoo prisoners acquire the skills to go to there, and also to better meet the needs of young men who cannot access Wandoo. To date, the system has failed to do so, and this partly explains Wandoo's low numbers.'

Mr Morgan noted that the closest equivalent of Wandoo, the Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women, had taken five years to reach capacity but said that the target should be to fill Wandoo within the next six months:

'Low numbers mean not only that the cost per prisoner per day is high, but also that Wandoo lacks the critical mass to maximise its services, efficiencies and effectiveness. It appears likely that the age limit will be increased to 28 to increase the 'flow' to Wandoo.

However, I reiterate that mainstream prisons must also deliver better targeted programs for younger prisoners. Fortunately, Acacia Prison has developed a plan to do this as part of its expansion.'

Wandoo had previously been the Rangeview Juvenile Remand Facility. The transition to Wandoo was undertaken in difficult circumstances. Building delays at Banksia Hill delayed the transfer of detainees, and Wandoo's commencement was delayed from 1 April 2012 to 1 November 2012. The Department of Corrective Services left the site in poor condition and Serco had just 14 days to prepare for its first residents.

Mr Morgan said Serco had done well, with a budget of only \$4 million for 'enabling works', to transform the facility from a children's remand centre to a young adult prison. Serco used the opportunity to train and engage the young men themselves in completing some of the work.

The inspection found that Wandoo's emphasis on high levels of interaction between staff and residents and on restorative justice had laid the ground work for effective dynamic security and improved rehabilitative outcomes.

Other positive findings included a strong and effective prisoner case management system; a positive family visits environment; programs and support for developing the young men as fathers; a good level of health service and preventative education provision; strong orientation processes; reparative community work; and strong 'throughcare' provided to the young men after release by Serco's contract partner, Mission Australia.

Mr Morgan noted that there had recently been discussion about whether Wandoo should have been used for female prisoners instead of the Department's announced plan to convert two units at Hakea Prison into a new women's prison. He said:

'Clearly, using Wandoo was an option that needed to be considered. However, it would not, in itself, have offered the number of beds needed to compensate for years of poor planning for female prisoners. It would still have been necessary to find another facility in addition to Wandoo. The proposed new Hakea women's prison does provide greater capacity. And after it has been operating for 12 to 18 months we will assess its performance.

For now, at Wandoo, the priority is to appropriately fill it, for the contractor to continue to deliver high quality services, and for its outcomes in terms of reducing recidivism to be rigorously evaluated. Similar evaluations are also required at other prisons.'

Neil Morgan  
**Inspector**

6<sup>th</sup> January 2015

**For further Media Information:**

**Please see the Inspector's Overview to the Report and Key Findings (attached).**

**The Inspector, Professor Neil Morgan, will be available for comment from 12 noon on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and can be contacted on 6551 4201 or 0427 426 471.**

**The full report will be available on the Inspector's website ([www.oics.wa.gov.au](http://www.oics.wa.gov.au))**