

# Appendix 1

## THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Acceptance Level/Response
1. Develop and implement processes for region-specific and Aboriginal-centred throughcare, together with a detailed monitoring and evaluation plan.	<b>Supported – existing Department initiative</b> The Department's Integrated Offender Management project is a key priority over the next financial year. This project will look at establishing and improving systems in order to better cater for the throughcare of offenders transitioning between community and custody. Existing initiatives, such as joined-up corrections, service agreements with non-government agencies, and Aboriginal Services Committees <sup>218</sup> (about to be established at EGRP) aim to reduce Aboriginal disadvantage within the Western Australian prison system.
2. Implement measurable strategies to increase the number of Aboriginal prisoners from this region who are eligible for minimum security status and associated programs and treatments.	<b>Supported in principle</b> The Department conducts a prisoner assessment process for all prisoners. Where a prisoner who historically predominantly resides in the Goldfields/Ngaanyatjarra region "scores" a minimum security rating they are transferred to EGRP via the earliest available escort. It is not appropriate to have a separate classification system for Aboriginal prisoners.
3. Put better systems and resources in place for release planning and re-entry into the community for all prisoners from the Goldfields/Ngaanyatjarra region. In particular, where security allows, displaced prisoners should be given more time at EGRP before release.	<b>Supported – existing Department initiative</b> The Department already has systems and resources in place for release planning and re-entry into the community for all prisoners. When the Warburton work camp is in operation this will increase the opportunity to provide displaced prisoners more time at EGRP before release. Further, the aim of Aboriginal Services Committees (about to be established at EGRP), mentioned in Recommendation 1, is to reduce Aboriginal disadvantage within the Western Australian prison system.

218 Aboriginal Services Committees aim to reduce Aboriginal disadvantage within the Western Australian prison system and effectively manage Aboriginal prisoners. Strategies to achieve this are framed around the areas of governance, education, employment, health, supportive communities and housing. Each prison is expected to have an Aboriginal Services Committee. EGRP will establish an Aboriginal Services Committee in the near future.

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<p>4. Ensure all staff who work with female offenders attend the five-day <i>Working with Female Offenders</i> training course.</p>	<p><b>Supported</b></p> <p>The <i>Working with Female Offenders</i> program is currently a two day course delivered by the Department's Training Academy. This training can be delivered by a Satellite Trainer to staff at regional prisons.</p> <p>The Department is supportive of providing <i>Working with Female Offenders</i> training to staff who work with female offenders. This training will be made a priority.</p>
<p>5. Provide programs to address the needs of all women who have been convicted of violent offending, including those at high risk of violent re-offending, both at Eastern Goldfields and at other prisons.</p>	<p><b>Not Supported</b></p> <p>To date, there have been no programs for high risk violent women developed or delivered in Australia, nor have there been criminogenic programs targeting regional, traditional Aboriginal female offenders. There are several reasons for this, including the demand not being sufficient and that the needs of female offenders are unique and complex.</p>
<p>6. Implement an intensive recruitment drive for Aboriginal staff, with a strong focus on employment relating to rehabilitation, reparation and re-entry.</p>	<p><b>Supported</b></p> <p>Culturally appropriate recruitment, selection and assessment tools are being piloted for the West Kimberley Regional Prison which are intended to be utilised for EGRP recruitment associated with the redevelopment of the prison. Local recruitment and training, including pre-employment training will be undertaken to enhance the prospect of recruiting a high number of Aboriginal people from the region.</p>

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<p>7. Develop dynamic community engagement inside and outside the prison, including (i) a workable solution to the ongoing lack of an active Aboriginal Visitors Scheme and Elders program; and (ii) more structured and more frequent consultation with relevant communities regarding the Warburton Work Camp.</p>	<p><b>Supported in part</b></p> <p>The Department supports dynamic community engagement inside and outside the prison. However, it does not support the examples highlighted in the recommendation. The AVS does not perform a community re-entry role. The service was established with its principal role being suicide prevention.<sup>219</sup> Aboriginal Services Committees (about to be established at EGRP) facilitate consultations with community based stakeholders (refer to Recommendation 1).</p> <p>Two Aboriginal visitors have been employed at EGRP since the inspection. In addition, the project manager and prison staff (including the Commissioner on two occasions) have regularly briefed the Warburton community.<sup>220</sup></p>
<p>8. Ensure that EGRP is fully maintained to an appropriate level, pending the new prison.</p>	<p><b>Supported in part</b></p> <p>The Department is committed to the provision of a safe and secure environment for staff and prisoners at an appropriate level. A new prison will be established in the Goldfields and until the new prison is fully operational the Department will ensure the current facility remains at a standard to deliver the current level of service.</p>

219 While the immediate purpose for the establishment of the AVS following the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody may have been suicide prevention, this has expanded considerably over the years, a fact that has repeatedly been stated by the Department through its own materials, policies and public press releases. For example, just this year the AVS Manager publically stated that its role included being a conduit into the community (see [4.12] - [4.14] of this Report). The Department's response is therefore confusing and unhelpful.

220 Some consultations occurred in 2009 but in March 2011, local people clearly and universally communicated to the Inspector that they felt excluded from the process and that, to the extent that there had been 'visits' by people from the Department, there had been no real engagement. This was further evidenced by the fact that they had no idea of the projected opening date, little sense of the potential role of the work camp in the communities and, in many cases, a false sense of how many prisoners would be able to access the camp. In addition, information subsequently provided in response to the draft of this Report confirmed that no effective engagement had occurred during 2010 (see [4.25] - [4.32] and [4.46 - 4.48]). We have been informed that consultation processes have been strengthened since our concerns were raised and that one of the discussions occurred only in June 2011.

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<p>9. (a) Install suitable climatic controls to reduce air temperatures and to increase cool air circulation in Unit 2 and 3 prisoners' cells at EGRP.</p> <p>(b) Explore and implement other management measures to reduce the impact of the harsh climate.</p>	<p><b>Supported in part</b></p> <p>(a) Not supported. The existing prison is scheduled for demolition. The new prison will have climate control.</p> <p>(b) Each cell in Units 2 and 3 is provided with a fan. Some fans are ceiling mounted while others are a pedestal design. EGRP will consider how changes to the daily routine can reduce the impact of the harsh climate. The design of the new prison will include climate control measures.</p>
<p>10. Ensure that health services, including comprehensive support in respect of chronic disease management, blood borne viruses, and alcohol and substance use, are commensurate with those provided in the metropolitan area.</p>	<p><b>Supported – existing Department initiative</b></p> <p>Inaccurate medical information was obtained from the Med Status Update screen on TOMS and not from accurate information obtained from ECHO.<sup>221</sup></p>
<p>11. Ensure the health centre is fully staffed and that the staff complement reflects the prisoner profile (i.e. includes female and Aboriginal staff).</p>	<p><b>Supported</b></p> <p>The Health Services Directorate is currently recruiting in EGRP and the process should be finalised by the end of June 2011. There are currently two vacant full-time FTE for which suitable applicants have been identified including a female clinical nurse of Aboriginal descent.</p>

<sup>221</sup> The Inspectorate acknowledges the disparity between the Department's TOMS and ECHO databases (see [5.7]). However, that disparity does not affect our analysis and recommendation. Unfortunately, the Department has not addressed the substance of the recommendation.

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<p>12. Develop and implement an Aboriginal healthcare strategy that recognises the cultural and gendered needs of the local prisoner population.</p>	<p><b>Supported – existing Department initiative</b>                      The Department is currently consulting and benchmarking with various government agencies interstate to inform the development of an Aboriginal healthcare strategy that recognises the cultural and general needs of the local prisoner population. In addition, the Department is consulting with Edith Cowan University on its Review of Indigenous Offender Health publication, produced to give an overview of health issues facing the Indigenous offender population.</p>
<p>13. Implement ongoing monitoring mechanisms with respect to health services to ensure compliance with procedures and standards, to identify opportunities for improvement, and to ensure staff accountability for their clinical practice.</p>	<p><b>Supported – existing Department initiative</b>                      The Health Services Directorate (HSD) has a number of internal and external monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance in the workplace. The HSD has been formally accredited by the Australian Council on HealthCare Standards (ACHS) until March 2013, following an external inspection. The Council awards Accreditation status to those that demonstrate compliance with performance standards based on legal requirements and codes of practice. In addition, HSD have an ongoing Clinical Governance Program which assesses compliance to clinical standards. As part of this program a Senior Medical Officer conducts ongoing medical record audits and follows up on any issues where necessary. HSD has also increased the frequency of visits by senior clinical staff to regional sites to provide oversight.</p>
<p>14. The Academy should facilitate delivery of First Aid Mental Health Training for Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders for all staff working with Aboriginal prisoners.</p>	<p><b>Supported – existing Department initiative</b>                      Mental Health First Aid for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is currently offered by the Academy and where possible through local providers. The demand for this course is significant and places are awarded to officers and staff throughout the state.</p>

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<p>15. Ensure adequate delivery of Academy courses to EGRP staff.</p>	<p><b>Supported – existing Department initiative</b> All courses related to supervision and management scheduled on the Academy’s calendar are available to staff throughout the state. In 2010, 53 courses related to these topics were made available through the Academy in the metropolitan and, where available, in regional areas.</p>
<p>16. Provide equipment, extraction training, and a rapid response capacity for the use of razor wire, or provide alternative security measures.</p>	<p><b>Supported</b> The Manager Emergency Management with the Security Manager will review current emergency practices at EGRP to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for incidents involving razor wire. During June 2011, the Department will meet with FESA to confirm the nature of assistance that can be provided by local emergency services to EGRP for incidents involving ‘at height’ razor wire retrieval.</p> <p>It is the Department’s intention to eventually eradicate razor wire from Western Australian prisons. In regards to EGRP, the Department’s Director for Security has authorised for razor wire to be removed from certain areas within the prison.</p> <p>This process will involve further discussions between the prison Superintendent and Director for Security.</p> <p>The new prison will not have razor wire.</p>

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