



Research Publication

Bathurst Gaol Evaluation Study. Implementation of the Bathurst Gaol Management Plan:

**Research findings, January 1983 -
January 1986.**

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Department of Corrective Services,
Research and Statistics Division

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PREFACE

The opening of Bathurst Goal in 1982, refurbished after the riots of the 1970s, was the beginning of a major innovation in prison management. The gaol was to operate under an ambitious plan intended to improve on the relationships found in traditional secure prisons between staff and prisoners, and to reduce some of the adverse effects of secure imprisonment by fostering inmate autonomy and responsibility.

Many correctional innovations appear to fail because they were never genuinely implemented. As the new programme began at Bathurst, the first difficulties of implementation became evident. Workshops for the employment of prisoners were not ready. The staffing thought to be required could not be approved. Some of the proposed innovations have never been implemented. However, an enthusiastic Superintendent and a committed group of senior staff were determined to achieve whatever they could. It was, therefore, vitally important to monitor and evaluate what was being done, and how it was working.

Many new steps were taken, including: the open layout of accommodation inside the secure perimeter; the development of small residential units for groups of 16-18 prisoners with active steps to encourage inmate participation in day-to-day decisions in the units; the organisation of staff rosters to place staff in consistent functional teams; the first multi-disciplinary Gaol Management Team; major emphasis on staff development for prison officers within the institution; and (later) the development of full-time trade training and education as occupations for a large proportion of prisoners. Thus, research staff were recruited to work freely inside the goal within a few months of the first prisoners arriving. This was itself a major innovation, allowing much more trust between researchers and the researched, both prisoners and staff.

This report summarises the results of the research from January 1983 to January 1986. The studies summarised examined the extent to which the original plans for the gaol were implemented or modified and the immediate impact of the innovations on the prisoners and staff who lived with the results. The research team has,

throughout the project, operated as part of the gaol and its development, taking the role of a friendly critic.

Co-operation by other staff and prisoners has been excellent. This was enhanced by the location of the researchers inside the gaol, and the policy of circulating and discussing all reports inside the goal before presentation to the Corrective Services Commission. I believe that the research helped to bring some difficult, and at times contentious, issues into focus, and contributed to some aspects of the success achieved, and to redefinition of many of the original objectives.

This is the first publication of research findings from Bathurst. It documents evidence of some major and continuing achievements. Security and safety have been combined with a low tension level. Prisoners have been managed by communication and co-operation rather than coercion, particularly in the units.

Difficulties in the planned approach to work and training were creatively resolved. There is also evidence that some of the ground gained has subsequently been lost.

The findings show that worthwhile progress can be achieved in our prisons by sufficient commitment and effort. They also illustrate the very real limits on what can be done inside a gaol if the constraints of legislation, funding and staffing are not altered.

The work reported here involved many people. Four research officers (Manuela Crouch, Kerry Mahony, Kathy McLennan and Diana Simmons) have worked for extended periods inside the gaol. Angela Gorta has provided continuing supervision of the work with some assistance from Don Porritt. The views expressed in this overview are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Corrective Services Commission or of the Minister for Corrective Services.

Don Porritt
Chief Research Officer
December, 1986.

INTRODUCTION

"The riot and destruction of Bathurst Gaol in 1974 led to the setting up of a Royal Commission to look into various aspects of the N.S.W. prison system. Mr. Justice Nagle, the Commissioner, made a number of recommendations which can be read in other documents ... Mr. Gerry Hay was appointed Superintendent of Bathurst in 1980 and came to the position with a firm intention to develop a programme for the Bathurst maximum security section which would reflect the spirit of Mr. Nagle's recommendations" (Implementation Committee, 1981, p.2). Bathurst Gaol re-opened in September 1982.

The Bathurst Gaol Management Plan was intended to be a major innovation in the management of prisons in this State. The Management Plan was to pioneer an approach to better management of prisons that might prevent the processes which led to the burning down of the old Bathurst Gaol. The rationale behind the Management Plan was to make the atmosphere in the gaol as normal as possible, while still maintaining security.

The Research and Statistics Division of the NSW Department of Corrective Services took responsibility for evaluation of the implementation of the Plan. Two research officers have been monitoring overall acceptance of the programme by Bathurst officers, and specific programme areas since January 1983. A number of detailed reports have been prepared and these are listed in the References.

The Bathurst Management Plan as outlined in the 'Draft Outline of the Management Strategy' was planned "as a system of management through positive incentives and interpersonal skills that will enable the gaol to meet its aims". These aims were outlined as:

- 1) the secure containment of prisoners;
- 2) the management of prisoners on humanitarian lines;
- 3) to ultimately reduce the re-offending rate of ex-Bathurst inmates.

It is important to note that many aspects of the original plan were never implemented, while other areas which were initiated have now ceased altogether. Also some aspects are operating but have changed from the original intention of the Management Plan. Such shifts are to be expected in the implementation of any major innovation. It can be instructive to compare areas where some progress has occurred with those where it has not.

A new management plan has been released which is more specific than the original Draft

Management Plan, and is a more realistic outline of what can be achieved in the short-term, e.g., in terms of inmates' wages.

The most successful areas of inmate work at present are trade training and education. Trade Training, despite staffing and funding problems, has continued to provide training in four trades with the result that nineteen trainees have reached Stage II (equivalent to second year) of the course and 30-40 inmates are involved in Stage I. Education courses are increasingly popular, once again in spite of funding and staffing problems.

SPECIFIC AIMS OF THE ORIGINAL PLAN

Specific areas of the programme that were to develop in keeping with the programme aims were:

1. Unit accommodation and management system

Bathurst Gaol had four accommodation blocks: Wings, A, B, C and D. In the re-built gaol, B and C Wings were both sub-divided into four smaller living areas, using steel partitions to separate each section. The sections are called 'units' and contain 16-18 cells on the 2nd and 3rd floors, with communal living area, kitchen, ablutions block and an office area taking up the ground floor.

Those inmates who were employed in full-time work were to be able to apply to live in unit accommodation. Structured meetings were to evolve between unit inmates and officers to deal with unit issues. Informal interaction between officers and inmates was planned to evolve within this environment, with encouragement of inmates in decision making in keeping with the management of the gaol. A & D Wings remained in the 'traditional wing' style.

2. Industries

Industries were to provide employment for a majority of inmates based on the payment system of a realistic wage and incentive bonus. Prisoners' wages were to be made up of an amount normally used by the Department to purchase goods for the prisoner which was instead to be given to him, plus the normal bonus paid to persons employed in revenue-earning industrial work and income from sale of items produced at Bathurst.

The main focus of the industrial programme was to provide trade training "to be augmented with realistic work that produced saleable items".

3. Education

Payment for those doing educational courses was to be based on wages comparable to those

in industries with incentive bonuses for completion of courses.

4. Activities

Activities were proposed to be available for inmates during recreational hours. The use of a gymnasium and recreational room was to be available on the basis of paid membership and rental of equipment.

5. Reception

Reception was viewed as an important tool to assess new inmates at Bathurst. The Reception Committee was to include staff such as the psychologist, the welfare officer and parole officer. The committee's role was to explain the new programme at Bathurst to the inmate and to draw up a written 'contract' with an inmate into which he would voluntarily enter with the option of withdrawing within a certain time. The nature of these contracts was to depend on the inmate's choice. It could be a simple agreement to participate in the programme, or it could refer to more specific behaviour.

6. Visits

Visits were to be a right for all inmates during recreation hours.

7. Internal credit book

The internal credit book was to be for payment of private purchases and weekly accommodation expenses.

8. Team management

Team Management was to evolve with specific teams and team leaders responsible for Accommodation, Security, Prisoner Processing and Staff Development. Whilst still retaining the chain of command, team management aimed to enable officers at all ranks to participate in decision making relating to their area of involvement.

9. Staffing and selection

Gaol staff were to be selected on the basis of their ability to adapt to new ways of working with inmates and interpersonal communication skills. A target level of 25% female custodial staff was also proposed.

10. Staff Training

Staff training was to provide ongoing training as well as general and unit orientation courses for officers in the initial implementation stage.

11. Job Rotation

Job rotation was to be introduced to enable officers to gain experience in different areas of the gaol for a set rostered period.

12. Physical Structure

Although not specifically mentioned in the management plan, it was expected that the

freedom of inmate movement in the gaol would greatly reduce tension. This was mainly due to removal of gates as points of conflict between inmates and prison officers.

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Six of the twelve areas listed above have been the main focus of evaluation over the past three years. Other areas have been touched on as problems arose which affected all areas of the gaol.

The main areas assessed have been: the unit accommodation and management system; aspects of staff training; team management; education; and the vocational (trade) training scheme; as well as staffing in general. The effects of physical structure have also been examined in passing.

In earlier studies into unit accommodation, staff training and team management, findings were particularly positive. Reduced tension across the gaol community and improved relations between officers and inmates had been achieved, despite major difficulties which had impeded full development of the programme. These difficulties included: lengthy delays in the development of industries; pressure from unexpected increases in inmate numbers before the gaol was fully operational; and the placement of Peter Schneidas, an inmate with a history of violence towards prison officers, at Bathurst, and subsequently diversion of resources for his containment. During the first two months of his stay at Bathurst, a 'pool' of thirty-five prison officers was set up to look after him. Schneidas was initially housed in Unit B1 on his own with a staffing structure of one Senior Prison Officer, one 1st Class Prison Officer and one Prison Officer with the executive officer on call.

The state-wide, 37 day strike in February-March 1984 significantly affected developments in the programme, particularly officer/executive relations and officer/inmate relations.

To that point, programme planning was carried out by an Implementation Committee which included gaol staff, community representatives and (once prisoners were at the gaol) prisoner representatives. The operation of this committee was also assessed (see References: 7).

Later studies, at the end of 1983 and 1985, showed that while most officers still held positive attitudes towards the programme, over half felt that Team Management had broken down, and officers' attitudes to prisoner management had become less liberal (see References: 9 and 14).

Problems such as understaffing have caused a great deal of upheaval in the gaol, and this uneasiness has been transferred to inmates. In ad-

dition, a number of inmate privileges were reduced because of problems within the gaol. For example, unit buy-ups had been stopped for a time, and there were delays in the holding of a Gala Day. It is hoped that the recent introduction of an updated management plan will allay anxiety about the future of the programme.

1. Unit accommodation and management system

The eight units were opened in stages during 1983. By 1985 unit living was well established as an alternative to the traditional wing accommodation.

The unit management system was implemented as each unit opened. Research on the units has concentrated on the evaluation of the initial implementation phase. Three tri-monthly reports based on information gained from interviews and observation studies were written in 1983 (see References: 4, 6 and 8). These reports focussed on specific issues and problems that were a part of the early stages of unit living.

Problems encountered included the integration of ex-protection prisoners, the administration of difficult prisoners, the realistic attainment of participatory decision making for inmates, the rate of intake and clarification of desirable objectives for officer/inmate relations. These reports also found that reduction of unit staffing had created ongoing problems. Unit staff were reduced from two to one officer per unit on both day shifts. This decreased an officer's mobility from the office area and reduced involvement in unit activities. The limited number of female officers within the gaol had restricted the introduction of the proposed one female officer per unit.

Structured Interaction, i.e. formal unit meetings, were being held regularly in two of the eight units with more informal discussion regarding unit issues occurring in some units. From interviews conducted in four of the units it was apparent that the majority of the unit members (both inmates and officers) viewed meetings as potentially useful. However, criticism regarding lack of clear guidelines on areas of decision making for officers and inmates, and delayed action on decisions, were noted. Once a unit was established and its local rules agreed, there was often little for such meetings to do, unless a specific problem arose.

Relations over the whole unit community were seen by unit members to be substantially improved compared to previous wing experience. Inmate/officer relations were also noted to be developing positively, although degrees of involvement between the two groups varied from unit to unit. There was considerable uncertainty

among key staff about how much interaction between unit staff and inmates was sufficient to meet the aims of the plan.

The result from most interviews was that the units were seen as more relaxed and less tense than a wing. Greater involvement in group activities and increased personal security were also reported by both staff and inmates.

Results of a structured observation study indicated that although differing levels of interaction between inmates and officers existed in the units, there was a higher level of officer-inmate interaction, and especially of social interaction, in the units than in the wing. The implementers acknowledged that differing levels of interaction in different units were acceptable as long as there was 'peaceful co-existence'.

In the period following the interviews of September, 1983, unit management suffered significant setbacks in its development. Two major factors were identified. One was the staffing reductions mentioned previously, which were compounded by shortages due to sick leave and resignations. The second factor was the strike by prison officers in February-March, 1984.

Although no major incidents of violence or abuse occurred, the degree of enthusiasm among inmates and officers involved in unit management declined in the period immediately following the strike. The good rapport which had begun to develop between the officers and the inmates diminished. Inmates retreated from their unit officers in the belief that the striking officers had not cared if they had been left in their cells all day with no visits or telephone calls. In addition, the striking officers were less supportive of the plan because it had become identified with the executive staff, who were the object of much hostility during the strike (see References: 10). However, by June, 1984, officer-inmate relations had become less strained.

No specific unit studies have been conducted recently. The following is a summary of developments based on Accommodation Updates and Key Issue Reports written by research officers since June, 1984 (see References: 11 and 12).

Shortages in officer staff have continued to adversely affect the unit management system, along with the rest of the gaol. Briefly, the consequences for the units have been: an inability to retain permanent officers in each unit; no increase in the one officer per unit ratio or in female officers working in the units; and very little Staff Development input to reinforce unit philosophy and objectives, due to problems maintaining a full-time Staff Development Officer.

Originally, there were two officers rostered in each unit on a permanent basis. Later, due to staff cuts, this was reduced to three officers over

two units, and then to one officer per unit. Also, permanent staffing for units can no longer be maintained overall, although some units do have permanent officers.

At Accommodation Team meetings, prison officers have supported maintenance of permanent staff in the units. The planners and the officers felt that permanent unit staff would assist in creating a stable unit environment.

There are fewer unit meetings being held now than during 1983. Some of the units have held occasional meetings, mainly to solve minor house-keeping problems. In one case a meeting was called to discuss the eviction of an inmate.

Finally, the success of the Unit C3 cooking project should be mentioned as an indicator of inmate responsibility. This project has been operating for 2½ years. Ingredients for cooking are supplied from the main kitchen. In the beginning all C3 inmates shared the cooking and cleaning on a roster basis. As more work became available, fewer inmates could take time out for cooking, so positions were created for two inmate cooks. Following the success of C3's project, members of the Inmate Liaison Group requested that all units do their own cooking. This was introduced in December 1985.

2. The development of industries and employment for inmates

a. Background

The establishment of the Industries' workshops and Trade Training courses took longer than expected. Consequently, for about eighteen months, there was a severe shortage of meaningful work for inmates. This meant that criteria for living in units needed to be relaxed, and to date these have not returned to the rigidity originally intended.

The delays were caused in part by difficulties encountered in setting up elaborate machinery shops and finding suitable overseers. The prison officers' strike of February - March, 1984, again caused severe disruption in these work areas. No trades people or education staff could enter the gaol during that period. The timing of the strike presented particular difficulties since the Trade Training Programme was ready to commence in February, but the strike delayed its commencement until July, 1984. The extra six month delay was due to rescheduling the Trade Training Programme to fit in with the Department of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) timetable.

In the implementation process, Programmes Division undertook the primary responsibility for introduction of the trade training under the Industries umbrella, and meant that the emphasis of Trade Training was on training, rather than the

production of saleable items as was intended by Industries. Industries has retained responsibility for inmate domestic work (sweepers, gardeners, cooks, clerks) and the Upholstery and Bookbinding workshops, which re-opened in June, 1984. The establishment of full-time Trade Training evolved from close co-operation between senior officers of Industries and Programmes at Head Office. By July, 1984, there were more work opportunities available to inmates as the Industries, Upholstery and Bookbinding workshops, and the Trade Training Programme were operating. Also, the part-time Basic Education class had become full-time.

b. Present Inmate workers

The main gaol has a population which varies between 180-200 inmates. On 15 January 1986, there were 152 inmates working, 43 non-workers and unemployed, and 8 inmates awaiting trial. Of the workers, sixty-seven (44.1%) were in full-time education, trade training or ceramics; sixty-five (42.8%) were in domestic employment i.e. sweepers, clerks etc. and twenty (13.1%) were either in the Bookbinding or Upholstery workshops.

(Note: at this point, the Upholstery workshop had been re-opened outside the gaol walls.)

c. The wage incentive scheme

Payment to inmates has not been implemented on the basis of a realistic wage. Major external constraints in legislation and Treasury policy will have to be overcome if this element of the plan is to be implemented.

Inmates are paid according to Departmental guidelines. These wage rates are traditionally very much below community wages, even when provision for food and accommodation provided is taken into account. Within this framework, the Bathurst inmates earn bonuses only in the production workshops, i.e. upholstery and bookbinding. The majority of domestic workers are paid the base rate with the clerks being paid at the higher rate.

Table 1 - Bonus Payment Scale Table

Classification	Proficiency Workers	Skilled Workers	Semi-Skilled Workers	Unskilled Workers	Unemployed Workers	Non-Workers
Ordinary Bonus Rates Per Week	\$17 (5 days pw)	\$14 (5 days pw)	\$12 (5 days pw)	\$9 (5 days pw)		
Productivity Allowance for Revenue Producing Industries (per week)	Max. \$22 (pw)	Max. \$14 (pw)	Max. \$12 (pw)	Max. \$9 (pw)		
Inmate prepared to Work But No Work Available					\$7 (pw)	
Inmate Not Prepared to Work/ or Terminated Worker						\$3.50 (pw)

** Also covers approved Domestic Employment Positions.*

d. Job selection

The job selection process has evolved into a more informal procedure than was envisaged in the Draft Management Plan. In the early stages of implementation, a selection committee was formed and the inmate jobs advertised. This committee consisted of the Industries Manager, Principal Industries Officer and the Senior Education Officer. The committee found that it was taking too long to fill inmate positions by this method. A simpler process was introduced with Industries appointing all inmates to work positions. They maintain a list of unemployed inmates who are offered jobs on a 'first come, first served basis'. An inmate has the option of refusing the job offered. If an inmate refuses the job, his name goes to the bottom of the list to be reintroduced in turn.

In effect, the selection procedure advanced by the planners was found to be impractical in filling unskilled positions such as sweepers. It can be argued that, although inmates may be given an informal interview by the officer in charge of a work area when they express an interest in a job or report for work, they cannot gain experience of formal interviews for employment.

3. Education and Trade Training

The wage rates indicated in 2(c) above show that weekly wages for those doing full-time courses are comparable to those employed in prison industries, except there is no provision for the payment of incentive bonuses for completion of courses. Consequently, many inmates are attracted away from Education by the higher wages obtainable in Industries.

Currently, Bathurst Gaol offers eight full-time courses: two basic education classes, a computing class and a ceramics class plus four trades courses. A variety of classes have continued to operate in recreational hours. Some of these include: art, creative writing, music, yoga and drama classes.

A study done recently which compared education at Bathurst with that offered at seven other gaols (see References: 17) found that Bathurst offers the widest range of full-time classes, with high participation rates. Bathurst also has the highest participation rates in both full-time and part-time vocational courses. More specific information about Bathurst showed that the majority of inmates were satisfied with the educational facilities offered, and that inmates felt good about learning and bettering themselves.

Trade courses offered are: Welding, Carpentry and Joinery, Automotive Mechanics, and Fitting and Machining. Forty inmates commenced Stage I of a three year, three stage course in July, 1984. This is the Trade Training Programme mentioned above. The trainees are taught by TAFE teachers two days a week and by civilian training officers on the remaining three days. This programme places great emphasis on practical work which complies with TAFE requirements, rather than on production of saleable items.

A research study was conducted after the first six months of the Trade Training Programme. This study had four objectives: to develop a profile of the ages, educational and employment experiences of working inmates, so that trainees could be compared with other working inmates; to find out if the Programme was being delivered as planned; to assess benefits to inmates based

on their perceptions of what life and training skills they had gained; and to measure programme acceptance among other inmates, prison officers and professional staff (see References: 13).

The main findings were as follows. There were few differences in average ages and educational levels among trade trainees and workers in other areas. The average age of trainees was twenty-eight years. Ex-trainees, those who had dropped out of the course, tended to be younger than those who remained. A slightly higher percentage of trainees had left school in Primary School and in High School Year 11, while no trainees had completed the Higher School Certificate.

The trainee apprentices had a more positive attitude towards their work, leisure time and use of skills acquired in gaol on release, than inmates in other work areas.

Trade Training was well accepted by the prison officers, professional staff and other inmates interviewed. Participation in Trade Training was seen as lowering tension levels in the gaol, although some of the officers were concerned about security in the Trade Training areas.

Since this study was completed in May, 1985, the Department has given assurances that Trade Training will continue at Bathurst, subject to funds being available. There are still problems in fitting in trainees who wish to continue their trades course at lower security institutions. Factors such as course availability, appropriate classification and suitable TAFE commencement dates, all have to be considered. Trade Training personnel were disappointed that the Bathurst lower security X-Wing was not re-opened as a male prison. This would have facilitated lower security trainees continuing with their course at the local technical college.

Training officers have succeeded in maintaining a flow of practical work for trainees. One example of the practical work obtained was the repair of vehicles from a local bush fire brigade. Securing practical work from the community will always need ingenuity on the part of supervisors, given the gaol setting, some community prejudice against gaol work and sensitivity among unions about competition from prison labour.

Recently, the trades courses have been interrupted on two occasions because there were not enough apprentice training officers to supervise trainees on non-TAFE days. There were some delays in processing the appointed positions. Such closures set back apprentices' progress even when they only lasted for a couple of weeks.

4. Activities

As work opportunities increased, activities continued during the recreational hours com-

mencing at 3.30 p.m. on week days and during week-ends.

Inmates have not been provided with rooms for a gymnasium and recreation room. Consequently, the proposals of paid membership to a club and the inmate rental scheme have not been implemented. There were no spare rooms to allocate for a club room. A recent proposal to centralise the activities in the auditorium area should eventually see the auditorium more fully utilized as a club room under the supervision of Activities Officers. Already the Activities office has been moved into the auditorium area, which allows greater supervision of the issuing and return of sporting equipment.

Inmates from the units and wings have been involved in ongoing touch football and cricket competitions. Tennis is also played on the cramped, concrete sports area. The grassed oval is almost ready for sporting activities and Gala Days and this will alleviate pressure on space in the concrete areas. Inmates also participate in outside activities, such as Indoor Cricket competitions with the town teams and assisting with Riding for the Disabled.

Activities Officers take part in the organisation of Gala Days, which are eagerly anticipated by the inmates. Families and friends of inmates are invited into the gaol for a barbecue style picnic day, complete with merry-go-rounds and swings for children. Seven Gala Days have been held since the gaol re-opened.

5. Reception

No contract has been formulated so inmates do not, as was planned, enter into the Bathurst Programme voluntarily.

Initial receptions are completed, whenever possible, by the Principal Prison Officer (Prison Processing), the Assistant Superintendent (Industries) and the Welfare Officer.

A booklet outlining information considered useful for inmates new to Bathurst Gaol was drawn up by the Senior Prison Officer in Prisoner Processing. It was issued to inmates on arrival. The booklet was withdrawn about a year ago as this information was out-of-date. Some revision was done but to date this booklet has not been re-issued.

6. Visits

Visits have remained a right for all inmates. When limited work existed within the gaol, visiting hours were on a daily basis from 9.00 a.m. - 11.30 a.m. and 12.15 p.m. - 3.30 p.m. Inmates had access to unlimited visits, the duration of which depended on the facility's capacity.

Since Trade Training and other meaningful work began in July, 1984, visiting hours have been changed to allow workers to have unlimited visits during their recreation hours. Evening visits have been very successful to date for all concerned. Facilities in the visiting section have been improved, and continue to be upgraded, although problems still exist with tea/coffee making and childminding facilities.

It is unfortunate however, that visiting hours have been cut, by one hour, to alleviate the overtime bill incurred by the gaol. It was seen by many inmates and officers that the rights of the inmates spelt out in the Management Plan were ignored to suit the needs of the gaol management.

7. Internal credit book system

This has not been implemented. Inmates do not pay for weekly accommodation expenses. As in most gaols, inmates are able to purchase a limited number of items from the canteen or through the Activities Officer. At this stage, they can use private finances plus wages earned inside the gaol.

8. Team Management

Teams originally outlined for the gaol were Accommodation, Prisoner Processing, Security, Industries and Staff Development. The Gaol Management Team was to involve executives from various teams, the Superintendent and professional staff and was to operate as the overall organising body of the gaol.

The Security team was disbanded in mid-December, 1983, leaving one Assistant Superintendent to act as a relief for other team leaders and executive staff. Officers manning security posts are now rostered under general duties. Also, other officers are no longer rostered in their specific teams.

Up until June, 1984, team meetings had been held for Accommodation, Industries, and, prior to its disbanding, Security. Gaol Management Team meetings had continued on a regular basis of three meetings per week. The Assistant Superintendent (Staff Development) was involved in these meetings and in organising ongoing training to meet specific needs of each team. Within the Accommodation team, unit officer meetings for each unit were held on a regular basis during 1983. A report on the operation of the Gaol Management Team (see References: 5) identified a number of problems and was associated with a self-review by the Team. This team has shown evidence of being able to 'learn on the job' and improve its operations.

Staff cuts and restrictions in the use of overtime in which to hold meetings created real difficulties in maintaining regular team meetings. The February-March, 1984 strike has exacerbated these problems by creating tension between executive staff and other prison officers.

Problems still exist with team management. Recent studies showed that junior officers still did not feel they had a say in their own work area. In addition, teams themselves have broken down to an extent. There are now only four teams: Accommodation, Prisoner Processing, Education (this has only recently become a team) and Industries, with the Gaol Management Team as the governing body. The Accommodation, Education and Industries teams hold occasional meetings when the need arises, but the Prisoner Processing team has resisted all efforts to hold formal meetings on the grounds that they are in constant communication with one another.

The Gaol Management Team (GMT) has reduced the number of meetings to one per week, and has recently been reviewed again (References: 16). Several members felt that the GMT was occupying itself with trivial matters and bypassing more important issues. The role of the GMT has changed, according to the members, from the key decision making body of the gaol to a largely advisory body for the Superintendent. Also, most members felt that the actual meeting procedure should be tightened up in the interests of efficiency.

Inmates participate in team management through the Inmate Development Committee Liaison Group. This involves four inmate representatives: a welfare officer, a psychologist, an Education Officer plus Accommodation team leaders. The issues raised in these meetings are relayed to the GMT for discussion and decision.

9. Staffing and selection

a. Staffing

A proposed staff allocation for Bathurst Gaol was outlined within the Draft Management Strategy. A total of 184 custodial and industrial positions was proposed. Total staff, however was set at 171 positions as directed by the Commission. Subsequent staffing cuts and difficulties encountered in filling Industrial Overseer positions have further reduced staff positions. At June 1984, a total of 135 custodial and industrial staff were employed at Bathurst Gaol. In September 1985, a total of 120 custodial and industrial staff were employed, with the authorised number of positions being 158. Following local recruitment, the total number of custodial and industrial staff employed had risen to 151 by January 1986.

b. Selection

Whilst some staff were selected for the Bathurst programme on the basis of desirable skills necessary for programme implementation, others were transferred unwillingly to Bathurst or were already positioned at the gaol.

Prison officer acceptance of the programme has been measured on three occasions. Results from the first study indicated that the majority of officers interviewed were positive toward the programme, with a further 30% reservedly positive and 13% negative towards the programme. Since the strike in February - March 1984, prison officer attitudes have been informally gauged generally as less enthusiastic about the programme than prior to the strike.

The third prison officer study in 1985 found that 62% felt the programme was worthwhile, 20% felt programme implementation was falling down and another 18% indicated that they had lost confidence in the programme or were not interested in it.

The second feature of staff selection outlined in the Draft Management Strategy was a recommended attainment of a 25% level of female custodial staff. At this stage, this level has not been achieved. The highest level of female custodial staff at the gaol has been 6.4%. This also includes female officers at X Wing, being used as a women's minimum security institution since it re-opened in December, 1984.

10. Staff training

The aim of staff training at Bathurst Gaol was to assist the implementation of the Draft Management Strategy through the provision of information related to participatory management and opportunity for staff to develop the skills required.

The Assistant Superintendent (Staff Development) initially conducted both general and unit orientation courses for officers at Bathurst Gaol. A total of 74 officers completed the two day general orientation course whilst 39 officers completed one or two day unit orientation courses. However, there has not been an orientation course since December, 1983, and no figures are available on how many officers presently at Bathurst have done either a general or unit orientation.

The position of Assistant Superintendent (Staff Development) has been filled only intermittently since May, 1984 except for a few weeks in January/February, 1985. Formal courses have also been constrained by staff shortages and the need to arrange sessions without generating overtime.

Results from prison officer interviews conducted in February/April 1983, indicated that a

higher proportion of those who had attended a general orientation course (65%) felt positive about the programme when compared with those who had not attended (35%). However, the most recent prison officer study showed that attendance at an orientation course did not affect the proportion of positive attitudes expressed towards the programme. This may be attributed to the time elapsed since the courses have been held, so that the effect, for those who have done them, may have lessened.

Other courses which have been run at Bathurst include: a Visits orientation course, Job Application Procedures, Interview Skills Workshops, and Security Procedure Workshops. In December 1985, twenty-three prison officers graduated from the first training school held solely at Bathurst. Ongoing training for unit staff and other teams such as the Gaol Management Team have also been held, although not in recent months.

11. Job rotation

Job rotation for prison officers, between areas for a set rostered period as outlined in the Prison Officer Booklet, has never been formally implemented. Reasons for this are unclear. Some senior officers have been rotated in recent months, for example, in the visits and reception room areas, but this is as a result of agreement between certain groups, rather than a formal job rotation system.

12. Physical structure

The lack of gates within the gaol has always been one of the most positive aspects of the Bathurst Gaol Management Programme. These major points of conflict between officers and inmates at other gaols, do not exist at Bathurst. Informal observations by research officers have found that this freedom of movement continues to maintain reduced tension and a feeling of ease within the gaol. It has not resulted in a loss of control, and very few incidents of violence among prisoners have occurred.

CONCLUSIONS

This overview of the implementation of the Bathurst Gaol Draft Management Strategy has clearly identified some major successes, as well as particular areas which have not been developed in the gaol's operation.

Aspects of the programme which have been implemented and have been the focus of research at Bathurst Gaol indicate particularly positive results. Prison officer acceptance of the programme; effects of unit management (in terms of greater positive interaction between inmates

and officers, reduced tension within the units and in the overall gaol); some participation by inmates in decisions affecting their unit; and improved relations among inmates have all been noted in earlier research reports. The recent Trade Training study indicated that the trainees felt they were gaining life and work skills which would be useful to them on release, and that participation in meaningful education also contributed to the relaxed atmosphere of the gaol. Thus, there has been significant achievements of the aims relating to reduced tension within the gaol, humane management, and the provision of meaningful work.

Also, to date, the aim of secure containment has been achieved with no escapes from within the gaol walls since the gaol re-opened.

The system of positive incentives for inmates based on a realistic wage, incentive bonuses and a credit book system, has not been implemented. To date, wages remain far below outside standards and are inadequate for the amount of work inmates do. For example, a unit cook who works 3-6 hours a day for 7 days a week and is 'on call' at all times to bring in stores etc., is paid only \$18.00 per week. The principle behind the proposal for a credit book system, giving inmates more choice about that they do with money, still appears worthwhile. Attention should be given to the changes in Treasury and Departmental policies which would be required to implement the principle.

Industries has failed to reach its expected level of development, even though it does use an incentive payment system in the form of bonuses for its workers. In fact, fewer than 30 inmates are employed in the two Industries at the Gaol. The inability of Industries staff to implement a Trade Training scheme, in large part due to problems in recruiting qualified Industries Overseers, meant delays for inmates expecting to start the courses. Programmes were able to take over and establish the scheme using civilian staff and Commonwealth funding. This also meant a shift away from traditional industries to full-time education and vocational training at Bathurst.

Team management has almost completely broken down. Officers are no longer rostered according to teams, and team meetings are rarely held. Only the Gaol Management Team still meets regularly. Its effectiveness has been reduced because it does not get feedback from individual team meetings. In addition, unit meetings are held only occasionally, and the only input inmates have to the management of the gaol is through the Inmate Development Committee Liaison Group by making an application to the Superintendent. Inmates still do not see that they

can make suggestions about gaol management, as they have not been encouraged to do so.

Recommendations made by research officers in previous reports have addressed the need to revise the original Draft Management Strategy and identify specific objectives in keeping with developments and changes that have occurred. Further recommendations have also identified the need for ongoing, programme-specific staff training and continuity of permanent staff within unit management. Difficulties encountered in the implementation of these recommendations have included staff cuts and prospects of further cuts, low morale prior to and after industrial disputes and perceived lack of support from upper level management within Corrective Services. This includes both executive staff at Bathurst, and Head Office staff. Even though the Draft Management Strategy has been revised, commitment to the programme by key people appears to be waning. Unless programme aims are adhered to and suggested changes implemented there is little chance that 'the Bathurst experiment' will fulfil its potential, despite its real achievements.

Ongoing monitoring of the Bathurst programme will continue until June, 1987. In the past, the effectiveness of evaluation has been limited by lack of clear, concrete objectives for current operations and future developments. Hopefully, future evaluation will be helped by the updated Management Plan for 1985, which outlines more specific objectives for the various work areas.

The original plan was extremely ambitious. Given local commitment and support from the Commission, aspects which have not so far been implemented may yet develop. Also, what has been achieved despite the many problems, is most important. Bathurst Gaol has shown that the traditional strains between officers and prisoners can be reduced, with increased participation in decisions by both without compromising security. There are early indications that the Trade Training Programme does provide inmate trainees with a feeling of self-worth, as well as work skills.

Further developments in the implementation of the Draft Management Strategy will need to be re-examined in the light of general developments and changes across the gaol. The challenge is now to recover ground lost in the strike and through erosion of resources, maintain the real achievements and build on these according to the principles of the initial plan. Holding on to the gains becomes an even greater challenge after the initial wave of enthusiasm for a new project begins to wane.

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