



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR
OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES

2024 INSPECTION OF GREENOUGH REGIONAL PRISON

159

APRIL 2025

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2024 Inspection of Greenough Regional Prison

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Inspector's Overview

Greenough may have turned a corner on the road to improvement

Several of our past inspection reports for Greenough Regional Prison have been critical, focussing on the negatives or areas requiring improvement. But during our inspection in July 2024, we saw several areas of improvement that deserve acknowledgment.

Greenough's management and staff were future focussed and optimistic. There was a growing appetite for change and improvement evident across many of the areas we inspected. That is not to paint too rosy a picture, as there are still many areas in need of investment or improvement in services and supports.

Staff in Greenough work hard and most were committed to working collegiately in providing services to prisoners. There was noticeable improvement with a more positive attitude and perspective shared by many staff we heard from during the inspection. Of course, with a workforce of over 200 it is never going to be perfect and there were still complaints about conflict and friction between some staff. Common complaints from staff related to more systemic issues like the impact of record prison populations, regular staffing shortages, and infrastructure limitations.

Some staff said they had always tried to 'make it work' in response to system level deficits but did so without recognition or thanks. These are frustrations we often hear during our inspection work in response to common problems seen in most prisons.

Most individuals in the workplace have autonomy around how they view the environment in which they work. Individuals can choose to be optimistic and focus on the positives, and that is what we saw in many staff at Greenough. But the concerns of staff, including the pessimistic ones, are worth listening to and this highlights the need for continued attention to the sources of these frustrations at the local level and also across the prison system.

Since the inspection there has been a local recruit school completed which has resulted in a welcomed increase in custodial staffing levels. The Department's response to this report also noted efforts to recruit additional staff including clinical staff and Vocational Support Officers. Both are commendable initiatives.

We have been regularly briefed by the Department on the development of a strategic plan together with reforms around long term infrastructure and workforce planning. The Department's response to the draft of this report notes that this plan is nearing completion. This should open opportunities for greater focus and direction in Greenough and perhaps harness some of the enthusiasm we observed.

Pleasingly, the Department's response also highlighted proactive steps taken by local leadership to address some of the issues identified in our inspection. Examples included: the Superintendent meeting with off-country prisoners to seek input into what additional support they could be offered; the appointment of additional unit recreation workers; ordering additional recreation equipment;

improving the quantity of breakfast packs; and consulting with other prisons to explore options to improve food quality and quantity.

Record increases in the Western Australian prison population have had a significant impact in every facility. Greenough has not been spared from this and there has been additional pressure on both staff and prisoners. Areas where this has been most noticeable include, accommodation, infrastructure, and the availability and access to support services, like health, education, employment, and the ability for prisoners to maintain contact with family and friends.

But two groups in particular stand out in Greenough: women, and off-country men.

Up to 20% of the male population at the time of our inspection were from the Pilbara or Kimberley regions. They shared with us their experience of loss being away from home and the impact this has on their wellbeing. But commendably, prison leadership at Greenough recognise their situation and are doing what they can to make life easier for this group.

Women in Greenough, prior to February 2024, were housed within a specialist women's precinct in Unit 4. But population demands across the system meant that in early 2024 they were moved out of Unit 4 and relocated, initially to Perth, but eventually back to Greenough in Unit 5. Despite the efforts of local staff, Unit 5 does not offer the same level of amenity or access to services that was available to the women when they were in Unit 4.

Women and off country men in Greenough are the face of system wide pressures and should remain at the forefront of efforts to improve their situation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We had one Independent Prison Visitor for Greenough at the time of our inspection. They are a community volunteer, appointed by the Minister for Corrective Services, who attends Greenough on a regular basis observing the operations of the prison and providing an opportunity for the men and women placed there to raise issues and complaints to inform the work of our office. I acknowledge the importance of the work undertaken and thank them for their contribution to our ongoing monitoring of conditions in Greenough.

I also acknowledge the support and cooperation we received throughout the inspection from the Superintendent and staff at Greenough and from key personnel in the Department. The men and women living in Greenough who took the time to speak with us and share their perspectives also deserve our acknowledgement and thanks.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the inspection team for their expertise and hard work throughout the inspection. I would also particularly acknowledge and thank Liz George for her work in planning this inspection and as principal drafter of this report.

Eamon Ryan

Inspector of Custodial Services

7 April 2025

Executive Summary

A lack of strategic planning had foreseeable consequences

The Department of Justice (the Department) had yet to finalise its strategic framework to guide the functions and priorities of Greenough Regional Prison (Greenough). Local business plans that map out priorities were often overtaken by statewide challenges such as record high population levels and ageing infrastructure. These factors limited service delivery and impacted prisoner management.

Greenough was future focussed and work culture was improving

Greenough's management was proactive and in the absence of system wide strategic planning, attempting to fill the gaps in the provision of services for prisoners. Staff culture was more positive than recent inspections although morale was impacted by population pressures, ageing infrastructure and short staffing. Overall, relationships between staff and prisoners were more positive.

Greenough faced challenges in providing a meaningful day

Greenough lacked the infrastructure and staff required to offer a constructive day for most prisoners. Industries had not kept pace with the increased population, there were not the staff to run them so too many were idle in units with little to do. Unit 6 was a minimum-security placement, but lacked infrastructure and opportunities found at similar facilities elsewhere. Food was a source of many complaints as most prisoners had no choice or control over how their food was prepared. Education was a good service and program delivery was underway for those with identified treatment needs.

Health and wellbeing supports were mixed

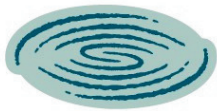
The primary health team had increased and offered preventative health care health services to prisoners. But dental care, mental health and psychiatry services were limited and did not meet demand. Prisoner support services including the Prison Support Officer (PSO) and Aboriginal Visitor Scheme (AVS) were well resourced although they had less prisoner contact than prisoners thought reasonable. Access to recreation and equipment varied between units. Older units and Unit 5 had little in the way of exercise equipment and no recreation workers to organise unit-based activities.

Community connections were difficult to maintain

Due to mounting population pressures across the estate, local women were transferred out of Greenough in February 2024 and out-of-Country men took their place in Unit 4. Both groups of prisoners expressed distress at being away from family, supports and Country and reported feeling 'lost'. The disconnection and distance was exacerbated by limited access to phones. Units were full and so prisoners spent lengthy periods queuing for a 10-minute phone call. Prisoners were also saddened that their requests to attend funerals were often declined for reasons beyond the control of the prison although they appreciated the efforts of the Chaplaincy service to offer Sorry time.

List of Recommendations

Recommendation	Page	DOJ Response
Recommendation 1 Government should support and resource agreed objectives and priorities developed as part of the Department's strategic planning work.	2	Noted
Recommendation 2 The Department should, as part of its strategic planning framework, audit Greenough's current and future infrastructure and cohort requirements to inform its future plans.	11	Supported in Principle
Recommendation 3 Improve access to freshly prepared and self-catered meals.	21	Supported - Current Practice/Project
Recommendation 4 Review the functions, practice and operations of Unit 6, comparing what is currently occurring with what should be available in a minimum-security environment.	22	Supported in Principle
Recommendation 5 Develop and resource a culturally safe and targeted mode of health care for First Nations prisoners.	24	Supported in Principle
Recommendation 6 Provide adequate mental health clinical resources and support to meet the needs of prisoners at Greenough.	25	Supported in Principle
Recommendation 7 Create recreation workers positions for each unit to organise and manage unit-based recreation activities.	28	Supported
Recommendation 8 Accommodate regional prisoners in on Country prisons, unless there is a compelling reason not to do so.	33	Supported in Principle
Recommendation 9 Explore and identify alternatives to increase phone access while awaiting a whole-of-estate upgrade.	34	Not Supported



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GREENOUGH REGIONAL PRISON FACT PAGE

ROLE OF FACILITY

Greenough Regional Prison (Greenough) holds prisoners of all security classifications, minimum, medium and maximum (remand only). It accommodates sentenced and remanded men and women. Most prisoners live inside the main prison, and up to 56 minimum-security men are accommodated in a unit located external to the main prison.

HISTORY

Greenough opened in 1984 as a minimum-security facility. It was upgraded in 1990 to a medium-security prison. In 1996, a minimum-security area was added just outside the perimeter fence.

A riot occurred in July 2018 which badly damaged infrastructure and impacted staff and prisoners' sense of safety. Following this, a standalone women's precinct (Unit 4) was opened in 2022. Recent population pressures resulted in women being transferred out of Greenough to accommodate additional men. In June 2024, women returned to Greenough but were placed in Unit 5, which is small, crowded and lacks fit for purpose infrastructure.

OFFICIAL CAPACITY

337

PRISONERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION

311



The prison is located in Greenough on Yamatji land, approximately 420 kilometres north of Perth.



INSPECTION DATE

15 - 19 July 2024



1 A lack of strategic planning had foreseeable consequences

Prisons have long been awaiting strategic direction from the Department of Justice (the Department) to assign each prison a set of functions and priorities. In the absence of such statewide guidance, prisons develop their own business plans and make business cases to meet local need and priorities. But as evidenced at Greenough, the Department has required its prisons to respond to statewide challenges rather than local initiatives and priorities. Greenough had been focussed on the recently established female precinct but were subsequently required to transfer out local women and absorb male prisoners from over-populated northern prisons to assist with system level population pressures.

Business cases to maintain ageing infrastructure and provide fit for purpose amenities, space, and accommodation for the different prisoner cohorts were often not supported. Greenough worked hard to overcome these challenges while the Department worked on developing an overdue strategic vision and infrastructure plan.

1.1 No system level strategic vision and plan for prisons has local impacts

While acknowledging that the Department has published a broad strategic framework, this does not specifically address the needs of prisons and detentions centres or their place in the overall corrections system. Consequently, during our inspection and review work we often comment on the absence of a system-wide strategic plan and vision that connects individual prisons as component parts of a larger organisation.

Greenough is by no means a small operation. It has an annual budget of over \$25 million, employs over 200 staff, operates on a 24/7 basis, and is responsible for the security, care, and welfare of over 300 men and women. As a medium-security regional prison, it also carries a relatively high level of operational risk. There can be no argument that a public sector enterprise of this size and complexity should operate under system level strategic plans and direction and be guided by local business and operational plans that give effect to these objectives.

This premise applies to what we saw and observed during this inspection.

To its credit, Greenough, like many other prisons, had attempted to fill the absence of a system-wide strategic plan by developing plans and initiatives that outline local direction, priorities, and practice.

We were given a copy of the Greenough Business Plan for 2023-2024. It was a good plan, with links to elements of the broad Department strategic framework. It contains many commendable initiatives and projects, some of which are discussed later in this report. But we also heard that a constant challenge was that local plans often did not coincide with system level imperatives, such as managing record high population levels. And also, that business cases developed for local initiatives requiring additional resourcing were often refused as they did not fit within overall objectives, priorities or restrictions required to manage the Department budget.

Local business plans could be much more effective if they could be directly linked to a clear strategic vision and direction for all prisons, where individual facilities had identified priorities and objectives, and a clear understanding of their role in the overall prison system.

In response to us raising this issue on several previous occasions, we have been briefed by the Department on extensive work currently underway to develop a strategic plan and vision due for publication by the end of 2024 (OICS, 2023; OICS, 2024). In addition, we have also been informed that strategic workforce, infrastructure, and information technology planning is underway. These plans are to be linked to operational business plans for each facility. There is much to be positive about in these developments, but they will require ongoing commitment and resourcing from government.

Recommendation 1

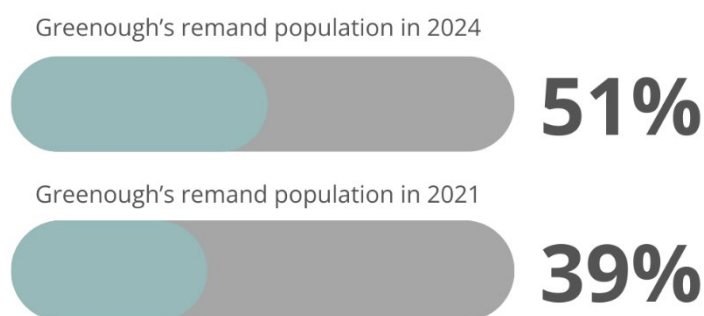
Government should support and resource agreed objectives and priorities developed as part of the Department's strategic planning work.

1.2 Responding to record high population overtook local priorities

Greenough had a larger and more complex population than when we inspected in 2021. On the first day of our 2024 inspection, there were 121 more prisoners than at the commencement of our inspection in 2021. The increase was driven by record highs in the statewide prisoner population, lack of space at other prisons and Greenough's proposal to take men transferring out of northern prisons.

Because of the population pressures, many First Nations people were held in facilities off Country. One fifth of Greenough's male population was from the Kimberley or Pilbara regions. Because West Kimberley, Broome and Roebourne Regional Prisons were regularly over capacity, Greenough offered to accommodate men together rather than have them dispersed across metropolitan prisons. Close to 80 men had relocated to Greenough since transfers began.

As a result, women were transferred out of their dedicated 80-bed unit in February 2024 to free beds for Greenough to absorb the population surge from the male estate. Unit 5 was re-opened in April 2024 to accommodate small numbers of local women returning to Greenough on temporary transfer from metropolitan prisons for family visits. Ten local women returned in June 2024 on a longer-term basis.

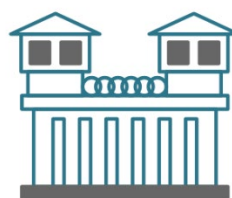


Growth in the proportion of remand prisoners was the largest contributing factor to the statewide population increase. Their turnover and transience put pressure on resources and services at Greenough. The video link room had been expanded to accommodate the increased demand for court appearances, legal supports, and remote counselling services. But the waiting room was too small and so men lined up in the offender services corridor. This required an additional member of staff to supervise them and prevent their engagement with women in Unit 5.

Greenough absorbed the increased population as best it could, but it was to the detriment of local women and out-of-Country people who were displaced. As discussed throughout this report, Greenough had not been resourced to anticipate or keep pace with population growth, and services, staffing and ageing infrastructure were strained.

1.3 Infrastructure had not kept pace with the population expansion

Prisoner numbers across the state had been increasing for some time and Greenough's population had increased by approximately 63% since the last inspection. The Department has built some new prisoner accommodation but has more heavily relied on converting cells to multiple occupancy to increase capacity. During the inspection, we learned the Department had proposed to Greenough double bunking men in earned privileged cells in Unit 4 to create even more capacity, but this would require retrofitting custom built bunk beds to fit the cells. At the time of writing, this work had yet to be progressed.



41%

of staff surveyed
thought the quality of
facilities was 'poor'

Approaching 40 years since commissioning, Greenough is an ageing prison. Management and staff were aware of its deterioration and limitations but had no resources for upgrading facilities or increasing capacity. In response to the 2018 riot, the Department allocated \$19 million to re-build, refurbish and fortify the prison. But in 2024, we found several examples where the Department had fallen behind in ensuring the functionality and upkeep of Greenough's facilities.

- There was no plan to increase industries infrastructure and Greenough lacked capacity to provide employment for its population of over 300 men. If fully staffed, we estimate that the main workshops such as the laundry, kitchen and gardens had capacity to employ about 100 prisoners. There was no infrastructure in Unit 5 to provide meaningful employment for up to 32 women.
- Health centre infrastructure had not expanded with increases to the prisoner population and the additional demands of servicing a remand population. When all three nurses were on shift there was no room for another clinician, so staff had to work out of a space not fit for purpose, like the dental suite.
- The education centre was a welcoming area, but not built for purpose and could only accommodate 20 learners at a time.
- Most unit dayrooms were small and lacked the space and chairs for communal eating. Prisoners ate meals in cells or at outside picnic tables that lacked shelter from elements and attracted flies. Prisoners reported this exacerbated their dissatisfaction with the food and how it was prepared - see Chapter 3.



Photo 1: Evidence of prisoners eating meals in cells due to dayrooms having inadequate furniture.



Photo 2: The day room in Unit 2 was clean, but stark and lacked chairs.

1.4 Infrastructure could not service some prisoners' needs

Infrastructure in Unit 6 did not offer a minimum-security experience

In our previous inspection report, we observed living conditions and amenities in Greenough's minimum-security Unit 6 were poor compared to other minimum-security units in similar sized prisons (OICS, 2022). Evidence gathered during this inspection confirmed this was still the case and the only real incentive in terms of infrastructure was the availability of single occupancy rooms.

There had been some improvements since our last inspection, which included new exercise equipment and two new e-visit terminals. But unit infrastructure remained fundamentally unchanged.

- The unit was formed entirely from demountable housing (dongas) and although there are decent outdoor spaces, it is relatively confined compared to the expansive grounds and permanent infrastructure in facilities like the Bunbury Pre-Release Unit and the Roebourne Town Work Camp.
- The day room was clean and recently painted. But it lacked any cooking equipment beyond toasters and microwaves for self-catering.
- There were only two telephones in the unit for up to 56 men.

Too few opportunities to self-cater

There was no opportunity at Greenough for prisoners to self-cater as there is in many other minimum-security placements. In our last inspection report, we found this was a missed opportunity for men to develop life skills prior to release and offer a meaningful reward for the supervision level they had attained (OICS, 2022). Men in Unit 6 expressed disappointment they received the same meals as medium and maximum-security prisoners. They compared Greenough unfavourably with other minimum-security placements where prisoners had a choice of meal or could self-cater. Unit 6 was not resourced with a kitchen and there was no funding to install one. There is scope to increase access to the barbeque as an interim measure while the Department's strategic review of infrastructure is underway.



SUGGESTION

Increase the frequency of barbeques in Unit 6.

In every other minimum-security prison, you are allowed to buy sausages, chops, chicken and you also have frying pans, pots, cooking equipment. I don't understand if this is a minimum unit why don't we have these facilities here.

Quote from prisoner in Unit 6 about the lack of self-care facilities

In Unit 4's earned privilege wing, prisoners were also not self-catering. Instead, there were two prisoners employed as cooks who prepared meals for the entire wing. Prisoners appreciated better-quality, freshly cooked meals but they were not provided the privilege of self-catering.

Although management shared plans with us to improve and upgrade infrastructure in Unit 6, there was no approval or budget provision to do so. This impacted prisoners' wellbeing who wanted access to meaningful activities and life skill development prior to release.



Photo 3: The day room in Unit 6 was clean but very basic.



Photo 4: There were no self-catering facilities in Unit 6.

Unit 1 serves many purposes and manages a complex population

Unit 1 runs a range of regimes in a small, confined space. In 2022, we reported it was expected to perform too many functions and evidence from this inspection continued to support that finding (OICS, 2022). There is a small recreation yard, a day room and two telephones for up to 40 prisoners.

Unit 1 receives people after they have been remanded into custody, who are often in poor health and experiencing chronic, often urgent, needs. Many may be emotional, volatile, or substance affected. But Greenough lacked a dedicated or therapeutic space to manage unwell or psychologically vulnerable prisoners. They were placed in Unit 1 along with several other high-needs cohorts because there was no other option.

Unit 1 also accommodates men on punishment or protection regimes, which routinely required separation from each other or other prisoners. To facilitate their access to showers, phones, or exercise other prisoners are often required to be locked down. This created tension and risk for prisoner management, and impacted staff who had to return frustrated prisoners to cells. Unit 1 would benefit from infrastructure enhancements with dedicated amenities for the different cohorts.

The women's precinct had opened, but was now occupied by men

The Department's commitment to improving outcomes for women in custody was outlined in *Better Futures. Empowering women: changing lives* (DoJ, 2022). A strategic framework for women in prison and beyond, *Better Futures* recognised how women in regional prisons are often a minority group and cautioned this should not be a basis for disadvantage and inequitable access to services. The establishment of the women's precinct was commendable evidence of this commitment.

Over \$12 million dollars was spent rebuilding and refurbishing Unit 4 after the 2018 riot, transforming the space from a women's accommodation unit to a women's precinct. Although the opening of Unit 4 was still some months away, in our 2022 inspection report we expressed optimism that inequalities in service provision would be addressed (OICS, 2022). The build created space for programs, activities, and education. Women would have their own purpose-built visits room and subject to staffing, access to a dedicated medical consulting room and industries infrastructure.

There was one limitation when Unit 4 reopened in late 2022. The build did not include purpose-built family accommodation separate from mainstream prisoners, so there was no capacity for women to have children for overnight stays as is the case in several metropolitan and regional prisons. But overall, the size, space and potential were in line with the Department's acknowledgement of the need to improve the appropriateness of infrastructure for women (DoJ, 2022).

But in February 2024, the 25 or so women resident in Unit 4 were transferred out to make space for male prisoners due to near record rises in the statewide male population. Subsequently, in June 2024, with similar population pressure building in the metropolitan female estate, around nine local women were returned to Greenough. But this was not to the purpose-built Unit 4, instead they were moved back to the pre-riot women's accommodation in Unit 5 which was the same small, cramped space we described life there as 'hard' in 2021 (OICS, 2022, p. 31).



Photo 5: The activity cupboard in Unit 5.

Women were pleased to be back on Country, but not in Unit 5. They missed the services and supports they had in Unit 4 which gave them a meaningful routine and a sense of purpose. Now, as a small group in a predominantly male facility, their access to a meaningful day was limited. Women reported their placement in Unit 5 was a disadvantage because:

- They could not attend industries and the only paid work available was in the unit.
- There was no space to run education or programs, which meant women could not access rehabilitation opportunities.
- Static recreation equipment was relocated to Unit 4 and had not been replaced.

We love being home, but you gave our Unit away.

Quote from woman in Unit 5 when returned to Greenough

The prison made efforts to ease women's return. Women said they appreciated having people visit the unit to talk to them and offer support. They spoke positively about the chaplaincy service who were regular visitors. Women were offered increased supervised visits with family members who were also in the prison, and to art and craft materials. Education staff organised an author to visit and share stories and a hairdresser was scheduled to visit. Beyond such small initiatives, there was little scope for Greenough to mitigate the limited functionality of Unit 5. Given the infrastructure constraints, management had hoped to keep numbers low, but when we visited a couple of weeks after the inspection, the population had more than doubled to 21 women. The unit was more crowded and noisier and lacking adequate space for services or activities to run.

Some uncertainty remains about women in Greenough, with statewide strategic and infrastructure planning yet to be finalised. Clearly, women are not a transient population at Greenough but the Department's stated ambition that they 'deliver fit for purpose living environments' for women has regressed because of recent changes (DoJ, 2022, p. 12). In the interim, regular consultation with women might help identify possible compensatory activities.

1.5 Buildings and assets suffered from a lack of investment and maintenance

Greenough faces an ongoing battle to manage the impact of ageing infrastructure and seasonal change. This inspection was undertaken in winter, and we saw the impact of wet weather on buildings and surrounds. Previous monitoring visits have been conducted in summer and we observed similar infrastructure impacts with issues around heat mitigation, water supply and airflow.

Winter rains affected several areas across the prison. We observed leaking roofs, water damage, and mould in the health centre, education centre and administration building. Despite significant investment in Unit 4, we were told known problems with the roof had not been addressed and leaks remained an issue.



Photo 6: Water leaked from a damaged roof in the administration area.

The kitchen roof had also been leaking. We heard that faults had impacted lighting and electrics for much of the prison during our inspection, requiring services such as video link appointments to be relocated elsewhere disrupting operations. But during the inspection work had commenced to fix the problem.

There were other risks for kitchen staff to manage. We observed the kitchen floor was uneven, the guardrail up the ramp to the cool room was unstable, and heard from staff that catering equipment regularly broke down with repairs often short lived. Staff advised unavailable equipment often created additional work for a busy kitchen, interrupting service delivery and menu planning.

Most prisoner accommodation in Western Australia is not air conditioned. Although we inspected in winter, we heard concerns about infrastructure limitations experienced in the previous summer. According to the Bureau of Meteorology the historical average maximum summer temperature in Geraldton is between 27.5 and 29.7 degrees (BOM, 2025). In February 2024, Geraldton's temperature peaked at 46.8 degrees, and at that time prisoners reported heat distress and clogged and partially obstructed vents that did not effectively circulate air. Also, the air conditioning in the laundry and administration building was broken and working conditions for staff and prisoners were uncomfortable. More recently, in January 2025, the temperature reached 49.3 degrees.

The job is made harder (because of) outdated facilities.

The buildings and fences are rusting, lots of the locks don't unlock or lock easily.

Quotes from staff about infrastructure

Greenough had also experienced several water outages during summer due to the deterioration of the water ring main around the perimeter of the prison. We were told a feasibility study to replace the water ring main had been completed and the findings passed on to Infrastructure Services for Treasury to consider. When the prison was without water, prisoners could not shower, and due to water fountains and taps not working, bottled water had to be provided.



Photo 7: The kitchen roof was under repair.

Plumbers and electricians were regularly on site and this led to maintenance vocational support officers (VSOs) being frequently redeployed from their work to escort contractors. We were told that there were several maintenance and repair projects that had been quoted or were awaiting a feasibility study or investigation by a contractor.

There had been some upgrades to prisoner accommodation, such as new vinyl flooring in some areas, but significant infrastructure defects and limitations remain across the prison.

Greenough is a busy regional prison with a diverse population with significant needs, but at the time of inspection it was not adequately equipped to manage the growth in prisoner numbers or provide for the range of prisoners needs. Over several years, the Department has referred to the development of long-term custodial infrastructure and technology planning but to date nothing had been finalised (OICS, 2022a). More recently, the Department has re-commenced infrastructure planning as part of a broader strategic planning framework. This is an opportunity for Greenough's management to highlight the need for fit for purpose accommodation, amenities and service delivery space.

Recommendation 2

The Department should, as part of its strategic planning framework, audit Greenough's current and future infrastructure and cohort requirements to inform its future plans.

2 Greenough was future focussed and work culture was improving

Greenough's management had built momentum and were proactively filling gaps in the provision of services for prisoners. Although there were more prisoners with less to do, relationships between staff and prisoners had improved. Overall, we found Greenough was reasonably settled and staff were more positive than they had been for some time. Based on the views and experiences shared during the inspection, we advise caution in highlighting these local gains while the Department manages significant population increases, workforce development and infrastructure planning.

2.1 Management worked on local initiatives to meet prisoners needs

Over the past two years, there had been change and movement within Greenough's senior management team. The superintendent position was vacant and had been filled by several different people. There were new security and facilities managers and a new clinical nurse manager (CNM) in the health centre. Notwithstanding the various changes in personnel, the management team still brought strong local knowledge and shared many years of custodial experience between them. While learning new roles, they have guided staff and provided stability for staff and prisoners. And in the absence of finalised system-level plans, management was proactive and setting its own direction to address prisoner needs and fill gaps. We look forward to monitoring how these initiatives are supported and progress.

A partnership approach to a preventative family violence program

Research acknowledges the link between family violence and alcohol and drugs (Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and Other Drugs, 2019). Over several visits and during the inspection, Greenough's staff expressed concern about the 'revolving door' of imprisonment that offered limited program interventions and returned men to the community with the same deficit skills, insight, and disadvantage as when they were remanded or sentenced.

It was early days, but Greenough was working to establish a partnership to run a family and domestic violence (FDV) program for men on remand. Under departmental policies, most remand prisoners and some sentenced prisoners are ineligible for programs, while others are never treatment assessed to identify what programs would benefit their rehabilitation because of backlogs in the assessment system. This type of initiative, if supported and successful, could fill gaps of the kind we highlighted in our review of the supports available to perpetrators of FDV (OICS, 2022).

Early days for a disability support group

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, documented how people with disability face challenges navigating the justice system (Disability Royal Commission, 2023). To address some of these inequities and also identify appropriate supports, Greenough has commenced an initiative to establish a disability support group. This group are responsible for promoting early identification of needs and developing an appropriate suite of resources to support individual prisoners. People with disability are overrepresented in the justice

system, so a committee like this is an important step in ensuring disability does not lead to further disadvantage (OICS, 2024a).

In our 2024 review, *People in custody with an intellectual disability*, we noted that identified intellectual disabilities in the youth estate had increased by 44% between 2018 and 2022 (OICS, 2024a). Sadly, the reality is that many of these young people will transition into the adult estate and, for those sent to Greenough, the disability support group will be a positive local initiative.

Supports for younger prisoners

There were 40 prisoners aged under 24 at Greenough on the first day of the inspection. Many younger prisoners have distinct needs and vulnerabilities in comparison to older and experienced prisoners. But we often find there is little by way of dedicated service provision to address these needs. The situation at Greenough remained unchanged since our last inspection, when we reported there were no targeted initiatives so younger prisoners were referred to existing services (OICS, 2022). But there was a promising initiative under consideration.

Staff and prisoners identified family and culture as one of the best resources to settle and support young men. Cultural leaders within the prisoner group were exploring with management how to mentor this group in adapting to prison life in the adult system and developing more pro-social and healthy lifestyles. This promising initiative has potential and we will follow its development with interest.

2.2 Relationships were more positive

Staff interviewed during the inspection identified teamwork, collegial support, and improving outcomes for prisoners as some of the most satisfying elements of working at Greenough. Many staff held a positive view of leadership and were committed to their employment at Greenough. They reported improved communication and support from line managers and prison management, and survey indicators of staff wellbeing were more positive and closer to the state average than has been the case for several years.

If you have compatible staff in a unit, people who can work as well as have a laugh, you're in for a great day.

Staff seem to have respectful working relationships with all prisoners and most staff get along well.

I am very happy here.

WORK RELATED STRESS

5.89/10 ↓

(6.07 in the 2021 pre-inspection survey)

QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE

6.58/10 ↑

(5.37 in the 2021 pre-inspection survey)

Quotes from staff about working at Greenough

But some local challenges and tensions were evident. Some custodial staff said they did not think their commitment to 'make things work' was always appreciated or acknowledged by local managers and the Department.

We don't get thanks for what works well and we rarely get praise. We need a show of appreciation as morale is low.

Quote from staff member about improving morale

Similarly, there appeared to be some evidence of tension and division across teams. Our staff survey results reflected differing perceptions of bullying between staff, at similar levels to three years ago. But from our assessment of available evidence, including talking to staff, there appeared to be a lack of clarity around understanding or distinguishing between what were the reasonable actions of a line manager and what may constitute bullying. This impacted some relationships. Staff were generally positive about colleagues trained to support them through grievance mechanisms, but less so in the timely resolution of issues and/or the grievance mechanisms available.

Acknowledging that improving staff culture is a renewed focus for local management, more work may be worthwhile to address issues impacting morale and wellbeing.

Greenough is generally a well-run prison. Lazy or incompetent officers are the biggest risk.

Some officers should leave as their bitterness is evident and does not promote team work.

There are too many cliques.

We need to be more supportive of new staff.

Quotes from staff about challenges at work

Satisfaction with head office was also improved, although to a lesser extent than the local gains. Staff perceived departmental representatives were more available and supportive of Greenough than had been the case in past years.

Staff and prisoners were more complimentary of each other

Our standards state relations between staff and prisoners should be positive and respectful (OICS, 2020, p. 15). Ideally, staff should seek to know prisoners as individuals and understand the effect of culture and life experiences on their behaviour. Despite population pressures, crowded units, and limited opportunities for meaningful engagement, we observed many positive interactions between staff and prisoners. We also witnessed how some staff de-escalated prisoner behaviour when there was potential for conflict which confirmed they understood the circumstances and triggers of

individual prisoners. Rapport helps build trust, maintain awareness of risk and is an opportunity to gather intelligence, all of which can help the prison feel safer.

Results from our pre-inspection surveys confirmed improvements. Staff perceptions of safety had increased and commentary about the 2018 riot had almost ceased. Although the prisoner perception of feeling 'mostly safe' had fallen slightly from 69% in 2021 to 66% in 2024, more prisoners thought officers treated prisoners with respect and thought unit staff would help them if they had an issue.

Most staff are awesome.

Officers are more approachable.

Quotes from prisoners about staff

A minority of staff thought prisoners lacked respect for authority and some prisoners voiced concerns with a few staff who were negative and dismissive of their rehabilitation efforts.

2.3 System-wide challenges impacted staff morale

Much of the negativity expressed by staff in the surveys and meetings was directed at system-level issues beyond the control of the prison and local management. Many staff expressed disappointment with the Department for its failure over many years to respond to the foreseeable trajectory of custodial pressures, such as population, staffing and infrastructure. As discussed in Chapter 1, many staff were frustrated at the lack of investment in custodial infrastructure which impacted prisoner management, but they were also frustrated by an overall lack of strategy, direction, and workforce planning. When a prison is short staffed, it can be difficult to meet the operational requirements of the site.

We acknowledge there is system-wide planning underway but how quickly that translates into change for prison staff remains uncertain.

Vacant positions impacted services and staff wellbeing

Twenty-four out of 150 custodial officer positions were vacant when we inspected which meant the prison ran with approximately 16% of its custodial staff allocation unavailable. Nine out of 32 VSO positions or 28% were unfilled. Although short staffed, Greenough was not experiencing the same critical shortages experienced elsewhere in the prison estate and so had received few probationary officers from the Department's training academy. The Department authorised additional overtime shifts to staff the newly reopened Unit 5, but staff reported they were tired and so often rescinded overtime shifts they had previously agreed to.

Short-staffing impacted several areas of prisoner management. Although lockdowns were less frequent at Greenough than at some of other prisons, when there were insufficient staff to operate a unit, prisoners were locked in cells or behind grilles. Some staff felt unsafe managing bored

prisoners with little to do, and some prisoners held unit staff responsible for the restrictions which risked impacting positive relationships.

Prisoner employment opportunities were also affected by the staffing shortfall. VSOs were sometimes redeployed to cover custodial staffing shortages which meant workshops were closed, or recreation on the oval was cancelled.

A local training school was scheduled to start in September 2024. Approximately 17 local people were recruited to attend an Essential Training Program, a 12-week course followed by a six-month on-the-job probationary period. This approach had been successful historically, recruiting local people, committed to the community and the prison. Provision of a local school means participants do not have to leave their home and family for three months to attend training in Perth. Running local recruit schools should be an ongoing consideration given the challenges regional prisons face in recruiting custodial staff.

Recruitment of VSOs had also proved challenging for Greenough, and this is true throughout the state. There is high demand for qualified tradespeople within the job market and the Department is often unable to compete. Potential applicants also face a longer and less flexible recruitment process in the public sector as compared to the private sector. And there were certain requirements that would not be needed in most other jobs, such as passing psychological screening and holding a first aid certificate. This is an ongoing problem for many prisons and requires a centralised strategic response to consider more innovative, efficient recruitment strategies and incentives to attract qualified tradespeople.



SUGGESTION

The Department implement statewide specific recruitment strategies and incentives to attract VSOs.

Staff require support to work with an increasingly complex population

As discussed in Chapter 1, Greenough holds a range of prisoner groups and each cohort has distinct needs. Staff at Greenough said they wanted training that reflected this diversity. But only 11% of survey respondents thought training to work with prisoners with mental health issues or cognitive impairment was adequate. In comparison, more than 80% of surveyed prison officers reported training was adequate across a range of mandatory measures such as use of restraints or chemical agent.

Staff said online training was inadequate to skill them for working with complex groups and expressed a preference for experiential learning from experts. We encourage Greenough and the Department to look at upskilling staff to work with prisoners with diverse needs. This would contribute to better prisoner management and improved staff wellbeing.



SUGGESTION

Provide training for staff to work with prisoners with diverse needs.

3 Greenough faced challenges in providing a meaningful day

Growth in the adult prisoner population impacts many areas of prison management. Shortfalls in infrastructure and staffing were the main constraints, especially in industries and education which resulted in too few prisoners being occupied during the day. Food matters in prison, but most prisoners lacked any choice or control over what they ate.

3.1 Greenough could not provide enough employment for prisoners

Too many prisoners at Greenough were not meaningfully employed each day. Only a small number (9) were officially designated on the Department's database as 'not working'. But there were more than 80 miscellaneous workers or unit workers who received the lowest level of gratuities with no specific assigned job. This meant approximately 30% of the prisoner population had no meaningful employment. Another 10–15% had limited employment in unit jobs, most of which would occupy them for no more than an hour or two per day. The chart below shows the distribution of workers.

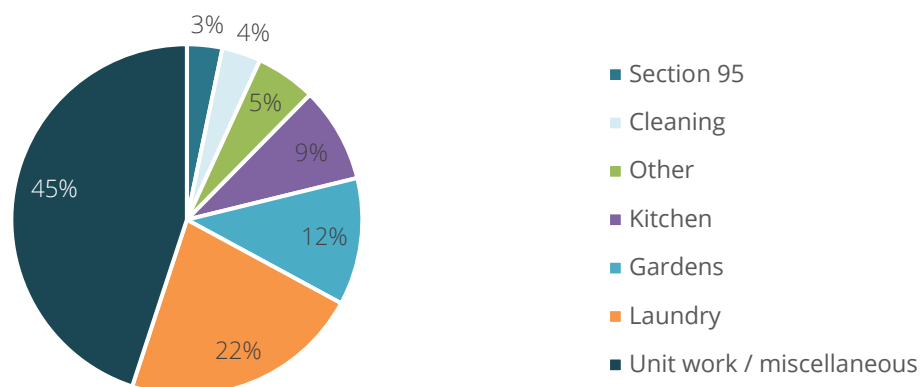


Figure 1: Prisoner workers in each work area, 3 July 2024.

Prisoner employment opportunities were limited by infrastructure and further reduced at the time of our inspection because of staff vacancies, leave and redeployment. There had been no metal shop VSO for over two years, so the workshop was closed. Only one of three VSO positions in the gardens was filled so the number of prisoners working in that area was limited to 16.

Section 95 of the *Prisons Act 1981* (WA) allows for suitably assessed low-risk prisoners to work beyond the prison's perimeter. This work is often community based and functions as reparation for crimes committed and can also assist with a prisoner's reintegration. But only one of three Section 95 officer positions was filled so the number of prisoners working in the community was limited to eight.

At the time of our inspection, the single Section 95 Officer had been on leave for several weeks and so all Section 95 activity had ceased because there was no capacity to backfill the position.

Custodial staffing shortages also had some impact on prisoner employment as VSOs were redeployed to cover custodial staffing shortages. Although less frequent than we have seen in some other prisons, this was also a reflection of the fact that VSO numbers were already low.

Comments from surveyed prisoners highlighted their frustrations.

Not enough jobs and pay is poor for non-workers who can't get a job.

Even work is mundane.

Most time is spent bored. TV is the only stimulation.

Quotes from prisoners about a lack of meaningful work

3.2 Education provided a good service despite the constraints

Education delivery had reduced following staff turnover in three key positions and when we inspected, not all positions had been filled. As a result, the number of education courses offered had been reduced from 26 to 10 until further recruitment could take place. Seventy-two per cent of students were First Nations people.

The focus was appropriately on literacy and numeracy, but courses were offered at all levels, ranging from adult basic education to tertiary studies. There was also a good range of vocational short courses offered, mainly for minimum-security prisoners in Unit 6, including the general construction induction (white card), forklift, working in confined spaces, working at height, and basic scaffolding.

Some prisoners expressed frustration at the limits of education within the prison. While acknowledging that frustration, we support the focus on basic literacy and numeracy and see it as appropriate to best serve the majority of the prisoner population.

Outside the classrooms, in the open space of the centre, there was a bank of computers. Education staff were aware of the need to provide students with opportunities to improve their digital literacy and tried to incorporate information technology into other courses. However, as in all prisons, the ability to support the digital literacy of prisoners was limited by the lack of online access and failure to provide alternative internal network solution for prisoners.

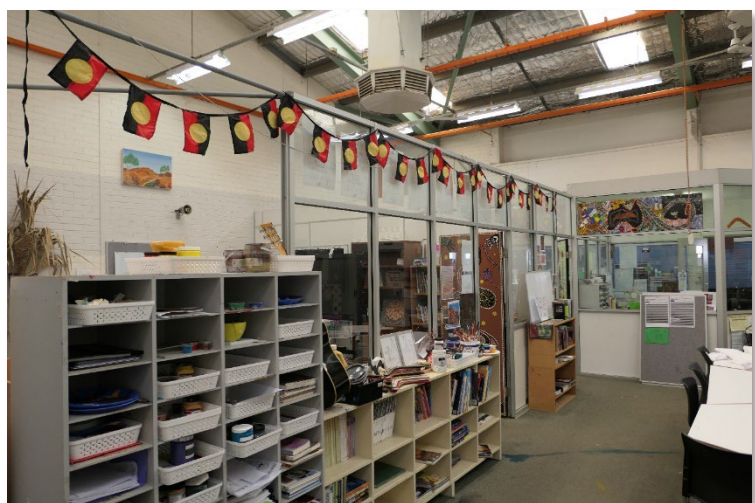


Photo 8: The education centre provided a safe learning environment.

3.3 Offender program delivery met demand but delays caused frustration

The Department has a suite of offender treatment programs intended to address offending behaviours but the high remand population meant only about half of prisoners at Greenough were eligible for offender treatment programs. And a smaller subset of that sentenced prisoner group was assessed as needing a program.

There were three programs officers at Greenough but there had been some movement in and out of these positions as well as several periods of staff leave. This delayed start dates and extended running times for programs. We spoke to several prisoners who were frustrated that delays meant their program would finish after their earliest eligibility date for parole.

Figures provided by the Department in April 2024 listed 61 prisoners with identified program needs at Greenough. Of these, 17 (28%) would not be available to the prisoner before they would be eligible for parole. The biggest shortfall was in addiction-related offending, with nine men listed as unable to access Pathways, the addiction-related offending program. However, a Pathways program was ongoing at the time of our inspection and a second was planned for later in the year to address this gap. A Medium Intensity Program (addressing general offending) had been completed in the first quarter of the year. Communicare were contracted to deliver the Not Our Way program addressing family and domestic violence once a year.

There were few voluntary programs but plans were developing

Less than 20% of the prisoner population at Greenough were assessed as needing an offender treatment program, but there was strong prisoner interest in accessing self-development opportunities. Voluntary programs can address a variety of needs such as addictions, healthy relationships, and life skills. However, course offerings were limited at Greenough. The re-entry services contract held by Regional Alliance West (RAW) provided individual support for prisoners approaching release but did not include any group programs.

Greenough had sourced the Circle of Security program, funded by Ngala, which focused on parenting skills. Twenty-one prisoners had completed the course and another was being run again at the time of our inspection. The only other opportunity for prisoners to opt in to self-improvement was with Desert Blue Connect, who provided individual counselling focused on family and domestic violence. There were about 50 prisoners engaged in this counselling, which was impressive. Unfortunately, it was only available to prisoners from the local area, although on occasion, support was provided to clients transferred to other facilities.

Prison management briefed us on options being explored to increase the range of voluntary programs available. This was an ongoing service gap that had been identified three years ago during our previous inspection (OICS, 2022, pp. 58–59) and it was positive to hear of local initiatives being explored.

3.4 Prisoners and staff were dissatisfied with food and its preparation

Food is an important part of a daily prison routine, with mealtimes providing a social activity that can contribute to routine and satisfaction in life. As was the case three years ago, food was a source of ongoing complaint at Greenough.

We heard consistent feedback from prisoners who said they were hungry because breakfast portions were too small, and the pre-packed meals prepared in the kitchen were not consistent in size. We saw a poster confirming prisoners received 25g of cereal per day, which did not comply with the 40g recommended in departmental policy (DoJ, 2023). We heard that Greenough management were addressing these concerns and monitoring portions for consistency.

The unpopular, but increasingly common, 'cook – chill' method was still operational which further reduced satisfaction. Meals were prepared and cooked, then blast chilled and served the next day, or several days later after being reheated. The Department did not support our 2021 recommendation to implement a 'cook fresh' system and noted food served under the 'cook – chill' method suffered little or no nutritional loss or change to appearance and taste (OICS, 2022). Prisoners disagreed and reported certain foods, such as roast meats and vegetables were less appetising when reheated as steam condensed into water. To its credit, the kitchen had responded to feedback received about particularly unpopular meal options.



Photo 9: Cereal contained in breakfast packs were too small.

The food is ok but there's not enough of it. Down south you see food getting thrown away but here they're scavenging just to get some.

The servings are getting smaller.

The food is deplorable.

Quotes from prisoners about food



Photo 10: Typical prison evening meal.



Photo 11: Prisoners making lamingtons.

Some prisoners took pride in their work in the kitchen and showed us the lamingtons they were making. Others were less complimentary and thought even freshly prepared meals would not compensate for the low-quality ingredients and equipment they were working with. First Nations prisoners reported access to cultural foods was limited to special days such as NAIDOC. This was disappointing in a prison accommodating an 84% Aboriginal population.

Satisfaction with food quality in other regional prisons such as Bunbury Regional Prison (Bunbury) has increased and is almost twice the state average. We think there is an opportunity to improve Greenough's kitchen's product and we encourage the Department to facilitate the sharing of good practice to see what can be achieved in the mid-West.



SUGGESTION

The Department facilitate inter-prison sharing of good catering practice.

Recommendation 3

Improve access to freshly prepared and self-catered meals.

3.5 Limited routine and opportunities in Unit 6

There was little about life and the daily routine in Unit 6 that prepared men for release. Men had more freedom of movement within the unit, and were only required to remain in their rooms between 10.30pm and 6.00am. But the low level of constructive activity did not support positive rehabilitation. There were many contributing factors to men being unoccupied during the day, for example:

- There was insufficient meaningful employment because two of the three Section 95 supervisor positions were vacant, and during our inspection the remaining Section 95 officer was on leave.
- Other employment opportunities were limited, and many did not provide a full day of work.
- Only one man was engaged in paid employment outside the prison as part of the Prisoner Employment Program (PEP), and efforts to set up further PEP opportunities for other men had so far been unsuccessful.
- Although there was a suite of vocational short courses offered by the education centre, many of the men in Unit 6 had already completed these and were frustrated that nothing else was available.
- Recreation was restricted to in-unit activities. Prisoners reported infrequent access to the oval adjacent to the unit and no access to community-based recreation which is available at many other minimum-security units as part of their preparation for release.
- There were no self-catering facilities, so men did not learn valuable life skills like budgeting and meal planning and preparation.

A minimum-security placement in a unit such as Unit 6 involves a level of trust, and with trust comes risk.

Unit 6 prisoners told us they were routinely subject to strip-searching whenever they went inside the main prison to do things like attend medical appointments or participate in programs. Many complained about the indignity and futility of this process. Prisoners told us that such practices indicated that their minimum-security status had little meaning. But security at Greenough were committed to continuing this practice to prevent the entry of contraband into the main prison.

In 2019, this Office reviewed strip searching practices in Western Australian prisons and found it was ineffective, harmful, and overused (OICS, 2019). The Greenough practice differs to what we see elsewhere. For example, prisoners in the work camp at Roebourne are electronically scanned with a hand-held wand when entering the main prison, and men in the minimum-security unit at Bunbury undergo a pat search. As we have observed before, improved gatehouse technology, such as a body scanner, is an obvious solution that provides a balance between security and safety and the trust and dignity of individual prisoners (OICS, 2022, p. 35).

Recommendation 4

Review the functions, practice and operations of Unit 6, comparing what is currently occurring with what should be available in a minimum-security environment.

4 Health and wellbeing supports were mixed

The health of people in prison will often be poor when compared to the broader community (AIHW, 2024). Time spent in prison is an opportunity to assess, support and improve health outcomes for people who are likely to have higher rates of chronic disease, mental illness, and substance dependence. Although primary health care had improved at Greenough, dental provision did not meet demand and gaps in mental health staffing posed unacceptable risks to prisoners and staff. The Department had recently convened a Clinical Workforce Committee (CWC) to address recruitment and retention of clinical staff. There are local opportunities to improve access to recreation.

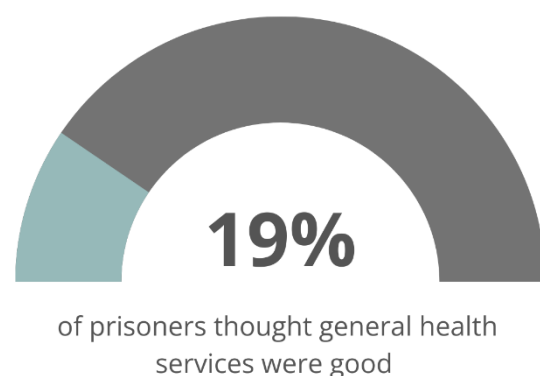
4.1 A holistic model of care, but missing a cultural lens

Primary health was fully staffed and provided a good service. Led by a CNM who brought drive and vision, the team comprised three full-time nurses and two casuals, as well as two administrative positions. General Practitioner (GP) provision had increased offering a tele-health service with fortnightly on-site attendance.

Having a fully staffed health team allowed Greenough to provide preventative health care for prisoners, up-to-date annual health assessments, and care plans. We also received information about an initiative introduced by the CNM called 'Spanner in the works'. It was driven by peer support prisoners who encouraged men to take more responsibility for their health. This was another example of the proactivity of Greenough's management in providing a service tailored to the population.

One aspect of health care that had not progressed since our last inspection, was the provision of culturally appropriate health care. Primary health staff reported the poor health experienced by many of Greenough's prisoners when received, but there was no First Nations clinician to support prisoners' engagement with prison health services or assist with continuity of care arrangements once prisoners were released.

Surveyed prisoners were less satisfied with health services in 2024 than they had been in 2021. Then, prisoners spoke with us about the cultural divide between western health and more traditional Aboriginal practices (OICS, 2022). First Nations prisoners often tell us they feel more 'settled' when supported by First Nations staff. With a higher proportion of First Nations prisoners in 2024, including those from regional areas, the need for culturally safe services is even more relevant.



The National Agreement on Closing the Gap aims to improve life expectancy for Aboriginal people (Joint Council on Closing the Gap, 2023). Having a First Nations clinician to improve engagement

would support this outcome. But our previous recommendation to tailor services for Aboriginal prisoners was only noted by the Department (OICS, 2022, p. 43). Given the ongoing disadvantage experienced by many Aboriginal people (AIHW, 2024), there is value in restating this recommendation.

Recommendation 5

Develop and resource a culturally safe and targeted mode of health care for First Nations prisoners.

Too many prisoners were waiting too long for dental care

As is the case across most of the custodial estate, many prisoners at Greenough were waiting far too long for dental care. We met many prisoners experiencing dental pain and who were being managed by the primary health team through antibiotics and basic pain relief. This situation was similar to what we found in our 2021 inspection.



The dentist was scheduled to visit once a week and see between four and five patients per day. When the dentist was unavailable, there was no replacement which pushed the waitlist back further. Twenty-eight per cent of the population (87) were on the list waiting to see the dentist as of 8 August 2024. Of this, 20% of patients (17) were rated as priority 1 as indicated by symptoms such as swelling, trauma to teeth, ongoing toothache, and inability to bite with the tooth.

4.2 Mental health services were in crisis

We drew attention to the poor state of mental health services for Greenough prisoners back in 2021 (OICS, 2022). Then, the Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs (MHAOD) nurse also serviced prisoners at Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison via telehealth. The service was stretched, and mental health intervention was reactive rather than therapeutic. Mental health services received the lowest approval rating of all prison services from surveyed staff.

The situation was even worse in 2024. After several weeks of leave, the MHAOD nurse resigned on the first day of the inspection and did not return. There had been no psychiatry clinic since April 2024. This further widened the gap between services available and prisoner need and left those with mental health issues without dedicated clinical support. The Chaplain had been working additional days to support prisoners with pastoral care, and the primary health team were overseeing pharmacotherapy and other medication interventions, but this was only a temporary solution.

According to departmental data which records prisoners with diagnosed or suspected mental health conditions, in June 2024:

- Five people at Greenough were rated as 'priority 2', meaning they had significant ongoing psychiatric conditions requiring psychiatric treatment.
- Sixteen people had a stable psychiatric condition requiring appointments or continuing treatment.
- Four people had a suspected psychiatric condition requiring assessment.

Our mental health experts have previously advised that priority rated prisoners require ongoing clinical attention and psychiatric care. In total, 8.4% (25) of Greenough's population had diagnosed psychiatric conditions, which was similar to the state average (8.5%). But Greenough did not have fit for purpose crisis care accommodation nor any therapeutic alternative, and this was compounded by the absence of clinical staff.

We have previously raised concerns about the availability of mental health services for people in prison who require specialist care and supervision, and so welcome advice that the Department is looking at issues affecting staff retention (OICS, 2024). The Department must address what is no longer an emerging issue, but a critical one.

Recommendation 6

Provide adequate mental health clinical resources and support to meet the needs of prisoners at Greenough.

Counselling services were back on site but under resourced

Greenough had a long-serving counsellor who had left the prison in late 2023, and it was several months before a replacement was appointed. This still left one counsellor position vacant. Like elsewhere across the estate, the service was stretched and limited to crisis intervention and follow-up of those prisoners most at risk.

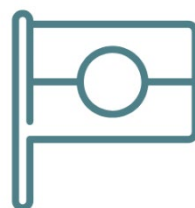
There was prisoner demand for longer term therapeutic counselling services, but Psychological Health Services at Greenough did not have capacity to provide this. Ongoing counselling was provided remotely by tele-health appointments with counsellors in other regional prisons. Some local men received support from Desert Blue Connect and others relied on the chaplaincy service. Many prisoners at Greenough told us they would benefit from counselling to help with grief and loss, trauma, relationships, and addiction, but such services are not available.

4.3 Support services were well resourced but need to extend their reach

Greenough benefitted from a full-time Aboriginal Visitors Scheme (AVS) worker and Prison Support Officer (PSO). Such positions in prisons were an initiative implemented following the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody to support vulnerable and at-risk prisoners (RCADIC,

1991, see Rec. 174). Both positions have the potential to contribute to the wellbeing of prisoners, especially in a regional prison where First Nations people are over-represented.

Most prisons we inspect have struggled to recruit or retain staff to these important roles, so having both positions occupied presented good opportunities for prisoners at Greenough. The PSO led a team of peer support prisoners whose focus was the welfare of other prisoners.



84%
of the population
identified as First
Nations people, up
from **78%** in 2021

Evidence gathered during the inspection indicated prisoners would like greater access to these staff in units for one-on-one support, especially as there was no MHAOD service. Women, in particular, looked forward to talking with them and wanted more informal opportunities for day-to-day engagement with both AVS and PSO.

The AVS and PSO position-holders said much of their time was spent reviewing at-risk prisoners, completing the relevant administration, and attending Prisoner Risk Assessment Group (PRAG) meetings. Although valuable, this work was time consuming, office based and reduced opportunities for them to interact with prisoners across the prison. It is important that these positions have capacity and availability to spend time with prisoners in order to build the relationship and trust necessary to meet their needs.

Greenough management should consider how both the AVS and PSO could spend more time out in the units interacting with and supporting prisoners who need their services.

4.4 Recreation was improving, but there was a long way to go

Prison management acknowledged the importance of structured recreation for prisoners' physical and mental health and wellbeing. Consequently, recreation was now considered an essential service. There were two substantive recreation officers, who were no longer the first selected to be redeployed when the prison was short staffed.

During our inspection, the football season was underway, and this was a popular highlight for the prisoners involved. Beyond this, prisoners had some access to the oval during their unit's allocated recreation time. It was positive that prisoners at Greenough were receiving opportunities to recreate outside. Surveyed prisoners rated access to organised sports higher than other aspects of recreation, but at 25% it was but still lower than the state average of 35%.



Photo 12: The oval and cultural area.

Prisoners could also recreate in the recreation hall, which is a good-sized space including pool tables, library, musical instruments, and exercise equipment. However, in a visit to the prison shortly after the inspection, prisoners told us that several exercise bikes were now broken and unusable.



Photo 13: The recreation hall was busy and offered some choices.

Unit-based recreation options varied across different locations

Prisoners consistently advised they wanted more equipment in units that would cater for a range of ages, interests, and skill levels. This was reflected in surveyed prisoners' feedback, where only 12% rated access to other recreation as 'good'.

In Units 4 and 6 there was a reasonable range of unit-based recreations equipment and options, including weight and aerobic machines. Prisoners in Unit 4 had the most gym equipment including treadmills, exercise bikes and rowing machines. There was also stationary exercise equipment in the external gardens.

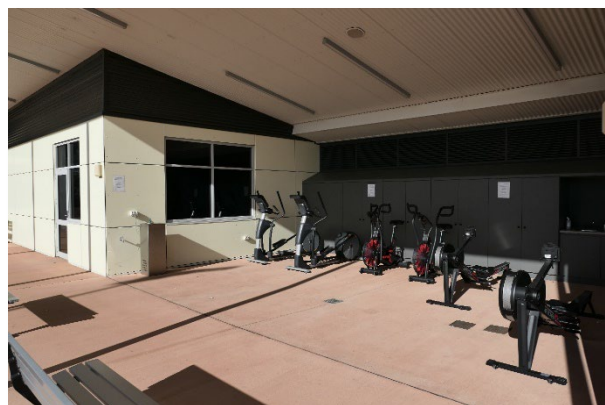


Photo 14: Gym equipment in Unit 4.

In contrast, units 1, 2 and 3 had little in the way of exercise equipment for prisoners to engage in strenuous physical exercise. Yard based equipment was limited to fixed isometric bars and basketball courts, many of which were under-utilised because the surfaces were in poor condition - although we understand a business case to repair surfaces was progressing. Staff in Units 2 and 3 tried to compensate by providing mats, skipping ropes and at least one medicine ball for unit-based recreation. Some staff said the exercise machines in the recreation hall were occasionally taken to units 2 and 3 for prisoners to use during recreation time, but prisoners reported this was rare and dependent on the availability of the recreation officers.

Unit 5 was the least well resourced. All fixed recreation equipment was relocated to Unit 4 in 2021 prior to the women moving there and had not been replaced or returned. Women could access the small, grassed area outside their accommodation but there no exercise equipment.

We have seen common sense solutions to increase unit-based recreation activities at other prisons where prisoner recreation workers set up exercise circuit stations using a range of equipment housed in mobile trolleys. There were two recreation worker positions at Greenough and both men lived in Unit 4, which was the best equipped for recreation. Having recreation workers in each unit to organise activities and oversee equipment would increase the opportunity for unit-based activity and mitigate the absence of suitable fixed equipment.



Photo 15: Attractive grounds in Unit 4.

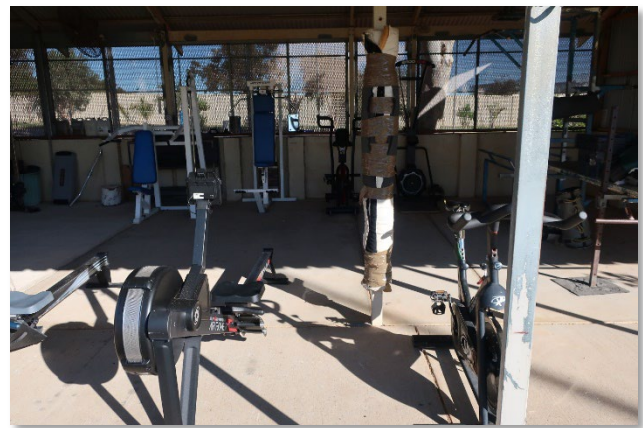


Photo 16: Gym equipment in Unit 6



Photo 17: Gym equipment in Unit 1.

Recommendation 7

Create recreation workers positions for each unit to organise and manage unit-based recreation activities.



Photo 18: Gym equipment in Unit 2.



Photo 19: Exercise equipment in Unit 3 looking from Unit 2.



Photo 20: Outdoor area in Unit 5.

5 Community connections were difficult to maintain

Over three quarters of Greenough's population identify as First Nations people. But Greenough's ability to uphold Aboriginal prisoners' concepts of wellbeing and attachment to land was overtaken by statewide pressures and imperatives. Regional women were transferred out to accommodate male prisoners and out-of-Country men were transferred in as a population management strategy. To uphold the objectives of supporting regional women, the Department will need to integrate *Better Futures* into the system-wide strategic planning and review of infrastructure already underway. Phones were at the end of their working life, but there were no plans to upgrade the aged telephone system.

5.1 Transferring women off Country was disruptive

Family and community links were deprioritised to accommodate male prisoners

Women at Greenough were dispersed between several metropolitan and regional prisons in February 2024 to allow Unit 4 to be used to accommodate men. Along with community providers who delivered services to Greenough's women, we were concerned with the transfer of local women off Country, away from loved ones and far from reintegration and community supports. In *Better Futures* the Department recognises the potential impact upon a child's welfare when family links were broken due to imprisonment, however we were advised the decision to transfer women out of Greenough was necessary to safely accommodate the state's rapidly rising prisoner population.

Although they were assured of access to services at their new facilities, many women told us it had not been easy to maintain contact while at a metropolitan prison. We heard several accounts of larger, busier metropolitan prisons where women could not easily make a phone call or book an e-visit. Face-to-face social visits decreased because of the travel and logistics involved and several women advised they had not received any visitors while off Country. Like the out-of-Country men who had been transferred away from family and community, women said they felt 'wrong' when placed in metropolitan prisons.

When women returned on temporary transfer, they acknowledged the efforts Greenough went to facilitate regular social visits. This was not their experience at some metropolitan prisons.

With pressure in the metropolitan female estate increasing, local women were returned to Greenough in June 2024 just before our inspection.

The preservation of family and community links are of benefit to women in prison and to those in their care prior to imprisonment, especially children. Prisoners who have supportive relationships may be more motivated to rehabilitate, and parents in prison who are engaged with their children are less likely to reoffend upon release (Prison Reform Programme, 2017). Disruption of care and relationships through incarceration, especially for women who are often the primary care giver, can be traumatising for parents and children.

Reintegration supports and opportunities for personal growth were lost

Many women in prison will have experienced trauma, substance dependence and feelings of poor self-worth. Time in prison is an opportunity to rehabilitate and address some of the underlying factors that may have led to interaction with the justice system in the first instance (DoJ, 2022).

In *Better Futures*, the Department recognised the needs, vulnerabilities and specific supports required to meet the needs of women who have experienced FDV. It acknowledged the 'skills women gain in prison and the support they receive upon release play an important part in successful reintegration' (DoJ, 2022, p. 13). Collaboration with community partners was identified as a key deliverable to achieve women's safe transition.

A significant step to providing this skill development and through-care was the introduction of the Leave Safe Stay Safe (LSSS) program, a three-year \$2 million pilot program to support women who have experienced family violence. Gosnells Community Legal Centre, Relationships Australia and RAW provide legal and social support and offer women a pathway to safety upon release.

Participants in the program planned how to reduce the risk of family violence as part of their reintegration preparation. They received counselling and learned to identify issues like coercive control. Graduates of the program receive a phone pre-loaded with relevant contacts and functions enabled should they need help upon release. And to help build trust and familiarity with community supports, the local Domestic Violence Unit within the WA Police visited the women in prison. One woman described LSSS as 'that one intervention that had made a difference'. It was the first time she felt 'less scared' about her future.

But the transfer of women out of Greenough relocated participants and graduates away from services and supports in the mid-West and put on hold the second LSSS group that was planned. It was not easy for service providers to support women while they were in metropolitan prisons where population pressures and staff shortages reduced access to video link, telephones and meeting rooms. We heard from service providers that without this input, some women struggled to maintain the gains and were vulnerable when they were released from prison.

Several other women had attended introductory workshops and were enrolled in a Certificate II in Community Services. This would have provided women with a qualification to assist with finding employment, as well as helping them learn about themselves and gain life skills. Staff noted how engaged women were with this opportunity and expressed disappointment it had come to an abrupt halt.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the Department is aware 'as a significant minority, woman (sic) generally do not receive equitable services' (DoJ, 2022, p. 24). There is no better example of the disadvantage they face than the displacement of women from Unit 4, the precinct designed with them in mind, and the loss of specially designed and targeted programs that showed women what they could achieve upon release. The Department must do better when imprisoning women if it is committed to bringing *Better Futures* to life.

5.2 Pilbara and Kimberley men also felt disadvantaged at Greenough

As prisons in the north of Western Australia were required to transfer male prisoners out to manage population pressures, Greenough offered to accommodate them as a group closer to Country, rather than have them dispersed across metropolitan prisons. Although Greenough acknowledged the importance of keeping First Nations people together, most out-of-Country prisoners we spoke to

described feeling culturally 'lost' in the Mid West. Many men reported experiencing poor mental health because of their relocation. This is in line with our understanding of how displacement from land can affect physical, mental, and social wellbeing (AIHW, 2024). Out-of-Country prisoners offered each other cultural support, but this was often difficult when everyone felt a similar loss.

I feel like a trespasser on someone else's land.

Quote from an out-of-Country prisoner

Their key concern was being away from Country and family. Many men said they had not seen their children and community supports for several months and because of this they felt 'weak'. Alternatives were not always accessible or practical, in-person social visits were unlikely given the distances and cost, there were insufficient phones in units, and not all families or communities had the technology to support e-visits.

The group had other concerns:

- Prisoners on remand were concerned about accessing legal support and communicating with lawyers by phone when their preference was for face-to-face engagement.
- They felt disadvantaged as they lacked the community networks who could provide them with cultural support at a time of loss. Several prisoners thought they would have been approved for funeral attendance had they been located at a northern prison when their loved one passed.
- Prisoners wanted Sorry Time for a Country man who had experienced a bereavement, but they were unfamiliar with Greenough's staff and how to make such a request.
- Men explained they would be less likely to self-advocate or engage with local supports and services because they were on unfamiliar land and experiencing cultural and spiritual distress.

Their concerns were reflected in our pre-inspection survey which included many comments indicating the worst thing about Greenough was being off Country.

I wanna get out of here and go back up to the Kimberley.

I'm behind locked doors, a long way from home.

I just wanna go home.

Quotes from out-of-Country prisoners

All of the out-of-Country prisoners we spoke to were awaiting news of when they could transfer home. Staff and prisoners thought rotating prisoners between Greenough and their local prison once space permitted could mitigate the impact, albeit temporarily. Greenough's ASO liaised regularly with their counterparts in other regional prisons to understand the local situation, but the reality was there would be limited short-term relief for this group. Roebourne has transferred

prisoners out while air conditioning is installed, and other northern prisons were regularly over capacity.

The out-of-Country men lacked a shared understanding of the statewide pressures that necessitated their transfer. We recommended Greenough create a forum so they could receive updates and reliable information and advise management on any compensatory activities that may help offset their isolation and distress.

As noted above, keeping First Nations people on Country is integral to their wellbeing. Displacement, as we heard during the inspection, often leads to prisoners reporting feeling isolated and despondent. While strategic planning to address the rising population is ongoing, we urge the Department to minimise the number of regional prisoners held off Country.



SUGGESTION

Provide a regular forum for out-of-Country prisoners to come together and hear from management.

Recommendation 8

Accommodate regional prisoners in on Country prisons, unless there is a compelling reason not to do so.

5.3 Access to phones had not improved

The most common complaint from prisoners during our inspection was that there were not enough telephones in units. Regular access to loved ones can be settling for prisoners. It is also good for their mental health and helps retain relationships the prisoner may rely on when released.

Over several monitoring visits and during our inspection, we observed prisoners queuing for lengthy periods to make a ten-minute call. There were no phones in industrial areas and workers who left the unit at 9.00am and returned at 3.00pm felt disadvantaged because they had even less access.

At most prisons, there is a 10-minute exclusion time between calls, but at Greenough prisoners must wait an hour. Management said this strategy was necessary to limit control of the telephone by certain prisoners. But many prisoners disagreed and said the hour wait between calls exacerbated their stress rather than improved access. They described the lack of certainty of speaking with loved ones as 'triggering'. Staff agreed with prisoners' views and said access to telephones was one of the biggest risks to the safety and management of the units. This echoed comments from prisoners involved in the 2018 Greenough riot who cited dissatisfaction with access to telephones as one of the precipitating factors to the incident (Shuard, 2018, pp. 46-47).

Prisoners at Greenough faced other challenges in maintaining family contact. For example, inter-prison visits were often hard to facilitate with some metropolitan prisons because staff shortages led to the cancellation of the visit. Several prisoners we spoke to had not had contact with loved ones for



64% ↓

of prisoners felt it was easy to contact family by telephone, down from **70%** in 2021

many weeks and were concerned important issues relating to their children's welfare could not be discussed.

In person visits across the estate are increasingly cancelled or reduced due to short staffing. With more people in prison or placed off Country maintaining family contact is critical to safe prisoner management.

The Department supported, and closed, our recommendation from 2022 to increase the number of phones in each unit. It referenced the Long-term Custodial Technology Strategy and development of a relevant business case to support the work (OICS, 2022). But there has been limited progress. Greenough is not alone in facing this challenge. Access to telephones is a system-wide concern that we have raised in our recent inspections of Albany Regional Prison (OICS, 2025) and West Kimberley Regional Prison (OICS, 2024b). In our consultations with the Department, we have been advised the phone system across the estate is at the end of its life and the technology need upgrading. More recently, the Department has advised the release of tender for a digital services platform.

We urge the Department to prioritise their review and resourcing of the Prisoner Telephone System (PTS).

Recommendation 9

Explore and identify alternatives to increase phone access while awaiting a whole-of-estate upgrade.

5.4 Prisoners often missed out on funeral attendance

External factors beyond the control of the prison often determined a prisoner's attendance at a funeral, but on many occasions this was not clear to prisoners and it impacted their relationship with staff. For example, the transport contractor for the Department may be short-staffed limiting their capacity to transport prisoners. Other factors such as local police resourcing, community dynamics, and family preferences, are additional considerations that may determine the likelihood of a prisoner being able to attend a funeral.

In the event of a family bereavement, First Nations people have cultural traditions and protocols they are expected to uphold and these obligations do not stop with imprisonment. In recognition of this for First Nations people in custody, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody recommended Aboriginal prisoners receive favourable consideration to attend funeral services (RCADIC, 1991, see Rec 171). Departmental policy also acknowledges the expectation for people in prison to attend funerals (DoJ, 2021).

Despite the policy support, we spoke with many prisoners before and during the inspection who had been unable to uphold their cultural obligations and whose attendance at a funeral had not been approved. Conversations with staff confirmed the prisoners' perspective. Many prisoners were

fearful of repercussions and how they would be accepted back into communities if they had not shared in the grieving process.

A lot of prisoners are restricted and not allowed to attend funerals whom they are very close to. It's not right. It's our lore to be there close to loved ones.

When the officers don't help us with transport, we feel like we gonna stress and fight.

They don't respect us after a loss, they don't send us back for visits to our country and see our families.

Carnarvon mob are not allowed at funerals. They don't understand funerals.

Quotes from prisoners about non-attendance at funerals

Sorry time was meaningful, but processes to grieve with family need clarifying

When prisoners were unable to attend a funeral in person, they appreciated the efforts of the prison to offer an alternative. If technology permitted, funerals were live streamed to the prison from the funeral home. The chaplaincy service facilitated a well-regarded Sorry Time and many prisoners appreciated this support. However, we heard from several prisoners yet to meet with bereaved family members to share grief and support each other. They were unsure of the mechanism within the prison to identify and verify family connections, especially the out-of-Country people who were less familiar with prison staff and processes. We encourage Greenough to determine a culturally appropriate process to identify family connections and communicate this to staff and prisoners.



SUGGESTION

Develop and communicate a clear pathway for prisoners and staff to request Sorry time.

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Appendix B Acronyms

Term	Expansion of Abbreviation
ASO	Assistant Superintendent Operations
AVS	Aboriginal Visitor Scheme
COPP	Commissioner's Operating Policy and Procedure
CNM	Clinical Nurse Manager
CWC	Clinical Work force Committee
DOJ	Department of Justice
FDV	Family and Domestic Violence
LSSS	Leave Safe Stay Safe
MHAOD	Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs
OICS	Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services
PEP	Prisoner Employment Program
PSO	Prison Support Officer
RAW	Regional Alliance West
VSO	Vocational Support Officer



Response to the OICS Draft Report:

2024 Inspection of Greenough Regional Prison

March 2025

Response Overview

Introduction

On 11 March 2024, the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS) announced the 2024 Inspection of Greenough Regional Prison (Greenough), with the onsite inspection taking place from 15 to 18 July 2024.

To assist with the inspection, and to inform the Inspection Report, the Department of Justice, Corrective Services (the Department) provided a range of documentation as well as access to systems, custodial facilities, staff, and prisoners.

On 23 January 2025, the Department received the draft report which noted nine recommendations for review and comment.

Appendix A contains comments linked to sections in the draft report for the Inspector's consideration when finalising the report.

Department Comments

The Department welcomes the findings arising from the Inspection of Greenough and extends its appreciation to the OICS Inspection team for conducting the Inspection.

The Department values the recommendations provided, which are aimed at strengthening and improving services available to prisoners such as health services and recreation opportunities. While some improvements can be achieved without significant cost, others require additional resources. The Department remains committed to progressing the supported recommendations, taking necessary action to ensure the safety and welfare of prisoners within Greenough and working with the relevant agencies to obtain funding where required to implement the recommendations effectively.

As noted by OICS, some of the recommendations made following the 2021 Inspection of Greenough have been raised again following the 2024 Inspection. These include recommendations pertaining to the prisoner telephone system (PTS) and infrastructure upgrades that form part of wider Departmental projects including the Offender Digital Services Platform (ODSP) project and the Long-Term Custodial Infrastructure Plan (LTCIP) 2025 - 2035.

As noted by OICS, a substantial rise in Western Australia's prisoner population has resulted in First Nations prisoners being housed off Country, which has been essential to maintaining the safety of prisoners and staff, security and operation of prisons throughout the State while allowing for necessary infrastructure projects to be undertaken.

To alleviate the impact this has on prisoners residing within Greenough, the Superintendent met with off Country prisoners to ascertain what could be done to assist them in their custodial journey. Initiatives have since been implemented such as barbecues to allow prisoners within Greenough to get together, in addition to the commencement of Team's meetings between the Kimberley and Pilbara regional prisons to provide prisoners time to connect and talk with kinfolk.

Noting the importance of recreation and meaningful activity as a protective factor in prisoner wellbeing, recreation workers have been recruited for each unit within

Greenough and additional exercise equipment has been purchased to give prisoners constructive outlets for physical activity and well-being.

In addition, community engagement programs such as the fire mitigation program in conjunction with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) saw Section 95 prisoners contribute 600 hours of community work to neighbouring communities such as Northampton, Mullewa and Dongara – in turn providing additional safety resources to communities and skills to prisoners. The Breaking Through program was also undertaken at Greenough and extended to minimum and medium security prisoners, with the program offering opportunities for gainful employment for participants upon return to the community.

Recruitment processes are currently underway for several positions including an Employment Coordinator and Section 95 Vocational Support Officers (VSO) which once recruited will increase Greenough prisoners' engagement in the community through the Prisoner Employment Program (PEP) and Section 95 activities.

To address staffing issues, a staffing review has commenced which will see the development of a new prison operating model that is operationally flexible and capable of meeting current and future demands. The operating model will include custodial operations and support areas including Health Services, Education, Treatment and Rehabilitative Services. Stage one and two of the review - comprising of the development and submission of a Prison Services Evaluation Project Initiation Document and business case is now complete and the focus is now on stage three which comprises of site visits to map out the staffing profiles across the custodial estate. The Greenough site visit is anticipated to commence in October 2025 and the findings will subsequently inform the proposed operational staffing model and forecasted projections to ensure Greenough is suitably staffed to ensure the safe operations of the site and meet the needs of the prisoner cohort.

The Department acknowledges and commends the efforts of staff who have worked hard to improve relations with prisoners and is pleased to hear that satisfaction with head office has improved and staff perceptions of safety has increased since the previous inspection. In addition, the Department continues to work with prisoners, staff and OICS to understand the issues impacting prisons across the estate and implement changes to improve conditions for both prisoners and staff.

Response to Recommendations

1 Government should support and resource agreed objectives and priorities developed as part of the Department's strategic planning work.

Level of Acceptance:	Noted
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Adult Male Prisons

Response:

The Corrective Services Strategic Plan is nearing completion which will set the direction and priorities for the agency and identify the role and purpose of each prison across the custodial estate.

Corrective Services will continue to seek Government support to fund the implementation of key priority initiatives outlined in our Strategic Plan and Long-Term Custodial Infrastructure Plan (LTCIP).

2 The Department should, as part of its strategic planning framework, audit Greenough's current and future infrastructure and cohort requirements to inform its future plans.

Level of Acceptance:	Supported in Principle
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Corporate Services

Response:

Corrective Services acknowledges climatic and environmental issues and impacts in the area. Some infrastructure works have been completed (*works to the floor in several units including Unit 4*) with other works to areas such as the kitchen scheduled to commence. There are also a number of other priorities that are dependent on the availability of funding.

Greenough is being reviewed as part of the LTCIP and business cases requesting funding to undertake expansion works will be progressed.

3 Improve access to freshly prepared and self-catered meals.

Level of Acceptance:	Supported - Current Practice/Project
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Adult Male Prisons

Response:

Since the inspection, Greenough has reviewed cereals provided to prisoners, and subsequently ceased using pre-packed products. Female prisoners now package cereal for all prisoners excluding those in units 1, 4 and 6, who package their own. This has enabled Greenough to increase cereal portions as well as generate further opportunities for prisoners to engage in constructive activity.

With regards to OICS comments pertaining to the 'cook/chill' method, as noted in response to [recommendation 8 arising from the 2021 Inspection of Greenough](#)¹, whilst this is not the preferred option, this method is an accepted controlled system of food preparation and is necessary to provide flexibility and to ensure the availability of meal quality and variety at all times.

Greenough are also in the process of recruiting a Chef Supervisor who once recruited may implement alternate arrangements.

Noting OICS positive comments regarding food quality at Bunbury Regional Prison, the Superintendent from Greenough is working with BRP to ascertain whether any improvements can be introduced at Greenough. The Superintendent is also arranging for the successful Chef Supervisor to attend other prisons to gain a broader understanding of initiatives implemented to improve food quality and learn how the same initiatives can be delivered at Greenough.

In relation concerns from First Nations prisoners regarding the availability of cultural foods, the Greenough Superintendent met with off Country prisoners from the Pilbara and Kimberley regions in late 2024 to understand their cultural needs. The consensus was that prisoners wanted more barbeques rather than cultural food due to concerns that some foods (such as kangaroo) may not be sourced in the correct manner / not from the appropriate region. Since then, Greenough have made changes to the menu to assist prisoners where possible.

4 Review the functions, practice and operations of Unit 6, comparing what is currently occurring with what should be available in a minimum-security environment.

Level of Acceptance:	Supported in Principle
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Adult Male Prisons

Response:

Greenough continues to make a concerted effort to recruit additional Section 95 Vocational Support Officers (VSO's) through ongoing recruitment processes. Prisoners in Unit 6 continue to be employed within the gardens, unit and external stores. It is hoped that once additional Section 95 VSO's have been recruited, this will provide additional employment opportunities for prisoners.

Prisoner Employment Programs (PEP) continue to be offered where possible as far as the availability of employers in the Geraldton area permits. An Employment Coordinator recruitment process is currently underway, and it is anticipated that once recruited, this position will drive the PEP program further.

Programs such as *'Breaking Through'* have also been offered to minimum and medium security prisoners with nine of the ten recent participants achieving employment upon

¹ Recommendation 8 arising from the 2021 Inspection of Greenough Regional Prison called for the implementation of a 'cook fresh' system. This recommendation was not supported by Corrective Services on the basis that the 'cook/chill' method is an accepted controlled system of food preparation and is necessary to provide flexibility and ensure food is available for prisoners in the event of a disruption. This method is a form of contingency planning and will continue to be utilised to ensure there are no disruptions to the provision of food.

returning to the community. Section 95 prisoners have also joined Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) in bushfire mitigation training and provided 600 voluntary work hours towards keeping communities in the vicinity of the prison safe.

Noting OICS comments pertaining to the use of strip searching, following the inspection, the Greenough Superintendent reviewed the practice of strip-searching of Unit 6 prisoners entering the mainstream prison. Whilst it is acknowledged this is not current practice at other prisons, wand searches do not identify contraband such as illicit substances. Strip-searching has been determined as necessary to reduce the likelihood of contraband being trafficked into the prison due to the proximity of Unit 6 and the visitor carpark.

5 Develop and resource a culturally safe and targeted mode of health care for First Nations prisoners.

Level of Acceptance:	Supported in Principle
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Offender Services

Response:

The provision of health services to Aboriginal prisoners is guided by the WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015 - 2030. In line with the recommendation and noting the importance of providing health care that is culturally safe, Corrective Services sought and received approval for additional Aboriginal Health Worker (AHW) positions. It is important to note that while some AHW positions have been approved and are available, the ability to fill the positions is limited due to the classification level being less than other partner agencies such as the Department of Health (DoH).

To address this issue, the Director of Health Services is liaising with the Clinical Staffing Review Committee about the potential reassessment of the classification level.

Corrective Services is also seeking to create a Director of Aboriginal Health Services position which if approved, will drive the delivery of culturally safe health care within the custodial environment.

Whilst Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Services (GRAMS) provided services at Greenough previously, shortages of health practitioners in the area resulted in GRAMS being unable to continue this service. Corrective Services continues to work closely with DoH on options available in the area.

6 Provide adequate mental health clinical resources and support to meet the needs of prisoners at Greenough.

Level of Acceptance:	Supported in Principle
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Offender Services

Response:

Corrective Services is cognisant of the demand for both health and mental health services at Greenough and across the custodial estate. Corrective Services continues to work with State Forensics Mental Health Services to bolster services. Resourcing pressures in this area are further compounded by a national workforce shortage of many specialist medical roles.

Corrective Services has undertaken reviews to analyse and quantify the gap between demand for services and its capacity, with this work informing requests for funding to address the staffing challenges. Corrective Services remains committed to seeking the necessary resources to meet mental health care needs in line with demand.

A further analysis of resourcing and demand will be conducted through Greenough's staffing review which is expected to take place in October 2025.

7 Create recreation workers positions for each unit to organise and manage unit-based recreation activities.

Level of Acceptance:	Supported
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Adult Male Prisons

Response:

Since the OICS' inspection, the Greenough Senior Management Team have reviewed all recreation positions and created an additional six recreation worker positions. The prison is currently in the process of appointing these roles to prisoners who will drive recreation activities within the units.

Exercise equipment has also been purchased and is awaiting delivery for female prisoners located in unit 5. In addition, a recent business case has also been approved to resurface recreation areas.

8 Accommodate regional prisoners in on Country prisons, unless there is a compelling reason not to do so.

Level of Acceptance:	Supported in Principle
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Adult Male Prisons

Response:

Corrective Services is committed to keeping First Nations prisoners on Country where possible, however as noted by OICS, the increase in the State's prisoner population has resulted in some prisoners being relocated off Country to enable critical

infrastructure works to be undertaken. At the completion of these works, those who were from the regions will be returned where this can be accommodated.

Where placement on Country is not possible, Greenough remains committed to supporting impacted prisoners and strives to provide alternative methods of connection for this cohort of prisoners. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Offender Services have initiated Teams meetings between the Kimberley and Pilbara regional prisons to allow prisoners time to connect and talk with kinfolk. In addition, the Superintendent has had off Country meetings with the prisoners, which has resulted in events such as barbecues for these prisoners to engage together.

Greenough recognises the importance of Sorry Time and works with prisoners to facilitate these requests when practicable. The Sorry Time process is well known throughout the prison, with a number taking place across the past 12 months. Funeral applications continue to be lodged and are considered on a case-by-case basis with due regard to risk, safety, and the nature of the relationship between the requesting prisoner and the deceased.

Corrective Services is also exploring other methods of connecting prisoners with culture, including through connection with local Aboriginal radio channels from across the state.

9 Explore and identify alternatives to increase phone access while awaiting a whole-of-estate upgrade.

Level of Acceptance:	Not Supported
Responsible Division:	Corrective Services
Responsible Directorate:	Adult Male Prisons

Response:

Greenough acknowledges the importance of prisoners maintaining contact with family as a protective factor, especially where prisoners are off Country. Corrective Services has multiple programs underway to seek funding to address access to digital services, provide digital platforms, and improve the digital literacy for prisoners.

As part of Corrective Services Long Term Custodial Technology Strategy (LTCTS), funding was approved to implement an Offender Digital Services Platform (ODSP) across the estate to replace end-of-life Prisoner Telephony System (PTS). Implementation of the new system is due to commence from April 2027. Once implemented, the new ODSP will increase capacity to add additional handsets across the facility.

Until the implementation of the above platform, there is no additional phone line capacity available at Greenough. However, to ensure access to phone calls are fair and equitable for all prisoners, local initiatives have been implemented including exclusion times of one hour between calls to provide equity in prisoner phone use.

Appendix D Inspection Details

Previous inspection		
19 -23 September 2021		
Activity since previous inspection		
Liaison visits to Greenough Regional Prison	9 visits	
Independent Visitor visits	16 visits	
Surveys		
Prisoner survey	23-30 April 2024	119 responses (38%)
Staff survey (online)	8 May – 23 May 2024	41 responses (19%)
Inspection team		
Inspector	Eamon Ryan	
Community Liaison Officer	Joseph Wallam	
Principal Inspections and Research Officer	Lauren Netto	
Principal Inspections and Research Officer	Liz George	
Inspections and Research Officer	Kieran Artelaris	
Director Projects	Ryan Quinn	
Social Work Student	Sherab Bhutia	

Key dates	
Inspection announced	11 March 2024
Start of on-site inspection	15 July 2024
Completion of on-site inspection	18 July 2024
Presentation of preliminary findings	14 August 2024
Draft report sent to Department of Justice	23 January 2025
Draft response received from Department of Justice	28 March 2025
Declaration of prepared report	7 April 2025

*Inspection of prisons, court custody centres, prescribed lock-ups,
youth detention centres, and review of custodial services in Western Australia*



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