



Background

The Northern Territory Government has announced a new era in correctional services for the Northern Territory underpinned by the construction of a contemporary 1,000 bed prison facility and complemented by a new regional process.

New era in correctional services

The new operating philosophy is based on a 'through care' model ensuring an integrated and seamless approach to managing offenders both in custody and in the community through:

- rehabilitation
- reintegration and
- reducing re-offending.

Site selection process

The site of the new Darwin region correctional facility will be located in outer Darwin, providing the capacity for expansion, if required. A map showing the new location is provided at Attachment A.

The selection of the new site was undertaken by an interdepartmental committee, which used a weighted scoring process to determine the site. The key criteria against which the site was assessed were:

- site area
- travel distance
- flat site
- buffer
- separation from residential areas
- environmental threats
- headworks
- NT Planning Scheme
- NTG land availability

Facility

The new correctional centre will be a 1,000 bed facility that will accommodate men and women who have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment or those who are on remand.

This new facility provides an opportunity to be innovative in design, with low, medium and high security accommodation within a very secure compound.

The new facility also presents an opportunity to purpose build a facility that specifically caters for the high percentage of Indigenous prisoners.

Educational and vocational training programs will aim to increase the personal, social and community life opportunities and employment prospects for prisoners.

The facility will also include a forensic mental health and behavioural management facility with a 25-bed capacity to cater for people who have committed significant offences and have been found to be 'unfit to plead' or not guilty by reasons of mental impairment.

Regional work camps

Northern Territory Correctional Services in the Department of Justice is investigating the establishment of prisoner work camps in regional centres of the Northern Territory.

Prisoner work camps will facilitate work programs through which prisoners can make amends to the community by engaging them on projects that enhance community life and maintain community assets.

The work camps will be based on an innovative concept using a base camp within a visible compound which will allow projects to be undertaken in remote areas.

Prisoners will have the opportunity to develop work and life skills that increase their chances at successful re-entry into the community on release.

Economic benefits for the Northern Territory

This new era in correctional services presents many opportunities for Territorians.

The design and construction of the new correctional facility is a high value project estimated to be in excess of \$300 million.

The project will generate real employment opportunities across the NT through design and construction, in particular for the building and associated services industry.

The employment benefits of the new correctional facility will continue past the design and construction phase with more employment opportunities for members of facility's multi-disciplinary team, including Prison Officers, administrative, vocational education and training staff as well as external service providers.

The work camps will also provide employment opportunities for Northern Territory in regional centres in the form of correctional services staff and service providers.

12 February 2009