



Research Publication

Working Towards a Better Future: A Study into Inmate Employment in the NSW Correctional System

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Research Officer

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Foreword

This research study provides an essential and objective critique over the performance of New South Wales Correctional Industry programs in contributing to inmate development.

The study does, however, have broader implications beyond the New South Wales Correctional System. The literature review aptly illustrates the dearth of research which has been conducted in this vital area of Correctional administration. I have no doubt the study will be welcomed and analysed by all those individuals and organisations throughout the world with an interest in Corrections.

The section dealing with the 'Importance of Work' is particularly valuable. It sets out quite eloquently a foundation stone of an effective and successful community - work. This, of course, is the fundamental reason why Correctional Industry programs exist.

An aspect of the study which I find particularly fascinating and interesting is the feedback provided by inmates. These comments represent the views and feelings of our clients. This information will be utilised, in a very serious way, to redefine our direction and operations for the future.

I would like to pass on my appreciation to Judy McHutchison and staff of the Research & Statistics Unit for the professional manner in which this study has been undertaken and published. I would also like to pass on my deep seated appreciation to our people - the staff, inmates and parolees who have contributed to the development and publication of this important study.

Finally the commissioning of this study is a real reflection of the changing face and maturity of Corrections in New South Wales. It is a further example of our commitment to CSI to set, rather than just meet, Correctional Industry best practice performance.

Wayne Ruckley,
Director
Corrective Services Industries

September 1995.

Executive summary

Significant importance is placed on work within the NSW correctional system. This importance is a reflection of the value in which work is held in society generally. In the general community work commands a central place in the lives of most of the population. As well as an avenue of personal satisfaction work integrates individuals within society by the provision of income, identity and social interaction.

Programs which orient correctional centre inmates towards employment have been seen as a means of promoting their rehabilitation and assisting in their assimilation back into normal society.

In 1990 the Research and Statistics Unit of the Department of Corrective Services completed a study commissioned by the Director of CSI (Corrective Services Industries) titled *Corrective Services Industries and Offender Post-Release Employment* (McHutchison 1991). In 1993 the Director of CSI commissioned a second study which forms this report.

This study, which commenced in January 1994, investigates the contribution of CSI to inmate development. The research for this study was undertaken in three stages: Stage 1 consisted of a review of the extant literature on the influence of correctional industries on inmate development; Stage 2 consisted of interviews conducted with inmates working in NSW Correctional Centres; Stage 3 investigated the post-release employment experience and the recidivism rate

of a large sample of parolees. Some parolees included in Stage 3 of the study were interviewed.

Stage 1: Literature review

Studies from other jurisdictions provide substantial evidence that the operation of industries within correctional centres contribute to more positive behaviour by inmates during their sentence.

Some studies from other jurisdictions compared employment and recidivism outcomes between offenders who had worked in correctional industries during their sentence and other offenders. The results for these studies showed either no difference in outcomes between the groups on rates of employment or recidivism, or a more positive outcome for the correctional industries group.

Stage 2: Inmate interviews

Interviews were conducted with 61 inmates working in the NSW Correctional System. Interviews reflected very positively on CSI business units. The evidence gained from these interviews suggests that working in CSI's business units is valued by inmates for the opportunity to learn and practice skills and to assist them to deal with the stress of their confinement by: making time appear to pass more swiftly, alleviating boredom, diverting their attention from matters which may give rise to negative emotions and the

deflection of possible conflict with other inmates.

When inmates were asked if there was anything they didn't like about their work or working in correctional centres generally the level of wages was the most common factor nominated.

Stage 3: Post release employment and recidivism

Post-release employment information was available for 260 parolees. All these parolees had worked in CSI business units or services industries for three months or more during their last sentence. There was no difference in employment outcome between parolees that had worked in the business units and parolees that had worked in services. Interviews conducted with a small number of parolees (as also stated below) provided evidence that it is possible for both these areas of work to inculcate offenders with new skills, and therefore increase the range of employment opportunities available to them. In addition, some parolees were able to refine existing skills or bring increased ability or understanding to their usual work as a result of their correctional centre work.

Parolees who had participated in a Community Employment Program (work release) were far more likely to have worked after release than parolees that had not participated in this program. Some of this success can be attributed to work releasees continuing employment after release with the same employer for whom they worked during their participation in the Community Employment Program.

The entire post-release sample (n=288) was tested on recidivism. There was no difference in recidivism within 18 months of release between parolees that had worked in the business units compared to parolees who had worked in services.

Parolees who had participated in a Community Employment Program were far less likely to recidivate over a period of 18 months than parolees who had not participated in a work release program.

Fourteen parolees in the post release sample were interviewed. Parolees used a combination of methods in attempting to locate work such as informal networks (i.e., family and friends), the CES and newspapers. When parolees were asked if there were any obstacles to their locating employment the existence of their criminal history was the most common obstacle nominated. Other obstacles nominated were age, the lack of transport and the lack of trade certificates.

These interviews also revealed, (as mentioned above) that both the business units and services provided inmates with work experience which can increase the employment opportunities available to them or improve their existing abilities in their area of work.

Since their release, some of the parolees interviewed had put the skills they had learned in the business units to constructive use in their leisure time by producing, repairing or altering items, building structures, or by giving advice on these to others.

In conclusion, the provision of employment in the NSW correctional system appears to be an important factor in maintaining inmate wellbeing and in the good management of correctional centres. There is also some evidence that the work experience gained in correctional centres in both the business units and services can assist offenders after release in obtaining employment or enable them to perform additional tasks in their usual area of work.

Recommendations

There are a number of recommendations which emanate from the findings of this study. These are as follows:

- Other jurisdictions in Australia collect data on the employment status of offenders at the time of arrest. The aggregate figure for each State is available in the National Prison Census. The NSW Department of Corrective Services should also collect this information at the induction and screening undertaken when inmates are admitted into the correctional system and this information should be recorded on an individual inmate's file. Aggregate data should then be recorded and could be made available for publication.
- Many inmates did not have information on the type of work undertaken in the business units and the opportunities and experience that this employment provides. Leaflets containing information on each of the CSI business divisions should be produced by CSI for the use of inmates. This material should describe the nature of the work, the training provided and the types of employment to which this work could lead. Some of the material in Annex 2 of this report could be utilised for this purpose.
- Information stands containing the leaflets described above should be established in all correctional centres. Other information which may be of assistance with regard to post-release employment or training such as that available from DEET (Department of Employment Education and Training) should also be included on these information stands.
- Higher inmate wages in real terms would appear to have a beneficial impact on the morale of inmates, their ability to support themselves post release and perhaps also with regard to productivity. Inmate wages should continue to be reviewed regularly and the affordability of increasing inmate wages in real terms should be addressed at these reviews.
- The parolees who had taken part in the Community Employment Program (work release) did better on employment outcomes and recidivism outcomes than those that did not participate in Community Employment Programs. This report and other studies on Community Employment Programs should be included in any review of such programs.
- The difficulties some parolees had finding employment supports the continuation of the Employment Development Program. This program should endeavour to link inmates with specific skills acquired in the business units with suitable employers.

Introduction

The NSW Department of Corrective Services has as one of its corporate objectives the provision of opportunities for the personal development of both male and female inmates through education and employment.¹ Under the strategy of the 'structured day' inmates' time is largely divided between education, employment and other activities.² A wide range of educational courses are conducted in correctional centres including basic education, vocational courses, drug and alcohol courses and craft and leisure courses.

The employment of inmates has had a long history in the NSW correctional system. Historically there have been a number of activities available in which inmates could be employed. These activities were either 'services' in which work contributed to the self sufficiency of the correctional centres, or were 'industries' in which work had revenue raising objectives. In the late 1980's under the direction of Corrective Service Industries (CSI), 'revitalisation' of Correctional Industries commenced. This process sought to optimise a commercial culture within all CSI industries and operations in the NSW correctional system.

Corrective Services Industries is now the registered business name of over 85 commercially based business units operating throughout correctional centres within NSW. These business units are structured through business divisions which manufacture metal, timber, electronic and textile based products, and include other enterprises concerned with upholstery, printing, bookbinding, packaging, recycling, laundering etc.³

The creation of additional inmate work positions within NSW correctional centres

has been a fundamental component of the revitalising of correctional industries and in recent years the number and range of work opportunities for inmates have been significantly expanded.⁴ In the NSW correctional system inmate employment positions are in the following areas:

Business units

- CSI: commercially based business units, operated by CSI covering seven business divisions (Cornet, Corfurn, Cortex, Corcover, Gencor, Correctprint and Agricor) (see Annex 2 for description);
- Private: private sector business units which are managed and/or operated by private sector businesses;

Services

- covers a range of correctional centre domestic functions such as cleaning, gardening, building maintenance, laundry, food preparation and community projects.

CSI strives to replicate private sector methods within correctional industries thereby making "real world" work responsibilities available to inmates. One of the means of facilitating this objective has been the extension of private sector involvement in correctional industry programs.⁵ By 1995 eleven private sector based business units were in operation within the NSW correctional system.⁶

Inmates employed, whether in business units or services are drawn from all security classifications, from maximum to minimum.⁷ Inmate wages are based on their skill level, work attendance record, output

and achievement of quality standards.⁸ Correctional centres can also use a range of privileges (such as the number of phone calls and visits) to encourage inmates to attend work regularly.

Another initiative by the Department of Corrective Services concerned with employment is workplace education. Inmate education is normally undertaken outside their hours of employment. However, 'workplace' education is considered part of an inmates work and takes place within working hours in the inmates' work area. The program is coordinated by the Adult Education and Vocational Training Institute and is concerned with assisting inmates to achieve technical skills related to their workplace. The courses can include accredited courses in technical skills, such as welding provided by TAFE (Technical and Further Education), literacy and numeracy skills, "employability" skills and the understanding of occupational health and safety matters.⁹ This structured training complements informal on the job training. Workplace education¹⁰ makes it possible for inmates to acquire trade qualifications pertinent to their correctional centre work.

The NSW Department of Corrective Services also conducts programs referred to as Community Employment (otherwise referred to as work release) programs from designated correctional centres which allow selected inmates to attend employment in the community whilst serving the latter portion of their sentence. Eligibility for work release usually requires an inmate to have been serving a sentence of more than three years, to have demonstrated "good conduct and industry" and to have successfully completed a three month work release assessment stage. It is also essential that inmates are in the lowest security ranking (C3) and that their sentence is within two years of completion. Inmates can be with-

drawn from the work release program for an infringement of the rules applying to the program. The Community Employment program at the Industrial Training Correctional Centre (also referred to as Industrial Training) allows inmates to attend outside employment (or education) from the centre two days a week.¹¹

A post-release initiative supported by CSI is the Employment Development Program (formerly known as the Second Chance Business Register). This program seeks to promote employment opportunities for former offenders. Employers willing to employ former offenders are placed in touch with agencies which provide, as part of their assistance to offenders, assistance with locating employment.¹²

Evaluation of correctional centre employment

In 1990 the Research and Statistics Unit of the NSW Department of Corrective Services undertook a study titled, *Offender Post-Release Employment*. This study (McHutchison 1991) commissioned by the Director of CSI provided information on the experience and needs of offenders and the contribution CSI was making towards the orderly operation of correctional centres and the post-release employment of offenders.

In 1993 the Director of CSI commissioned a second study and this present study commenced in January 1994. As the number of individual business units in the correctional system is large the Director nominated the ten business units (4 private sector and 6 operated by CSI) to be included in this study. These business units are listed in Annex 1, Table 14.

The objectives of this study

CSI operates commercial enterprises and

oversees private sector enterprises which manufacture a range of products using inmate labour in NSW correctional centres. These enterprises compete for customers with outside private industry in the general marketplace. In pursuing commercial goals CSI aims to achieve goals with regard to inmate development. These are as follows:

- reducing inmate idleness by contributing to more effective correctional centre management;¹³
- the learning of new technical and general employment skills;
- the enhancement of post-release employment;¹⁴
- the learning of new skills and attitudes to help inmates reduce the chance of their returning to prison.¹⁵

The aim of this study was to obtain information which would provide an understanding of CSI's contribution towards its objectives relating to inmate development. This was to be done by the following means:

Stage 1

A literature search to locate research studies conducted in other jurisdictions that have investigated the influence of vocational programs on correctional centre management, post release employment and recidivism;

Stage 2

An investigation of the work and experiences of male and female inmates currently working within the centres nominated in order to answer the following questions:

- (a) what type of work is undertaken by inmates?
- (b) what benefits, if any, does CSI have for

inmates during their period of incarceration?

Stage 3A

An investigation of post release employment in order to answer the following questions:

- (a) how many offenders have been employed since release?
- (b) how long did it take offenders to commence employment after release?
- (c) how successful were offenders in maintaining employment?
- (d) to test for any differences between the groups (business units and services, work release and non-work release) on outcomes to (a), (b) and (c) above.

Stage 3B

To assess the rate of recidivism since release and to test for any difference between groups (business units & services and work release & non-work release) on recidivism.

Stage 3C

To investigate (through personal interviews of parolees) the value of the parolee's experience in CSI with regard to their post-release employment and their personal lives.

The value of work

Significant importance is placed on work within the NSW correctional system. This importance is a reflection of the value in which work is held in society generally.

Work has been defined as physical activity, as income-producing employment and as socially prescribed behaviour¹⁶ which is a means of satisfying material needs and social needs. In modern times work has become a pattern of exchange between employer and employee where the worker gives up their time, accepts direction and supervision in the use of their energies, submits themselves to rules and discipline, and in return receives wages, benefits and satisfaction embedded in their work and social relations (Strauss 1974)¹⁷.

The Australian labour force comprises 75 per cent of the male civilian population aged 15 and over and 52 per cent of the female population (Boreham & Hall 1993)¹⁸. Therefore, the quality and quantity of work and matters influencing the experience of work are central issues in the political life of the nation and the everyday lives of almost all the population.

Work integrates individuals within society by the provision of income, identity and opportunity for social interaction (Wansborough 1994)¹⁹. In Australia, despite the safety net of the social welfare system, income from employment is essential for most people to maintain a relatively adequate standard of living. Without a reasonable income individuals are excluded from participation in many areas of social life.

Personal satisfaction also accrues from work, through a sense of usefulness brought about by a person's ability to apply themselves and achieve results. Goodwin refers

to this purposefulness, as adding meaning to life (Goodwin 1972)²⁰. Productive activity and the nature of that activity confers upon individuals an identity which they may not otherwise possess. Since the industrial revolution and possibly before, the kind of work people do, and sometimes the manner in which they do their work, has implications for the way they are regarded and how they regard themselves. Although employment is now considered as important for women as for men, historically the emphasis has been on men's employment:

"In our work-oriented society all adult males are expected to be productive wage earners. In most cases, gainful employment is a necessary though not sufficient condition for a man to consider himself a man and be considered a responsible and respected member of the community. In addition, the kind of job he holds helps to determine both his self-image and his status in society"²¹.

Now employment is considered just as important for women. In recent decades there have been major changes in attitudes and behaviour with regard to female employment. No longer is it generally assumed that women with domestic responsibilities will not also involve themselves in work outside the home. Women respondents to the Mackay Report, *Australians at Work*, spoke enthusiastically about the therapeutic effects of work, about the symbolic value of work in defining identity and about the joys and companionship of work (Mackay 1989)²².

This relationship between identity and the type of work in which an individual engages is so pervasive that not to be included in the workplace can undermine a person's sense of value and influence their treatment by others. To be labelled by one's occupation immediately states that one is a productive

member of society. Thus work can instil a sense of belonging and acceptance which can contribute to the cohesiveness of society.

In our society the period in which people are engaged in work extends over many years of their lives. People expect to enter the workforce after completing their education and only leave when age, illness or family responsibilities intervene²³. Not working can have an exclusionary influence from mainstream social life and negative consequences on wellbeing. Warr (1987) reports that between 20 and 30 per cent of men who have lost their jobs report a deterioration in health. Much of the research into the effects of unemployment have been cross-sectional, comparing a group of people who at the time were unemployed with similar people who were in paid employment.²⁴ Such comparisons regularly show that employed people are likely to have better psychological health than those who are unemployed. The unemployed generally score higher on measures relating to anxiety, depression, worthlessness, hopelessness, lack of confidence, and loss of sleep through nervousness. This is not only a cost to the individuals involved but to the entire community (Boreham and Hall 1993)²⁵.

Unemployment has also been linked to high suicide rates for males with one study finding that the suicide rate for unemployed persons was twelve times the average rate (Krudinsky 1977)²⁶.

Directly relevant to this present study is the correlation between employment status and crime. Although single factor explanations are inadequate, unemployment has been found to be a significantly common factor among those who commit crimes. Although NSW does not collect information on the employment of offenders at the time of arrest other States routinely collect such

information on offenders in their jurisdictions. According to the 1992 National Prison Census, the proportion of prisoners that were unemployed at the time of arrest ranges from 48.8 per cent in Queensland to 86 per cent in Western Australia, with other States/Territories recording approximately 70 per cent (Walker 1992)²⁷.

Part of the explanation for high unemployment among individuals that enter the correctional system is that they are generally relatively disadvantaged socially and economically and are very often deficient in work based skills. Wilson and Lincoln (1992) found that a large proportion of offenders were disadvantaged with regard to work prior to imprisonment²⁸.

Once released employment was found to be associated to parole success (Gorta 1982)²⁹. Glaser (1964) noted that in his investigation of hundreds of ex-offenders the most common factor that led to a legitimate way of life was the acquisition of a satisfying job³⁰.

Because the evidence that employment plays an important part in the successful readjustment to society after release programs which aim to increase employment of former offenders have been seen as the logical path to follow in their rehabilitation. Employment programs can be largely divided into three types:

- programs where the offender is shown methods which will assist them in locating work, or
- programs which aim to find offenders employment thus operating as employment placement agencies,
- vocationally oriented where the focus is on training.

The operation of industries within correct-

ional centres is a vocational orientated program as it can provide inmates with the opportunity to learn production tasks by informal on the job training which may be supplemented by formal training. It is the influence of industries on inmate development which is the focus of this study.

Literature review

In NSW, 'industries' have long been a part of the correctional system. Correctional industries currently operate in all Australian correctional jurisdictions and in many overseas jurisdictions including the United States, Canada and Britain. In the 1980's interest evolved in reviving correctional industries.

The rationale put forward by correctional managers and cited in the literature for the revitalisation and expansion of existing prison industries and the establishment of new industries was as follows:

- to reduce idleness and misconduct in correctional institutions (Criminal Justice Associates, 1985; Saylor & Gaes, 1992; McHutchison, 1991; Wilkie 1986);
- to assist rehabilitation by providing inmates with work experience and work skills, and to improve the inmates' attitude to work (Filla, 1981) and hence to assist offenders to obtain and sustain legitimate employment after release (Glasser, 1964; Gleason, 1978; Johnson, 1984);
- to reduce recidivism (Utah Governors Task Force, 1984; Basinger, 1985), and
- to recoup the costs of incarceration (Basinger, 1985; Wilkie, 86).

The growing interest in prison industries is reflected in the increasing number of journal articles, reports and conference papers now emerging. However, studies which attempt to evaluate prison industries *per se* and the effects of these industries upon the inmates who have been involved in correctional industry programs are small in number.

Almost all of the existing research studies emanate from the United States.

An extensive search of the literature has not been able to identify any research conducted specifically into correctional industries outside the US except for the study conducted in NSW by McHutchison in 1991 and an evaluation of an apprenticeship program by Wirth in Germany (1993). CORCAN which operates industries within the Canadian correctional system was contacted but no response was received.

Wirth's paper was delivered at a conference of the European Offender Employment Group in December 1993. This group was formed in January 1993 and has representation from nine member countries. The group's key aim is the promotion of programs which contribute positively to the employment of ex-inmates.³¹ Except for Wirth's paper the Conference papers were mostly a description of programs and not an evaluation of program outcomes.

In Britain, a study is being undertaken at Brunel University by Frances Simon. Simon's study aims to compare work and training at selected correctional centres with work and training in the same industries outside prison; to obtain inmate perceptions of the value of participation in industry programs and to gain information on the employment experiences of these inmates after release. A report outlining the findings of Simon's study is due in 1995.

In NSW Department of Corrective Services 79.47% of the total inmate population were engaged in work in either the business units or services during the month of June 1995³². The percentage of the inmate population working in the business units was 40.07%

indicating the extent to which Corrective Services Industries (CSI) have become an integral part of inmate management in the NSW correctional system. It is, therefore, important to have access to reliable information which examines the effects of industry programs on inmates.

The aim of this literature review is to examine all available literature which has investigated the influence of correctional industries upon inmates and to look at how the findings contained in these published studies compare with the rationale for the rejuvenation and expansion of existing prison industries and the establishment of new industries as stated above.

THE COSTS OF INCARCERATION

One argument put forward for the existence of correctional industries was the contribution that revenue from such industries can make to the correctional system. No studies were identified which examined this argument specifically, but reference was made in a number of studies to the financial benefits accruing from prison industries. However, different accounting methods and lack of information about the basis for these claims make comparisons across jurisdictions difficult. The brief for this research study did not include an examination of the cost-effectiveness of prison industries.

REDUCING IDLENESS AND MISCONDUCT

Anecdotal evidence provided by Governors and officers of correctional centres, as well as by inmates, attests to the contribution industries have made towards harmony and security within correctional centres by reducing idleness (Criminal Justice Associates 1985; Wilkie 1986). A safer more positive environment within correctional centres makes the job of custodial officers

easier (Farrier 1989). McHutchison (1991) found that productive work assisted inmates to cope with the stress of confinement.

This anecdotal evidence is now supported by empirical evidence. Maguire et al (1988) in their analysis of the effect of prison industry participation on institutional behaviour found a consistent pattern of lower rates of involvement in officially-recorded disciplinary violations among industry employed inmates.³³ These findings were maintained when other adjustment-relevant characteristics of the inmates were taken into account. In a study by Saylor and Gaes (1992) the initial results suggested that inmates who receive training and work experience during incarceration have less misconduct reports in the last year of their sentence and where reports did occur they were of a less serious nature than those of the comparison group.³⁴ These studies are discussed further in the section headed, *Influence on Post Release Employment and Recidivism*.

In a study into prison industries in Victoria, Filla (1981) stated that 98 per cent of inmate respondents wanted to work whilst in prison and 73 per cent wanted to learn a trade or acquire a skill.³⁵ Dickins (1986) interviewed a large random sample of inmates in correctional centres in NSW. Thirty one percent worked in business units whilst 62% worked in service positions. Of the sample, 79% stated they enjoyed working in gaol, however, this and other variables presented in the report were not discriminated on the basis of work location³⁶. The effects of industry on the operation of correctional centres has consistently been found to be positive yet, as will be seen below, research into the other desired objectives of correctional industries, increased post-release employment and reduced recidivism, have produced varying results.

INFLUENCE ON POST-RELEASE EMPLOYMENT AND RECIDIVISM

Despite an international search of the literature only twelve research studies were identified that investigated the influence of correctional industries on the post-release behaviour of inmates. Nine studies examined industries operated by correctional authorities and three examined privately operated industries.

(a) Industry operated by Correctional Authorities

Glaser (1964) conducted a research study on federal offenders at the request of the United States Federal Bureau of Prisons. Glaser found that parolees who successfully completed their parole were twice as likely to report that they had utilised prison-based training in their post-release employment. Glaser suggested that, "the habituation of inmates to regularity in constructive and rewarding employment, and the anti-criminal personal influences of work supervisors on inmates are the important factors which contribute to rehabilitation"³⁷.

In a study conducted in the United States, Gleason (1978) monitored the post-release records of inmates who received vocational training in Michigan State Prisons. The subjects in the sample and control group were matched on 21 socio-economic variables. The two groups were then tracked over a five year period by the use of social security lifetime earnings files³⁸ and the computerised arrest records of correctional institutions. The impact of training and specific training programs were analysed by multiple regression. Those who had participated in vocational training had greater post-prison earnings and less recidivism than the control group. The greatest reduction in the recidivism rate was related to those who were enrolled in a training pro-

gram for seven months or more. The training which produced significant results was computer programming, data processing, electronics and machine drafting.

Markley et al (1983) measured the effects of skills training programs for Arizona prisoners on both employment and recidivism. They compared two groups matched for age, sex, race, education and skill level prior to training. Income earned the year prior to incarceration appears to be a strong predictor of employment success measured by the number of months in work and level of earnings. However, they found no differences between the two groups on subsequent employment success or reductions in recidivism. The results failed to show any correlation between training in custody and recidivism based on a limited follow up period.

In 1984 the Utah Governors Task Force was appointed to review and evaluate the Utah Industry Program. The Task Force compared recidivism rates of inmates who had worked in correctional industries with offenders that had not. The recidivism rate for offenders that had worked in the correctional industries program was 13%, less than half that of the general release population for which the recidivism rate was 29%.³⁹

Johnson (1984)⁴⁰ used a sample of 210 offenders released from the Florida Department of Corrections to examine the relationship between prison industry experience and the post-release behaviour of inmates. Utilising a two year follow up period, Johnson found that prison work made no significant difference to post-release employment or recidivism. Nevertheless, Johnson found that inmates who had participated in two programs, community work release and vocational education, were more likely to be employed after release but the rate of recidivism was the same as the others.⁴¹

Basinger (1985) selected a sample of offenders from the Ohio correctional system. One group had worked for Ohio Prison Industries, the other was selected from the general prison population which had not worked in industries. There were no significant differences on age, race, offence type, education level, I.Q., civilian employment history or prior incarceration but the industry group had shorter sentences than the general group. There was no significant difference between the groups on recidivism (recidivism was defined as a return to Ohio Correctional Centres within one year). This research needs to be interpreted with care because the industry group was very small and may not be representative of inmates in Ohio Prison Industries in general.

Maguire et al (1988) conducted research into offenders released from the New York Corrections Program. The study group had spent six months of continuous employment in industrial workshops during their stay in maximum security in 1981-82. The researchers examined the relationship of industry participation and recidivism and found no difference in recidivism between the industry participants and the control group when other factors were controlled.

The United States, Federal Prison Industries (now UNICOR) has the responsibility to employ and train federal inmates through a diversified program which provides products and services to other federal agencies. In 1983, the Office of Research and Evaluation at the Bureau of Prisons commenced a study called the Post Release Employment Project (PREP). This study was a longitudinal study and inmates were identified for involvement prior to their release. Data for the study was collected over the period from 1983 to 1987. The study analysed the differences between federal offenders who received training/work experience for a period longer than six months and offenders

with similar backgrounds who did not participate in these activities. The offenders in the study were matched for criminal history, pre-prison work experience, education and characteristics on current most serious offence. The study group was found to have a greater likelihood of being employed during their halfway house (work release centre) stay. Positive results were also obtained with regard to the offenders behaviour in the community as the study group were less likely to have supervision orders revoked within the first year and more likely to be employed after release than inmates that had similar background characteristics, but who had not participated in work and vocational programs.⁴²

In NSW, CSI operate a wide range of business units within departmental correctional centres. McHutchison 1991, investigated the influence of CSI on inmate development. This study found that parolees who had worked in CSI business units for six months or longer were significantly more likely to find work after release than offenders who had worked in services for six months or longer. As well this group took significantly less time to find work than inmates who had worked in the service industries (cleaning, maintenance and kitchen) of the centres.⁴³ Nevertheless, both groups had problems retaining work and there was no difference in employment levels at the time the data was collected. There was also no significant difference in recidivism in the short-term (six months).

Wirth (1993) refers to a training program in Germany at Herford a correctional centre for juvenile offenders in the state of Northrhine-Westphalia. This vocational program has apprenticeship positions for inmates enabling them to become skilled in a variety of trades such as baking, electrical, gas fitting, plumbing, wood or construction mechanics, painting, varnishing, carpentry

and heating engineering. In addition short-term training courses of 6-9 months are also conducted and these can give inmates advanced standing if they attend trade courses after release. Of the number who commenced training, 60% successfully completed their apprenticeship and 80% successfully completed the short-term courses. Recidivism defined as another episode of imprisonment within four years, was on average 52% for the centre. The rate for those who had undertaken training was 36% for those who had successfully completed their apprenticeships, and 47% for those who had successfully completed short courses. Nearly all those that re-offended were unemployed after release leading the authors to state the importance of after care or placement services.⁴⁴

(b) Private Industry

In the last decade, in western countries, considerable attention was given to the transfer of government functions traditionally performed from the public sector to the private sector. Correctional centres were included in this general push toward privatisation. In the United States the interest in privatisation was propelled along by the increasing size of the prison population necessitating the need for more prison space (Joel 1992). As government and public acceptance of privatisation grew the involvement of the private sector in industries which had historically been managed by the correctional system developed.

With regard to inmate development, there is a general belief in the literature that any rehabilitative effect on inmate behaviour from participating in prison industry will be enhanced if the industry is managed by a private body. The main claim is that offenders working in private industry while incarcerated are benefited by more realistic work experience. In 1981, Florida legislated to

allow the establishment of a non-profit corporation called PRIDE Inc. to manage the State's prison industries. PRIDE's role was to encourage prison industries to operate on a profit making basis and provide tax incentives for private businesses to employ inmates and former inmates (Callison, 1989). PRIDE describes the benefits private industry can provide as follows:

"Rehabilitation is attained through subjecting inmates to the responsibilities of a work environment. Offenders must make formal applications for program jobs. They are interviewed and chosen for qualification and ability. When in work, inmate employees must check in and out by time-clock. The promotion procedures are the same as those of a private company on the outside. By the time that the offender is released they will have built up a stock of savings to last them through the first few weeks while they look for a job. PRIDE has an office for offender outplacement to assist in job search. Ideally, jobs found are related to the type of work they did for PRIDE, although some find employment simply as a result of learning the work ethic while in prison."⁴⁵

Many of the procedures described above can also be incorporated into industries operated by correctional centres. Certainly in NSW non-private business units within CSI have a high level of commercial orientation. Nevertheless, with regard to inmate development there may be some merit in Gandy & Hurl's (1987) suggestion that inmates develop a greater sense of competence and self-esteem by working in privately operated industries than in industries operated by correctional authorities.⁴⁶ Such work, it has been suggested by Skolnik & Slansky (1991), also provides offenders with the possibility of being able to document a history of stable employment with a private company (rather than a correctional industry) that can be used to assist in obtaining employment after release.⁴⁷

At July 1994, research into the influence of private industry on the behaviour of offend-

ers was meagre and results were inconsistent and confounded by the use of small samples. Only three studies could be located and they concentrated on recidivism rates. PRIDE found that offenders who had worked in their industries had a return rate to the correctional system that was only half the rate of the general population of former Florida inmates. This very encouraging result needs to be interpreted with care as a description of the methodology was not included with these results (Elliott 1988). The differences in outcome between the two groups could be as a consequence of the selection criteria used for identifying inmates suitable for employment in Pride. Only a small proportion of the large inmate population is selected to work in Pride.

Since 1986, Trans World Airways (TWA) has employed inmates in California to service "overflow" flight reservations. Before acceptance into the venture inmates must undertake an 18 week course which trains them to be reservation agents. A study using a very small sample of inmates (19) who had worked for TWA was matched with a control group for sex, ethnicity, age, reading level and offence record. The TWA sample were found to be less likely to return to custody within a year of release with only two inmates (9 per cent) returned to custody compared with 27 per cent of the control group (Elliot 1988). However, the sample sizes in this study are too small to draw reliable conclusions.

Zephyr Products a sheet metal fabricator in private industry in Kansas, hire inmates to work in their factory. The recidivism rate, using a very small sample, was the same as for parolees in general. This was despite the fact that all but one of the parolees were able to use their experience at Zephyr to obtain work as sheet metal operators after the completion of their sentence (Callison 1989).

At first glance it would appear that the body of existing research into correctional industries, both those privately operated and those operated by correctional authorities, are ambiguous with regard to post-release effects. However, none of the studies found the industry group to have performed less well on measurements of employment and recidivism than the comparison group. When differences between the groups were detected these differences were always in the direction of a more successful performance by the industry group. The research in this area is still very limited, however, when the general lack of success of other programs which aim to rehabilitate inmates⁴⁸ is considered, there seems to be some reason for optimism regarding correctional industries.

Inmate employment

Stage 2 entailed interviewing inmates working in correctional centres within the NSW Departmental of Corrective Services.

During this stage of the study data were collected to find out the nature of the work in which the inmates were employed and the value they saw in their present work for themselves both during their sentence and in the future after their release.

2.1 Methodology

Unstructured interviews took place with Industry Managers, Assistant Superintendents of Industry (ASI's), Overseers, Educational Officers and Welfare Officers. Structured interviews, using a questionnaire, were conducted with 61 inmates selected from those employed in the workshops (approximately 350 employed). Fifty seven of the inmates interviewed worked in business units and four worked in services either in the kitchen, cleaning, clerical (this inmate formerly worked as a correctional centre gardener) and maintenance. Of the 57 who worked in industries 44 were male and 13 were female. The four inmates who worked in the service areas were inmates from the Industrial Training Centre a correctional centre for males only. The number of inmates interviewed and their work locations are set out in Annex 1, Table 14.

Inmates were selected randomly from attendance sheets in the business units. The purpose and methodology of the study were described to inmates. It was also explained to inmates that their participation in the study was voluntary and that their involvement would have no influence on the course of their sentence; that information they provided was completely confidential and that answering questions was voluntary. Inmates were then asked if they wanted to

be involved in the study. All inmates to whom the researcher had described the study and who were asked this question agreed to be involved in the study. Inmates were interviewed for between 20 minutes and one hour.

2.2 Results

Inmates provided information on their education and work experience prior to imprisonment, a description of the work they were undertaking and their opinions on the value they saw in their current work.

(a) Education previous to imprisonment

Inmates were asked to state the highest level of education they had reached and their age at leaving school. The majority of inmates had left school before they had turned 16 years of age most commonly in Year 9 or Year 10 at High School. Responses to these two questions on education are contained in Annex 1, Tables 15-16.

(b) Employment before current sentence

To gain an understanding of the inmates' work experiences in the community prior to their entering the correctional system inmates were asked some questions about this period. Inmates were asked: "Did you have any sort of paid employment in the month before you came to gaol (before arrest)?"

Of the sample of male inmates (n=44), 50 per cent were not working at the time they were arrested. The most common reasons given for not being employed were, that they were involved in criminal activity or heroin use (7)⁴⁹ or that there were no jobs (5) or because of their health or age (2), or that they were waiting for the outcome of a

court case (3) and other individual responses.

Of the 13 female inmates interviewed only two were working at the time of their arrest. The most common reasons given by the female inmates for not working at this time were that they were involved in domestic responsibilities (3), or that they were taking drugs (2), or that they didn't want to work (2). Other individual responses from females included health problems, lack of skills or involvement in the study.

Of the 50 per cent (24) of male inmates that were working at the time of their arrest the most common type of work they were engaged in was labouring (7), or working in the building industry or related trades (4), semi skilled positions in the manufacturing industry (4), in the retail industry (2), or other individual responses.

Of the two female inmates who were working at the time of arrest, one was working in the sex industry and the other female inmate was employed on a poultry farm.

(c) Difficulties finding employment before current sentence?

Inmates were asked, "In the two year period before you came to gaol did you ever have any problems finding work?".

Seventy-nine percent of male inmates claimed they did not have any trouble finding work in this period. The most common reasons given for not having problems finding work during this period were that they knew people who could give them work (8), that they had a job of long standing or that there was plenty of work in their trade (7). Also nominated were personal characteristics i.e., that they were determined or motivated (4), or that they were good workers or knew how to present them-

selves (2), or that they had formal qualifications or experience (6) and other individual responses.

Twenty one per cent of male inmates (10) stated that they had problems finding work in the two year period before coming to gaol and attributed this to their lack of formal qualifications or experience (3) or their lack of English (1), their age (3) or the recession (1). Two inmates attributed their difficulties in finding work to the lack of determination they had towards finding work (2).

Of the 13 female inmates interviewed, 10 claimed not to be interested in locating work. This lack of interest they claimed was because they were on drugs (3), receiving compensation (2), looking after children (2) or studying. The three female inmates stated that finding work had been a difficult. The reasons they gave for this was their lack of training, lack of available employment, or their age. The female inmate who nominated her age as a problem was in her mid-twenties. This inmate explained that her age was a problem because there were no positions available for women her age without training and experience.

(d) Type of work undertaken in correctional centre business units

A summary of the activities undertaken within business units is provided below under the name of the of the business unit. A more detailed description of the activities and the products produced in correctional centre industries is provided in Annex 2.

Agricor: within Mannus Correctional Centre Agricor operates a farm of approximately 4000 acres. The main activity of this business unit is the production of cattle, fat lambs and wool. A 25 acre vineyard and apple orchard are also being developed.

Billprau: within the Reception and Induction Centre is a private sector business unit which produces round neck t-shirts.

Corfurn business units: (in this study units located at both Parklea Correctional Centre and the Industrial Training Centre were included) manufacture timber furniture.

Cormet: at Cessnock Correctional Centre produces tubular steel furniture mainly tables and chairs.

Correctprint: at Mulawa Correctional Centre, a centre for females, engaged in offset (instant) printing and basic book-binding. Correctprint ceased operation at Mulawa in 1995.

Cortex: at Cooma Correctional Centre is primarily engaged in the production of hospital linen. The product produced by this business unit is of a standard high enough to achieve international certification for its product under the Australian Standard AS/NZS ISO 9002.

Hard Rock Bakery: at the Reception and Induction Centre is a private sector business unit which produces bread, buns, cakes, pastry items and pizza.

Panama Developments: at Mulawa Correctional Centre is a private sector business unit which operates a plant nursery producing annuals, cottage garden plants and climbing plants.

Smorgon: at Emu Plains Correctional Centre is a private sector business unit which is involved in the recycling of plastic drink bottles.

(e) Preparing for work in correctional centres

Inmates working in industries were asked,

"Did you have any information on this business unit before you commenced work here?".

Approximately half of the male inmates claimed they had no information on the business unit before they commenced work. Those that did have information on the business units had obtained this mostly from other inmates (13), or sometimes the Classification Committee (3), or they had worked in this unit or a similar unit in Corrective Services or had engaged in similar work in private industry outside the correctional system (3). All female inmates responded that they did not have information on the business units before they commenced work there.

Inmates were asked, "Was enough time spent teaching you how to do things properly here?".

The majority of the inmates in each business unit responded that enough time was spent teaching them to do things properly. The four inmates interviewed from services all thought that enough time was spent teaching them how to do things properly.

Eighteen per cent of inmates (10) in the business units did not think enough time was spent teaching them how to do things properly. These inmates referred to: not receiving enough time from overseers (i.e., overseers too busy) (5), or that they would like to learn more, or that they were only shown how to do something once (2) or other individual responses.

Some examples of the responses to this question are below:

"Yes, but I want to know more - get into it." (Corfurn-Parklea)

"Officers should show inmates more and maybe better furniture." (Corfurn - Training Centre)

"They put you somewhere where they can keep an eye on you for the first few days." (Corfurn - Training Centre)

"They gave me a rough idea and said to ask questions, you tell them what you can't do and they explain it." (Cormet)

"Would like more detailed training to identify faults. We need samples to see what faults look like." (Cortex)

"Yes induction is good. Have OP12 manual to tell you what to do." (Cortex)

"Yes, very thorough but it's up to the individual." (Smorgon)

"The guys are put with someone who knows what they're doing till they pick it up." (Hard Rock Bakery)

"Yes - would be shown if you are prepared to learn."
(Agricor)

"Just told me about things as we went along but this is probably the best way to learn." (Panama)

"Everyone gets taught how to do things properly if not by an officer by one of the other inmates." (Correctprint)

"Alongside inmate - he is the plumber and when he is doing a job he lets me know what is happening."
(Services)

(f) Opportunity to practice and learn skills

To establish if inmates considered that their present work provided them with the opportunity to practice existing skills, inmates were asked if they had undertaken the type of work they were doing in their current work elsewhere.

Fifty percent of the male inmates (22) and 23 per cent of the female inmates (3) had performed similar work elsewhere. However, some of this previous experience was gained in other correctional centres in NSW.

The 4 inmates in services had done similar work in other correctional centres and one had worked in his area of work (clerical) outside the correctional system.

1. Inmates with experience of similar work to current correctional centre work

Inmates that had performed similar work elsewhere were asked three questions: where they had undertaken this work; if their present work allowed them to practice existing skills; and if they had learnt new things.

Responses to these three questions from inmates in industries that had previous experience with similar work are in Table 1 below.

2. Inmates *without* similar work experience elsewhere

Of the 50% of male inmates (22) and 77% of females (10) in the business units that had no previous experience in similar work elsewhere, nearly all stated they had learnt new things since starting work in the present business unit. The following were mentioned as new things learnt by one or more inmates with no previous experience in their area of work:

Agricor: animal husbandry; animal handling; making and erecting fences.

Billprau: the use of sewing machines; the cutting out of t-shirts; the procedure involved in putting a t-shirt together.

Corfurn (Parklea): the operation of machinery and saws; short-cuts when making items with timber; the manufacture of timber mobile units.

Table 1: Responses from individual inmates with previous experience in similar work.

	Where have you done this work?	Does the work here allow you to practice skills you knew before?	Have you learnt new things since commencing work in this business unit?
CORFURN - PARKLEA >>			
1	In gaol (Lithgow) and in my own home.	Yes	No
2	Furniture manufacturers - involved in making furniture.	Yes	Yes, certain ways of sanding small things that I had missed out on. Greater understanding now.
3	Builder no formal qualifications - used someone else's certificates when required.	Yes, I believe no one is perfect and every day you learn something new.	Yes, spa bath frame, kitchen cabinets, outside we used to just fix them.
CORFURN - TRAINING CENTRE >>			
4	Goulburn in the cabinet shop I worked on a wooden lathe and made crutches.	Yes	Yes, beam saw, different types of wood.
5	Made steel cabinet outside now wooden cabinets.	Yes	Yes, new type of cabinet how to operate machines.
6	A long time ago in mid 70's casual data loader since computers have been my hobby.	Yes	Have polished skills in office procedure - from accepting manufacturing orders to invoicing to everything in between. Word processing has improved a lot.
7	Running a company employing 140 people. Was once voted Marketeer of the year.	No, the skills needed in that office are not even bookkeeping skills. I have skills which could be put to good use and are not.	No
8	Outside gaol and Inside gaol.	Yes, helps	Yes, you already know how to use tools only you learn more things to do with them.
CORMET - CESSNOCK >>			
9	Outside as a boiler maker.	Yes, keeps welding up to standard like a refresher course	No
AGRICOR - MANNUS >>			
10	Outside I was a shearer.	Yes, crutching and shearing	Yes, did not know about cattle before - now know drenching, feed and supplements and pulling calves. How to put a fence up.
11	In New Zealand on farms.	Yes, drove tractor without a licence now have tractor and fork lift licence	Yes, fencing especially, vaccinating cattle and sheep, proper way to feed them, drenching, how to look after animals.
12	Outside with cement products - cement urns.	Yes	Yes, how to make cement fence posts.

	Where have you done this work?	Does the work here allow you to practice skills you knew before?	Have you learnt new things since commencing work in this business unit?
13	Grew up around Griffith more fruit and vegetable farming.	Yes	Yes, a million things - learnt more about sheep.
14	Outside have worked with fruit trees.	Pruning and picking	Yes, seeing vineyard start from scratch.
15	Stock and machinery work, sleeper cutting from red gum.	No	Yes, how to make cement posts.
CORTEX - COOMA >>			
16	In gaol and outside own business - tents and sleeping bags.	No	No
17	Outside - worked around machinery did mechanical repairs	Mechanical skills	Yes, to mend sewing machines learnt by trial and error.
SMORGON - EMU PLAINS >>			
18	Outside have driven a forklift.	Now have gained a ticket for forklift.	Yes, how to use a bale lift forklift, how to set machinery up and service machinery, understanding of computerised machinery
HARD ROCK BAKERY - RECEPTION & INDUCTION CENTRE >>			
19	Twenty five years ago for dad.	Yes	Yes, two bakery modules with TAFE
20	Worked at large bakery as a storeman and packer.	I had little pre-knowledge	Yes, how to make dough and anything to do with bread and fancy rolls.
BILLPRAU - RECEPTION & INDUCTION CENTRE >>			
21	Have been coming to gaol since I was 21 now I'm 52 am very accomplished at textiles	Yes	Yes, how to make different styles of t-shirt
22	Only in other gaols	Yes	Yes, understand different machines, overlocker, twin stitcher and hemmer
23	Only in gaol textiles at Lithgow	Yes	Yes, cutting and how to use improved machinery.
PANAMA DEVELOPMENTS - MULAWA >>			
24	At Mulawa	Yes	Know a lot about plants. What soil they take to what soil they don't. What plants can be in the sun. What plants don't and fertiliser.
25	Was released in May and went to work in a nursery for three days	Outside I only did planting in the ground	Yes, different types of plants and certain ways to plant plants so they will grow
CORRECTPRINT - MULAWA >>			

	Where have you done this work?	Does the work here allow you to practice skills you knew before?	Have you learnt new things since commencing work in this business unit?
26	At a Sydney Hospital - dicta-phone typist	Yes	Yes, quotes on computer

Corfurn (Training Centre): maintenance of all machinery; the setting up of machinery; ability to sharpen blades; understanding the procedures involved in the manufacture of furniture.

Cormet: grinding; welding; how to set up a jig; appropriate tools for jobs; the proper storage of paint. One inmate stated that he now knew how to cut rust out of cars.

Learning how to cooperate with others was also mentioned as a new thing which was learnt at Cormet.

Cortex: sewing on a machine; the operation of overlockers; maths (from storeman work); how to fold sheets; understanding of production process; identifying different types of material; setting machines; sewing different items; codes for items; learnt the 'Australian Standards' for flat work;

Hard Rock Bakery: how to make bread, pizza and all sorts confectionary, mixture required for hot cross buns; correct temperatures and time required to cook various items.

Panama Developments: the propagation of plants; understanding plants and what is needed to look after them; identifying plants and names of plants; procedure required in taking clippings from plants; stages of plant growth; type of soil needed by plants; type and level of fertiliser plants require; levels of sunlight needed by different plants; and "how to make plants grow".

Smorgon: fork lift driving; identifying different types of plastics.

Correctprint: binding magazines together; making book covers; using the printing machine; collating pages; stores clerk duties; operation of the master plate maker; computing and processing quotations using the computer.

(g) Workplace education

With regard to correctional education generally many inmates interviewed had, since the commencement of their sentence, completed courses which may be useful in employment after release. Some had also completed personal development courses such as stress management or conflict management which may assist them in maintaining employment. A small number of inmates claimed to have learnt how to read and write since commencing their sentence. Women inmates had during their sentence, completed typing courses and a range of computing courses particularly Pagemaker (a desk top publishing package). One female inmate had completed a lithographic course which, she believed, would enable her to work in the printing industry after release.

All education courses in the NSW Department of Corrective Services are accredited courses. To be accredited a course must be competency based (a person's ability to perform in the workplace is compared to an established standard).

At the time of interview ten inmates were participating in a course which was directly related to their present work. The actual range of courses conducted which link an inmate's correctional centre work to formal training is greater than those mentioned below. The full range of courses conducted

in each business unit included in this study are listed with a description of the work undertaken in Annex 2.

Inmates that were currently involved in a course related to their present employment nominated a number of ways this training contributed positively to their present work. These responses are listed below under the name of the relevant business unit.

Agricor: some inmates were undertaking a Horticulture Course in conjunction with their work in establishing the orchard and vineyard. They claimed this course gave them greater understanding and appreciation for their work. The successful completion of this course meets the entry criteria for admittance to the Horticulture Course at TAFE which can be pursued after release if an inmate wishes. Inmates also nominated Rural Welding, the Bush Fire Fighting Course and the Backhoe Certificate as useful in their present work.

Corfurn: inmates at the Industrial Training Centre had the following comments to say about the Joinery & Carpentry Course:

"In the shop only gained experience in operating saws now learn how to make things, and learn about joins, tools, and drawings."

"Learn right tools for right job."

Cortex: inmates stated that the Total Quality Management Course was useful in their present work. Inmates made the following comments:

"Allowed me to trace faults back much quicker to where they came from. Now appreciate why there is so much paper work."

"Better understanding of standards. Helps me understand what is required. Makes the operating manual clearer. What the customer is looking for with regard to quality."

Hard Rock Bakery: the Bakery Course was temporarily postponed at the time the researcher was visiting this business unit causing a great deal of disappointment amongst some inmates. One middle aged inmate claimed to have spent a large part of his adult life in and out of correctional centres and stated that the postponement of the course meant he had lost the only chance to be gainfully employed after release and thus rehabilitate himself.

One inmate stated that the Bakery Course was important to their work because it increased his understanding of his work and taught him to make products with pre-mix as well as the "old way".

Smorgon: an inmate nominated his gaining a forklift ticket as useful. This ticket he believed would be important to him post-release as well, "It has my home address on it. I'll be able to use it later".

(h) Factors inmates liked about work in correctional centres

To gain an understanding, of the view inmates had of their work inmates were asked questions about their current work and how they felt about working in the correctional centres generally.

Inmates were asked, "Why are you working in this business unit?".

The most common responses from male inmates were that they liked the particular type of work they were engaged in or they wished to learn the associated skills, or that the work was related to their trade or experience (17). Other common responses were that they were allocated to this work by the ASI or Manager Industry (7) or that their friend/s worked there (4). The four inmates in services said the type of work they were doing was what they wanted to do. Female

inmates responded that they liked the work (5) or that they wanted to learn new things (3).

Inmates were asked, "What if anything do you like about your present job?"

Some inmates nominated more than one factor they liked about their present job. The most common response from inmates was that they liked the work because it made time go faster or stopped the boredom (22). Other common responses were that they liked the work because of its nature, or because it was a new experience or because it was interesting (19), or they liked learning things (14). Responses to this question for each employment location included in the study are in Annex 1, Table 17. Some examples of responses from inmates are as follows:

"A new experience for me something different I like it. Warm in winter. Doing something I enjoy doing."

"Helps pass the day beats sitting around can have fun."

"Like the metal industry working with my hands using my brain."

"Kills time. Gets you out of the yard. Stops boredom. Gives you a goal - try to better yourself with quality and quantity."

"Learning different things every day - safety rules. Could now do things around my own house."

Inmates were also asked, "What if anything do you like about working in gaol generally?"

Fifty three per cent of all inmates (32) said they liked working in gaol because it helped to pass the time, 12 per cent (7) stated that it kept their minds occupied, and 11 per cent (6) stated that they liked the money. Four inmates said they couldn't think of anything

they liked.

Some examples are below:

"Keeps my mind off being in gaol. Takes things that weigh on you about outside away."

"Helps pass time, time goes quicker stops you thinking about the outside. Have realised that work is not so bad."

"Am glad there is work in gaol - fills the day."

"Time goes quicker. Gives people opportunity to learn new skills."

(i) Factors inmates disliked about work

To gain an understanding of inmates' feelings with regard to their work and factors which may be operating as disincentives inmates were asked questions in relation to their current work and work in gaol generally.

Inmates were asked, "Is there anything you dislike about your present job?"

Forty-three per cent of the 61 inmates (28) interviewed could not think of anything they did not like. Some inmates nominated more than one factor they did not like. Sixteen per cent of inmates stated dislike for the level of wages in their current job claiming it was too low. Three inmates disliked the dust and dirt associated with their work. Three inmates nominated the officers as something they did not like with two inmates in services expressing discomfort with the high standard expected from them by officers. Two inmates thought the hours were not long enough (both worked in Agricorn) as well as a variety of individual responses.

Inmates were also asked, "Is there anything you dislike about working in gaol generally?"

The majority of inmates (52% of the entire sample) stated that there was nothing they did not like about working in gaol. Some inmates nominated more than one factor they did not like. Again wages were the most common factor nominated as not liked with 23% of the entire sample nominating this. Additionally two inmates felt they worked too hard, two felt that work was sometimes monotonous and two thought the attitudes of officers could be better.

Examples of some responses to, "Is there anything you dislike about work in gaol generally?" are below:

"No, I reckon it is great but should be more variety - need different things for different people."

"No, I think work is a good idea."

"No, prefer to work than sit around. Work in gaol is relaxing. No difference from the outside except outside you can go to the pub."

"Some places tend to slave you a bit - conditions aren't up to scratch such as the pay, searches after work, attitude of overseers."

"No, if you don't work it's the hardest you will ever do gaol."

"Too many gaols want you to work in a job you don't like."

In answering the above two questions on what inmates disliked about their current work and work in gaol generally, wages were nominated as the most common factor disliked. Of the inmates that stated that they were dissatisfied with the level of wages a small number spoke very strongly labelling the wages as grossly unfair.

Some inmates claimed that they needed more money to maintain their standard of living in gaol particularly if they smoked. Some inmates also stated that they needed money to re-establish themselves in the

community after release. A female inmate claimed women inmates were disadvantaged compared to the men because they needed to spend more money on toiletry items.

Some examples of responses regarding wages are below.

"Seeing I'm here I may as well make the best of it. Money could be better."

"The wages but not for me - the others [inmates]."

"Money - if wages were better you wouldn't struggle so much."

"With private industry money could be better - it's a private industry so someone is making money - the bonus system could be better. Sometimes you feel like a slave but you must not mind it too much because I'm still here."

"It's disgusting to make people work for such low wages. If you haven't got people outside to send you clothing you'll freeze in here."

(j) Main benefit of current job

Inmates were asked, "What do you see as the main benefit, if any, of working here?".

The most common response to this question related to the opportunity inmates had to learn and gain experience (27) and that it kept them occupied, not bored or made time pass more swiftly (18). Five responded that the main benefit was money. Other benefits according to individual inmates included: that it was their usual work, or that they hoped it would help them gain parole, or they liked helping people, or they liked the short hours, or they liked learning to get along with others. The main benefits nominated by inmates in each work location are listed in Table 18.

Some examples of responses are as follows:

"I like working, helping people finish the jobs."

"Keeps my sanity."

"Chance to earn money to live in gaol."

"For parole and have learnt a lot."

"Practising skills and money. It's like a refresher course in MIG [Metal Inert Gas welding]."

"Learning to get along with others. Work as a team."

"Learning a new trade."

"Means a lot to me. Work is in my blood. I get bored at weekends sometimes."

"Keeps people active less chance of stepping on peoples toes."

(k) Helping time pass

Inmates in their responses to questions on what they liked about work and the benefits of their work nominated amongst other factors, that work made time pass more swiftly. To investigate this benefit further, inmates were asked two questions directly concerned with the passage of time.

Inmates were asked, "Is working in gaol a helpful way of passing the time?".

All inmates both male and female in the entire sample believed working in gaol was a helpful way of passing the time.

When asked, "Why?" working in gaol was a helpful way of passing the time, the most common responses were that it helped time to pass more quickly; keeps you occupied or avoids boredom. Inmates also claimed that work stops them from thinking about things that will upset them, such as their families or the length of their sentence which is left to serve. Other responses were that work reduces the likelihood of conflict with other inmates, or that work is important for their mental health or that they like to work.

Some responses regarding the reasons that working in gaol is a helpful way of passing the time are below:

"Concentrate on job rather than sitting outside worrying about your family and things like that". (Corfurn - Parklea)

"Time flies when you are working, breaks up the day." (Corfurn - Training Centre)

"Keeps your mind occupied, keeps you away from the politics with other crims, keeps you tired at night so you can crash." (Cormet)

"I find personally the days go a lot quicker if you're working up here, not thinking about why you came here and how long you have got to go." (Cortex)

"Because otherwise you would be sitting around doing nothing and caught in vicious rumours gossip and allegations." (Hard Rock Bakery)

"If you're not working you keep thinking about things and you can lose your mind." (Panama Developments)

"Yes, don't get bored, don't get into trouble - it doesn't feel as if I've been in here for 11 years." (Correctprint)

"Keeps you occupied healthy body, healthy mind." (Services)

"Nothing else you can do only watch so much television, sport or books." (Agricor)

(l) Inmates opinions regarding employment after release

Inmates were asked, "Will you be looking for work when you get out?".

Seventy nine per cent of the male inmates (35) claimed they would be looking for work after release. Another 6% stated that they already had arranged employment for after release. The small number (11) who would not be looking for work gave reasons such as they would be studying, or their age, or that they would be applying for the in-

valid pension or that they were unlikely to find work. Eight of the 11 female inmates said they would be looking for work after release. Two female inmates did not intend to look for work. One of these intended to look after children and the other planned to marry after release.

Inmates were asked, "Do you think working here will be of any help to you with employment after release?". Responses to this question are in Table 2.

Twenty four per cent of inmates (15) responded that their present employment would not be useful in their employment after release. Six stated that the reason for this was that their usual work is in a different industry, or that they have a job lined up from Industrial Training (2) (a two day a week community employment program) or that they do not learn enough (2). Individual responses also included having not worked when outside for a long time or, getting married after release, or that non-continuation of a course made it unlikely that they could locate work, or that they were going back to Sydney (this inmate was working in Agricor).

helpful with employment after release. Explanations for these responses are given in Table 3 below. Explanations for the 'Yes' responses are on the left hand side and explanations for the 'Maybe' responses are on the right hand side of Table 3.

Table 2: Number of inmates who consider that their present work would be helpful with employment after release

Response	Males		Female
	Business units	Services	Business units
Yes	20	2	8
Maybe	12	1	3
No	12	1	2
TOTAL	44	4	13

As shown in Table 2 above, 46 inmates (64%) of inmates responded 'Yes' or 'Maybe' when asked if their current work would be

Table 3: Responses of inmates to usefulness of present employment to employment after release (Yes and Maybe responses only)

INMATES THAT ANSWERED 'YES'	INMATES THAT ANSWERED 'MAYBE'
<p>CORFURN: Have met other inmates who know how well I work and will find work for me.</p> <p>Will give me more experience.</p> <p>A lot of things I missed out on which in here I have picked up on.</p> <p>Gives me the option of whether I want to go back to being a storeman.</p>	<p>You need credentials you need more than a statement saying you are a good worker.</p> <p>Want to go into advertising (clerk).</p> <p>If I learn more.</p> <p>I'm going back to Condobolin.⁵⁰</p>
<p>CORMET: Now I can weld properly no certificates but I could show them.</p> <p>My brother is manager of an engineering firm he'll find me a welding position.</p> <p>Makes you more self disciplined.</p>	<p>Too dirty and in Summer too hot.</p> <p>Depends where I look for work if I work in light fabrication perhaps.</p> <p>If it was available.</p>
<p>AGRICOR: Do not have to go away shearing now can stay home and do cattle work.</p> <p>Will go back to parents [farming] property in Fiji.</p> <p>If I get my own property can make my own [fence] posts.</p> <p>Keeps you motivated, the more you know the better it is.</p>	<p>I'll probably go back to selling farm machinery. My work here will help me when talking to the cockeys⁵¹. I will know more.</p>
<p>CORTEX: Gives different avenues to look into perhaps I could be a storeman on the outside.</p> <p>Experience can pick up a job at a factory.</p> <p>If I was going to do small things myself.</p>	<p>There are a few clothing factories near where I live.</p>
<p>SMORGON: It has been suggested by some managers in this industry that I put in an application for a job.</p> <p>If I wanted to do this sort of work.</p>	

INMATES THAT ANSWERED 'YES'	INMATES THAT ANSWERED 'MAYBE'
<p>HARD ROCK BAKERY: Will open a confectionary shop I know its a good business because my friend had a shop and now I know how to produce them.</p> <p>If I do more of my course because you would have to have a ticket.</p> <p>Would come in handy but I don't think things are done like this any more.</p>	
<p>BILLPRAU: I own a factory would now consider making t-shirts.</p>	
<p>PANAMA DEVELOPMENTS (NURSERY): I intend to use it if I can't get a job computing this provides another opportunity.</p> <p>Would have experience would not need to start at the bottom.</p> <p>Could help at a nursery.</p> <p>Could show what I could do.</p>	
<p>CORRECTPRINT: Hope to get a job in a printshop on work- release.</p> <p>Always a lot of jobs in the papers asking for printers.</p> <p>Only a housewife when I came in only experienced in car detailing now confident I could work in the printing industry.</p>	<p>If I could get a job like I'm doing now outside I could possibly enjoy it.</p>
<p>SERVICES: Have already shown results when I've been on Industrial Training 2 days a week and have told them how to set up a data base.</p> <p>Have acquired computing skills - thinking of going into business.</p>	<p>If a bloke wants to do it, the assistant in charge is a good cook.</p>

Post-release study

Stage 3 of the study investigated the post release employment experiences and rates of recidivism of a sample of inmates released from the NSW correctional system to the supervision of the NSW Probation Service. Data for this stage of the study was obtained from Probation Officers supervising the parolees. Analyses were conducted to test for any differences between those who had worked in the business units and services, those who participated in a community employment program and those who had not.

3.1 Methodology

For inclusion in the sample inmates needed to be listed in the NSW Department of Corrective Services computerised Offender Record System (ORS) as being released to parole during 1993 and early 1994. These parolees were then included or excluded from the sample on the basis of their correctional system employment location. The same business units were included as for stage 2 (see Annex 1, Table 19). Both parolees that had worked in the relevant business units and parolees that had worked in services (at the same correctional centres as the nominated business units) were included. Parolees that had worked in services were to be a comparison group against which the post release performance of industries could be measured. For inclusion in the sample parolees were required to have spent three months or more in their work location and their parole expiry date was to be after 30th March 1994. Information on the post release employment experience of this sample of parolees was obtained by mailing one page questionnaires to the officers responsible for their supervision within the NSW Probation Service. Information on recidivism was obtained from the

ORS. For more detailed information on the methodology for this stage please see Annex 3.

3.2 Results

A total of 288 parolees were released during 1993 and early 1994 and were included in Stage 3 of this study (the post release stage). One hundred and fifty six (54.2%) were released during 1993 and 132 (45.8%) were released during 1994.

All the parolees (288) were surveyed and 260 questionnaires were returned which contained information on post-release employment. Therefore, an examination of post-release employment could be conducted on 260 of the parolees (business units n=129, services n=131). This represents a high response rate (90%) which augurs well for the reliability of the study.

The entire post-release sample of 288 was used in the analysis of recidivism as this information was available on the ORS. For details of the post release sample of inmates' correctional centre work locations see Annex 1, Table 19.

(a) Description of sample

To fulfil the criteria for inclusion in the sample parolees were required to have worked in their correctional centre work location for three months or more. The time the parolees in the sample spent in their correctional centre work locations ranged from 3 months to 2 years 10 months with an average time of 8 months. The average length of time the parolees spent in the correctional centre work locations are listed below in Table 4.

Table 4: Average time spent in correctional centre employment location

Corrective Services employment location	Mean number of months	
	Entire sample n=288	Post-release employment sample n=260
Business units:		
Correctprint	6.7	4.8
Panama Developments	6.1	8.1
Smorgon PET Recycling	6.1	6.3
Corfurn	7.8	7.8
Hard Rock Bakery	5.3	5.3
Billprau Pty Ltd	5.3	5.3
Cornet	6.4	6.5
Cortex	11.8	12.6
Agricor	8.6	8.1
Mean time for Industries	7.9	8.5
Services:		
Cleaning	8.0	8.2
Kitchen	8.5	8.9
Garden	7.1	7
Maintenance	10.1	10.2
Laundry	4.9	4.9
Clerical	13.5	13.5
Mean time for Services	8.3	8.5

The age of inmates in the sample at the time of release ranged from 19 years to 79 years with an average age at release of 34 years. The average age for the business unit group (n=146) was 33.2 years whilst the average age of the Services group (n=142) was 35.7 years. Table 5 contains the percentages of parolees in each age group.

Table 5: Percentage of inmates in each age group at the time of release

	All n=288 %	Business units n=129 %	Services n=131 %	Post release employment sample n=260 %
18-24	15.3	20.2	11.5	15.8
25-29	23.3	26.4	17.6	21.9
30-39	39.9	34.9	45.0	40.0
40-49	12.8	9.3	17.6	13.5
50+	8.7	9.3	8.4	8.8

The median time parolees served within the correctional system for their last sentence ranged from five months to 15 years with a median of two years, three and half months.

Table 6 contains the categories of the most serious offences committed by parolees in the sample i.e., the offence for which they were given the longest sentence during their last episode of incarceration.

Table 6: Most serious offence of current sentence

	Parolees #	Parolees %
Homicide	10	3.5
Assault	28	9.7
Sexual	52	18.1
Robbery	43	14.9
Property	72	25.0
Drugs	52	18.1
Other (fraud, driving, order & other)	31	10.8
TOTAL	288	100%

A property offence was the most common of the most serious offences that had been committed by parolees in the sample fol-

lowed by the offence categories of sex, drugs, and robbery.

At the time of the data collection on parolees' employment experiences, the period of time that the parolees had been released from the correctional system ranged from one month to 19 months with a median time of 7.8 months. Table 7 contains the time periods that parolees had been released as at the time of data collection.

Table 7: Time period between the release date and date of the collection of data on employment

	Number #	Percentage %
< 3 months	9	3.5
3-6 months	74	28.5
6-12 months	130	50.0
> 12 months	40	15.4
Missing	7	2.7

(b) Employment since release

Post release employment information was available on 260 parolees in the sample. Probation officers supervising parolees in the sample completed a one page questionnaire regarding the parolees employment experience since release. The officers were asked, "Has the parolee had any paid employment since release?".

Of the parolees that had been released for more than 3 months at the time of data collection (n=251), 36% had commenced employment within the first three months of release. Of those that had been released for more than six months at the time of data collection (n=170), 49% had commenced employment within six months of release. Of those that had been released for more than 12 months at the time of data collection (n=40), 58% were employed within 12 months of their release date.

Parole officers were asked, "What date did the parolee first commence work?".

Information on the time taken to commence employment after release (i.e., the time difference between the release date and the first day of commencing work) was available for 132 of the 141 parolees that had worked since release. The median time taken for these parolees to commence work was 5 weeks. The groups took similar time to commence work with a median of 5.5 weeks for the business units group (n=68) and a median of 4.0 weeks for the Services group (n=64) a non-significant difference between the groups at the .05 level.

An analysis was undertaken to determine if any variables could be identified as influencing employment outcome. The length of time since release varied between parolees and this inequality of time meant that parolees had differing lengths of time in which to locate employment. A valid analysis of factors influencing employment outcome needed to take this time factor into account. To accommodate inequality in time a statistical technique referred to as survival analysis was employed. Survival analysis allows for variations in time periods to be taken into account when estimating the contribution an independent variable makes to a dependent variable (the outcome variable). Survival analysis was conducted using cox regression (see SPSS for Windows Advanced Statistics Release 6.0). The variables included in the analysis were correctional centre employment location (industries & services), time in that employment location, age at time of release, the existence of a previous sentence, sentence length and type of offence.

There was no difference between the business units and services groups in time taken to find work. Only two variables, offence type and age, had a significant effect on

time taken to commence work after release. Parolees that had as their most serious offence a conviction in the homicide category were significantly quicker at commencing work after release than the rest of the sample. However, parolees that had as their most serious offence a property offence took significantly longer to locate work than the rest of the sample. When females (n=9) were excluded from the analysis the homicide category were not significantly quicker at commencing work than the rest of the sample. However, those parolees that had as their most serious offence a property offence still took significantly longer (at the .01 level) to commence work when the females were excluded from the analysis.

There was a trend for older parolees to be slower to commence employment than the younger ones. However, when parolees over 60 years were excluded from the analysis there was no significant result with regard to age.

(c) Retaining employment after release

There were 141 parolees in this study who had commenced employment by the time of data collection. The supervising officers were asked, "How long was the first episode of employment?". There were 133 responses to this question. Many parolees were still in their first employment at the time of data collection. Table 8 contains the numbers of parolees that were released for more than three months and had maintained employment for longer than three months. Of the 132 parolees that had worked since release and had been released for more than three months 50% had kept their job for longer than three months. At the time of writing some had retained their first employment for more than a year.

Table 8: Percentage of parolees employed for three months or longer by time since release

Time since release	# of parolees released	# of parolees employed	Parolees employed %
> 3 months	244	66	27.0
> 6 months	170	52	30.6
>12 months	40	13	32.5

To investigate the influence variables (correctional centre employment location {business units & services}, time in that employment location, age, existence of a previous sentence, sentence length, and type of offence) may have had on length of first employment a cox regression analysis was conducted. There was no difference between the business units and services groups. Parolees with a previous sentence were mildly (but significant at the .05 level) more likely to work for a shorter period in their first employment than those in the sample that did not have a previous sentence.

When the analysis was conducted excluding females, parolees that had a previous sentence were still more likely to spend a shorter time in their first employment than the other parolees. There was a trend for those parolees that had served a longer sentence to continue in their first employment for a longer period than the rest of the sample.

(d) Community Employment

Of the 260 parolees included in the post release employment analysis, fifty three (21% of the sample) had spent some time in a community employment (work release) program during their last sentence at either Silverwater Correctional Centre, Parklea Correctional Centre or Norma Parker Correctional Centre, or had been allowed to attend work as part the Industrial Training program two days a week from the Industrial Training Centre. The sample was

divided into two groups: those that had spent some time in a community employment program (work release group) and those that had not spent time on a community employment program (non-work release group). The percentage in these two groups and the correctional centre where they participated in a Community Employment Program are in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Parolees in work release groups

Work release centre	Number	%
Work release group:		
Silverwater	40	15
Parklea	2	1
Training Centre	7	3
Norma Parker	4	2
Sub total	53	21
Non- work release group	207	79
TOTAL	260	100%

The average age of the work release group was 37.6 years and the average age of the non-work release group was 32 years. When a t-test was conducted this was a significant difference in age at .05 level.

Sixty-six per cent of parolees (35) that had commenced a work release program were still on that program at the completion of their sentence. The time period spent on a work release program by the work release group ranged from one week to 22 months with a median period of 7 months. When those parolees that had been on work release programs but were not on that program at the time of release were excluded, the remaining work releasees had spent a median period of 11 months in a work release program.

Both inmates that worked in the business units and inmates that worked in services are eligible to apply for the Community Employment program. The numbers of

parolees in the work release group and the non-work release group that had worked in the business units or in services are in Table 10.

Table 10: Correctional centre work locations of work release groups

	Business units n=129	Services n=131	Total
Work release group	21	32	53
Non work release group	108	99	207
Total	129	131	260

(e) Employment since release - work release groups

Of the 141 parolees in the sample who had worked since release, information on time taken to commence employment was available for 132. The work release group (n=38) took a median time of 1.5 weeks to find work whereas the non-work release group (n=94) took a median time of 6 weeks to commence work. A t-test showed a significant difference between the groups in time taken to find work at the .05 level. However, some of this difference occurs because a number of parolees in the work release group continued with their work release employment after release and therefore were employed immediately on release.

Of the 38 parolees in the work release group that had commenced employment after release 16 appear to have continued with their work release employment as there was no difference between their release date and date of commencing work. When those parolees that had continued with their work release employment were excluded from the analysis the remaining 22 parolees in the work release group took a median time of 5.5 weeks to commence work.

To test the effect of the work release variable and other variables, (time in correctional centre employment location, age, existence of a previous sentence, sentence length, and type of offence), had on time taken to commence work after release, a cox regression analysis was conducted.

There were a number of significant effects from this analysis. The work release group were significantly quicker at commencing work (at the .01 level) than the non-work release group. Parolees that had as their most serious offence a property offence were still significantly slower in commencing work than the rest of the sample when work release was taken into account. However, the parolees that had as their most serious offence an offence in the homicide category were not significantly quicker, than the others in the sample, at commencing work once work release was included in the analysis.

There was still a trend for older parolees to commence work significantly more slowly than younger parolees once work release was taken into account. This was still the case when those parolees over sixty years of age were excluded from the analysis.

The above results were the same when females were excluded from the analysis.

(f) Maintaining employment after release - work release groups

Supervising officers were asked, "How long was the first episode of employment?". To investigate the influence work release and other variables (age, time in correctional centre employment location, existence of a previous sentence, sentence length, type of offence) had on the length of first employment a cox regression analysis was conducted.

There was no significant difference between the work-release group and the non-work release group in length of time in first employment after release. There was, however, a trend for older parolees to spend significantly longer periods in their first employment than younger parolees when work release was taken into account (at the .05 level). Parolees that had a previous sentence spent less time in their first employment than the others that did not have a previous sentence.

When females were excluded from the analysis parolees in the work release group were more likely (at the .05 level) to work longer in their first employment. A previous sentence also continued to have a mildly significant effect on time in first employment.

(g) Unemployment since release

Of the parolees that had been released for more than three months at the time of data collection (n=251), 64% had not spent any time in paid employment at three months after release. Of the parolees that had been released for more than six months (n=170), 51% had still not worked at six months after release. Of the parolees that had been released for more than 12 months (n=40), 43.5% had not commenced work at 12 months after release.

Supervising officers were asked, "What was the total amount of time (in calendar months) that the parolee was unemployed since release?".

The number of months unemployed were divided by the number of months that parolees had been released to give a percentage of time unemployed since release.

This information was available on 230 parolees. The parolees had spent a mean of

59% of their time unemployed (or not working) since release. The business units group had spent a mean of 60% of their time unemployed since release whilst the services group had spent a mean of 59% of their time unemployed (these results were the same when females were excluded from the analysis).

The work release group had spent a mean of 34% of their time since release unemployed whilst the non-work release group had spent a mean of 67% of their time since release unemployed. When females were excluded from the analysis the mean percentage time of unemployment changed to 36% for the work release group and 66% for the non-work release group. When a t-test was conducted on these percentages (both including and excluding females) the work release group had significantly less time unemployed since release at the .01 level than the non-work release group.

(h) Reasons for unemployment

Probation officers were asked, "If the parolee has not obtained work since release or experienced a long period of unemployment do you have any suggestions as to why this has occurred?".

Some supervising officers provided more than one explanation regarding the unemployment of a parolee under their supervision. Responses suggested generally that parolees were either not looking for work, or had problems obtaining work because of personal factors or factors in the local or national economy which limited the parolees chances of locating work.

With regard to parolees that were not looking for work a large number, according to supervising officers, lacked motivation (most common response with 31 responses), had health problems (27), or because they

were studying (5), or their age (6).

Examples of responses given by supervising officers with regard to the lack of motivation are as follows:

"Wants to re-establish himself with his family - prefers to stay at home - financially secure."

"He has no intention of obtaining employment for at least two years after his release. He has the attitude that he now wants to be a burden on society."

"(a) his wife is working (b) he had been in gaol for many years (c) he devotes a lot of his personal time to training youngsters in boxing."

Responses with regard to health referred to psychiatric conditions such as schizophrenia and stress and physical complaints (e.g., bad back, heart condition, cancer).

According to supervising officers problems in some of the parolees' personal lives intruded on their ability to locate work. These problems included difficulties with accommodation and disputes with partners (10) or problems with alcohol and drugs (11).

Some parolees, according to supervising officers, found difficulty obtaining employment as a consequence of limited work and social skills (21), lack of opportunities for employment (23) or difficulties with transport (5).

Responses with regard to the lack of opportunities for employment, referred to the limited employment opportunities in the area in which the parolee lived, or lack of available work in their trade or the general economic conditions regarding employment. Examples of some of these responses are below.

"Some initial inertia on the part of but handicapped by lack of skills."

"Have you heard of the recession?"

"High rate of unemployment in local area (Wollongong), some personal and family illness. However, has made conscientious efforts to gain employment."

"There is very little work available in the area (Tumut) except casual seasonal work."

"Client appears motivated but very little work available in the Goulburn area."

"The competition for work in this area is very high, client is of low intelligence and his offence does not help."

The parolee's criminal record was nominated by eight of the supervising officers as a reason for unemployment. A couple of supervising officers referred to the problems the parolee's criminal record created when dealing with the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES):

"The parolee feels it is because he had to agree to CES's policy to notify prospective employers of his criminal record."

"Client claims discrimination from the CES - discussing his criminal record in front of other clients/giving criminal details to prospective employers, then giving out his phone number."

(i) Type of work after release from correctional system

Supervising officers were asked, "What type of work has the parolee been predominantly engaged in since release?".

Parolees employed since release (n=141) were described by supervising officers as mainly employed in labouring (22), working in the building industry (mostly as builders labourers) (15), unskilled and semi skilled factory work (18), furniture removalists (5), office work mainly as clerks (5), stable hands (4), farming (4), food preparation in the hospitality industry (4) truck drivers (3), mechanics (3) and painters (3).

3B. Recidivism

The minimisation of recidivism is one of the goals of many correctional programs. In this study recidivism is defined as the percentage of offenders who since release have received a conviction which leads to another period of full-time custody in New South Wales within the time periods specified (see Tables 11 and 12). Information on recidivism was taken from the ORS and was available for the entire sample in the study (n=288) parolees. The data on recidivism was collected on 8th May 1995 and at this time all the parolees in the sample had been released for six months or more. The data on recidivism was collected at a date that was well after the date on which employment information was collected, therefore the time periods since release in the analyses of recidivism are longer than the time periods in the analyses of employment outcomes.

Table 11 contains the time period since release and the percentage in employment centre work locations that had been convicted of a new offence within these time periods.

Table 11: Correctional centre employment location and percentage recidivated

Months since release >>	>6 months (n=288)	>12 months (n=236)	>18 months (n=99)
Recidivated within >>	6 months %	12 months %	18 months %
Business units	3	11	19
Services	8	16	19
Total	6	14	19

Table 11 shows that the parolees in the business units and services groups that had been released longer than 18 months (n=99) recidivated at the same rate within the 18 months period.

To investigate the influence variables may have had on recidivism a cox regression analysis was conducted. The variables included in the analysis were correctional centre employment location (business units and services), time in that location, age, existence of a previous sentence, sentence length and type of offence.

There were highly significant results with regard to age and the existence of a previous sentence. Older parolees recidivated significantly less quickly over time than younger parolees (at the .01 level). Parolees with a previous sentence were much more likely to recidivate in the time period covered at the .01 level. These results remained the same when females (n=17) were excluded from the analysis.

These results remained the same when employment since release and length of employment were included in the analysis.

Table 12 contains the time period since release and the percentage in the work-release groups that had recidivated within these time periods.

Table 12: Work release groups and percentage recidivated

Months since release ▶▶	>6 months (n=288)	>12 months (n=236)	>18 months (n=99)
Recidivated within ▶▶	6 months %	12 months %	18 months %
Work release	2	2	0
Non-work release	6	16	24
Total	6	14	19

Table 12 shows that parolees in the work release group had a much lower rate of recidivism for the time periods than parolees in the non-work release group.

When the cox regression analysis was conducted with the work release variable and other variables, (time in correctional centre employment location, age, existence of a previous sentence, sentence length, type of offence) the non-work release group were significantly more likely to recidivate than the work release group (at the .05 level). Those parolees with a previous sentence were still highly significantly more likely to recidivate when the work release variable was taken into account at the .01 level. There was still a highly significant trend for older parolees to recidivate more slowly than younger parolees when work release was taken into account at the .05 level. These results were the same when females were excluded. When a cox regression was conducted with the same variables but including employment status since release (a period of employment or no period of employment) and the length of first employment since release the above results remained the same.

3C. Interviews with parolees

This section of the study sought to gain qualitative information by way of personal interviews with some parolees in the post-release sample.

3C.1 Methodology

From the sample of the 260 parolees for which information on post-release employment was available those that had worked in business units for the longest periods were selected for interview. Five parolees were selected from 7 of the business units. Only one parolee from the Hard Rock Bakery, three parolees from both Correctprint and Panama Developments were included as these were the only parolees from these business units reporting to the Probation Service.

In November 1994 a letter was sent to the supervising officers at the Probation Service requesting interviews with the parolees. In those cases where there was no response after six weeks a follow up letter was sent. In those cases where there was no response within another six weeks the supervising officers were contacted by phone. In January 1995 it was clear that some of the selected parolees would not be available for interview because they had completed their parole period, or that they had declined the request for an interview.

In January another 23 parolees were selected for interview and the same procedure followed. These persistent attempts to interview a larger number of parolees only yielded modest results.

Before the interviews commenced the researcher described to the parolees the purpose and the methodology of the study. The researcher also explained to the parolees that their responses would be completely confidential, that they were under no obligation to be involved in the study and they could withdraw from the interview at any time. The parolees were then asked if they wanted to participate in the interview. All the parolees (14) agreed to proceed with the interview. Utilising a questionnaire eleven interviews were conducted over the telephone, whilst the other three parolees were interviewed either in a coffee shop, at a Probation Service office or in their own home.

Only a small number of parolees were able to be interviewed and their involvement relied on their parole period not being terminated, their supervising officer passing on the request for the interview and the parolees willingness to be involved which could be influenced by a range of factors. The parolees interviewed are unlikely to be a representative sample of the parolees that

had worked in the business units and the responses should not be viewed as a measure of the success or lack of success of any business unit. The informative value of the post release interviews lies in the description they provide of the possible outcomes of working in a business unit.

3C.2 Results

Fourteen parolees were interviewed 12 males and two females. Table 13 contains information on the 14 offenders interviewed.

(a) Looking for work

Parolees were asked , "What did you do to try and find work?".

Most parolees used a combination of methods when trying to find work. The most common method nominated by parolees was the use of informal networks i.e., by word of mouth from family, friends and neighbours and in one case a landlord. This also appeared to be the most successful. Parolees also used the CES and newspapers:

"I tried everything so desperate, newspapers, CES, Leader."⁵²

Two parolees travelled from factory to factory in industrial areas until they were successful in locating work.

Two parolees were successful in establishing employment before their release from the Correctional system. A female parolee had found work through the Work Release Program at Norma Parker after contacting a company she knew in the printing industry and continued with this same employer after release. A male parolee before the completion of his sentence, had written to companies listed in the Yellow Pages which were involved in the production of wooden furniture. This parolee was successful in finding

Table 13: Description of post-release interview sample

	Correctional Centre	Business Unit	Number of months in business unit	Time since release at date of interview	Employed since release
1	Mannus	Agricor	10	6 months	yes
2			13	1 yr 1 month	yes
3			10	9 months	yes
4			11	1 yr 3 months	yes
5	Parklea	Corfurn	10	1 yr 4 months	yes
6			10	1 yr 7 months	yes
7			10	1 yr	yes
8	Industrial Training Centre	Corfurn	12	1 yr 5 months	yes
9			11	9 months	no
10	Cooma	Cortex	22	1 yr	no
11			16	1 yr 4 months	yes
12	Emu Plains	Smorgon	4	1 yr	yes
13	Mulawa	Correctprint	6	1 yr 2 months	yes
14			4	10 months	no

a company that was willing to hire him at the expiration of his sentence.

(b) Obstacles in the way of finding work

Parolees were asked, "Were there any obstacles in the way of your finding work"?.

Five parolees stated that there were no obstacles in the way of their finding work. Eight parolees claimed there were obstacles. The most common obstacle nominated by parolees was their criminal record.

Some examples of these responses are below:

"Don't believe I would get a job off anyone if I say I have been in gaol for 4 years."

"Yes, difficult if you are honest - if you can hide it easier. I was having trouble because of being too honest and I'd never hear anything. I lied to get

my current job but have now told the boss."

"Best not to let them know about your record when applying for jobs. Best to let them see you are a good worker before you let them know about your record."

Other obstacles mentioned were age (both parolees that nominated this as an obstacle were over 50 years old), and the lack of transport and trade certificates.

Examples of these responses:

"Age, friends businesses not doing well, I've never successfully been a collar and tie man."

"Would have been easier if I had been 20 years younger, no trade certificate."

(c) Using skills in employment

Parolees were asked, "Did you in any of

these jobs since release use skills that you had used in gaol?". A description of the responses to this question are below under the name of the business unit.

Agricor

Three of the four parolees interviewed who had worked in Agricor during their sentence, had in their paid employment since release, utilised skills or knowledge that they claimed had largely been gained by working for Agricor during their sentence. These included shearing sheep, stock work, lamb marking, hay-carting, fencing, drafting sheep and mustering cattle.

At the time of the interview two parolees were employed on farming properties. One was working full-time on a property and had moved his family into a house on the property. This parolee claims to have had limited knowledge of farming procedures before his work at Agricor. The other parolee had, initially after release, found employment in a factory as a welder producing truck trailers. He obtained, this work, he claimed, as a result of the experience he gained whilst working at Bathurst Correctional Centre and the completion of a one year metal fabrication course during his sentence. However, this parolee did not enjoy working in the factory after release describing the experience as, "like going back to gaol - after four years in gaol it was too soon - too close to being inside." After quitting work in the factory this parolee was able, to gain casual work as a stockman. He claimed this was only possible as a consequence of the experience he gained in Agricor.

A third parolee that was not working on a farm stated that working in Agricor gave him a chance to gain his fork lift ticket so that now in his employment he could "drive legally".

One parolee had not utilised skills he used in Agricor since release. This parolee was employed at the time of the interview, in the painting and decorating industry. He stated that his painting ability had been developed during his sentence whilst working in services at Mannus Correctional Centre and Goulburn Correctional Centre. He referred to the instruction he received during his sentence from other inmates, "a couple of old fellows" which resulted in his technique becoming a "lot faster and neater".

Corfurn

Three of the five parolees interviewed that had worked in Corfurn had utilised skills which were acquired in Corfurn in their paid employment since release. One parolee who claimed to have known nothing about working with wood before coming to gaol was able to find work in a cabinet shop after release. This parolee whilst working for Corfurn had also undertaken a wood machinist course completing 18 months. According to this parolee his work in Corfurn gave him the ability to read plans, know how to cut wood and how "to put it all together".

An Aboriginal parolee, who since release had obtained casual work teaching Kooris to paint, was as a consequence of what he had learnt in Corfurn, able to make timber picture frames for the paintings he and his students produced.

A parolee who had worked as a clerk in the office at Corfurn in the Training Centre claimed that working there helped him to feel comfortable with computers. He had no experience with computers previously. After a long period of unemployment this parolee participated in a desk top publishing course organised by the CES and this eventually lead to casual employment.

Two parolees interviewed had not utilised skills they had used in Corfum in paid employment since release. One parolee had not had any paid employment since release preferring to paint and write music. The other parolee had applied for positions in cabinet-making but was unsuccessful despite the willingness of overseers in Corfum to provide verbal references. This parolee attributed his lack of success in finding work in the furniture manufacturing industry to the prejudice he encountered as a former offender. He did however, later gain work cleaning and estapoling floors. He attributed his success at gaining this type of work to the experience he gained whilst employed in services during his sentence as he had never worked at this type of work previously. Despite having no documentation of his ability in this area, the parolee was able to obtain his current position through demonstrating his ability.

Cortex

Two parolees were interviewed that had worked in Cortex during their sentence. Neither of the two inmates had used the skills they had used in Cortex in paid employment after release. Nevertheless, one parolee who had worked as a storeman before his conviction claimed that the storeman's work he engaged in at Cortex allowed him to keep in practice. At the time of interview this parolee claimed not to be ready for employment as he hadn't "settled" since his release.

The second parolee had obtained employment since release as a boiler maker after being given a months trial and at the time of the interview had been in this position for a year. This parolee stated that he had some welding experience before his sentence but had learnt MIG (Metal Inert Gas) welding whilst working at Kirkconnell Correctional Centre. His work at this centre, he claimed,

made an important contribution to his current work by "polishing up" his welding and enabling him to identify symbols on drawings (plans), the meaning of which were unknown to him previously.

Smorgon

One parolee was interviewed and he had not, since release, engaged in employment which was similar to his work at Smorgon. Now working in his own successful landscaping business, this parolee had spent a period of time, whilst at Emu Plains Correctional Centre, working in services as a gardener and this, he stated, gave him the opportunity to keep in practice with his horticulture pursuits during his sentence.

Despite undertaking post release work of a different nature than his work in Smorgon this parolee stated that the experience he gained with Smorgon had still made a positive contribution to his current work. Smorgon, he suggested, gave him the chance to learn about working with people, a "trade" and the importance of safety procedures. The parolee stated that the emphasis on safety procedures at Smorgon made him realise "safety needs to be addressed before anything else" and he had incorporated this practise into his current business.

Correctprint

Two (female) parolees were interviewed. One woman had not worked since release because of health problems the other was working in an area directly related to her work in Correctprint. The employed parolee had been very young with little work experience at the commencement of her sentence. She attributes her current success in employment after her release from a long sentence entirely to the experience she gained in Correctprint.

During her sentence this parolee had worked in Correctprint for two years. Some of this time was spent in the production area as a "floor supervisor" which involved responsibilities for the store-room, the allocation of work to other inmates and quality control. Later the parolee was employed in administrative work at Correctprint as an office clerk with duties that required writing quotations for printing work, the writing of various reports for CSI head office and the keeping of stock cards. This parolee joined the work release program at Norma Parker Correctional Centre approximately one year before her release. Whilst on this work release program she obtained work in a printing brokerage where she was given responsibilities for estimating and invoicing. After release she continued with this same employer.

This parolee stated that working in Correctprint assisted her in her current work because it provided her with an understanding of the printing process, the terminology used in the printing industry and basic computing skills. Although currently working in administrative work in the printing industry (utilising skills acquired in Correctprint's office), the parolee stated that the experience she gained in the production side of printing at Correctprint currently assists her in assessing quotations for printing jobs as she is aware of factors which effect quality.

(d) Using skills in recreation time

As well as assisting in employment, skills can also be utilised in an individual's spare time to gain personal satisfaction and/or improve their standard of living. Parolees were asked, "Did working in gaol teach you skills that you could use in your spare time if you wanted?".

Agricor

Three of the four parolees that had worked in Agricor stated that they had learnt skills that they could use in their spare time. One parolee stated that he had learnt about the erection of fences, pasture improvement and the proper feeding of animals and was therefore able to help his brother who had only recently purchased a farming property. This parolee had also given advice on crutching and shearing to "mates" that were new to farming.

Another parolee had been involved in the erection of some sheds whilst working for Agricor. This parolee was, since release, able to assist friends in the laying of concrete slabs. A third parolee said that as a result of what he had learnt whilst working for Agricor he would later grow some vegetables.

Corfurn

The five parolees interviewed all stated that they had learnt skills whilst working in Corfurn that could be useful in their spare time.

One parolee had made coffee tables and intended later to make a china cabinet and guitar and to french polish his own furniture. This inmate stated, "If I want to make anything I can. I don't regret my time at Parklea I used it to my advantage."

Another parolee had made a cabinet for his sister repaired old ones and intended to do more carpentry work when he acquires his own house. A third parolee had restored furniture such as a wardrobe and set of drawers and had constructed a lattice screen for his veranda. A fourth parolee had not yet put his new skills to use in his spare time, but intended to make a table and cupboards in the future. The fifth parolee (the

parolee that had worked in clerical work at Corfurn) had since release, utilised his word processing ability (acquired whilst working in Corfurn) to write an article which was published in a magazine.

Cortex

One of the two parolees interviewed claimed that he had learnt sewing skills whilst in Cortex which he could use in his spare time. For example:

"If I buy trousers and they don't fit I make them fit."

Smorgon

Only one parolee interviewed had worked in Smorgon during his sentence and this parolee responded that he did not think he had learnt skills whilst in Smorgon which would be useful in his spare time.

Correctprint

Both of the female parolees interviewed stated that they did not think they had learnt anything in Correctprint they could use in their spare time. However, one parolee stated that her work in the Nursery (Panama Developments) had taught her how to pot plants although she had not as yet applied her self to such a task.

(e) Legitimate versus illegitimate work

Many offences committed by offenders are a means chosen by them to generate an income. For some offenders crime becomes an alternative to legitimate employment. Parolees interviewed were asked, "Why do you think that in the past you chose illegal means to make money instead of working in a straight job?". Responses were:

"I enjoyed being a thief, the hours I could work, could work by myself, tax free money, drugs."

"I was stealing to get additional money for drinking I'm not a career criminal."

"To make money. My business was struggling and it seemed like an easy way out. I learnt the easy way was not always the best way and you can't trust people."

A parolee stated that his criminal behaviour was as a consequence of:

"Lack of self confidence, lack of self esteem - I have no skills, no good looking for a job - I'd only get low pay."

This parolee was asked if anything could have been done to deter him from crime. He claimed that drug and alcohol counselling had been of benefit to him during his sentence, that it had helped him sort out his emotions about past unhappy experiences and assisted him in the setting of goals for the future.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to obtain information which would provide an understanding of CSI's contribution towards its objectives relating to inmate development. These objectives include: reducing inmate idleness and contributing to more effective correctional centre management; the learning of new technical and general employment skills; the enhancement of post-release employment and the learning of new skills and attitudes in order to reduce recidivism.

(a) Literature search

A literature search was conducted and this has been discussed earlier in the report.

(b) Inmate interviews

In stage two of the study inmates were interviewed to investigate:

- (i) the type of work undertaken by inmates (see Annex 2), and
- (ii) the benefits, if any, CSI has for inmates during their period of incarceration. This question is discussed below.

Information gained from interviews conducted with inmates working in correctional centres suggests that there is a high level of satisfaction by inmates towards their employment in correctional centres. Generally inmates believed their work provided them with the opportunity to practice and learn skills. Given the opportunity to nominate factors they liked about their work and the main benefit of their work, the most common responses from inmates referred to the opportunity to learn skills and acquire knowledge, or to make time pass more swiftly and alleviate boredom.

All inmates stated that working in correctional centres was a helpful way of passing the time. When asked to explain why working was a helpful way of passing the time many inmates gave responses which suggested that working helped them to deal with the stress associated with their confinement by: making time appear to pass more quickly; alleviating boredom; diverted them from concentrating on matters which would give rise to negative emotions and deflected possible conflict between themselves and other inmates.

When given the opportunity to state factors that they did not like about their work or work in correctional centres generally the most common factor nominated by inmates (16% & 23% respectively) was the level of wages. The level of wages paid to inmates is low compared to levels in the general community. This difference would be less if the cost of accommodation and food provided to inmates was factored in. Also CSI operates under considerable disadvantage with regard to the intensive supervision and training required by the inmate labour force; the high turnover of inmate labour and the constraints of operating enterprises in a security environment.⁵³ CSI currently operates at a cost to the Department reflecting the cost of its community service commitments. If CSI performs at a level that allows for greater affordability an increase in inmate wages in real terms may impact beneficially on inmate productivity and self esteem as well as making it possible for inmates to have greater financial reserves on release.

Most inmates believed that their current work will assist them in finding employment after release. This expectation may be realistic for some inmates but not for others.

According to overseers in the business units, most inmates do not stay in their employment for the length of time required to acquire the skills necessary to work in comparative industries in the general community. However, a sense of greater competency may give inmates enhanced confidence in persevering with job seeking after release. The post release interviews with parolees revealed that parolees can utilise their correctional centre experience in their post release employment in ways which may not be anticipated (eg., the aboriginal art teacher who was able to make picture frames for his own and his students paintings as a consequence of his experience in making timber furniture whilst in Corfurn).

The inmates in this study had little knowledge of the work undertaken in the business units before commencing work in those units. It would appear to be advantageous if information was available to inmates on the nature of work undertaken in the various business units, the vocational training provided and possible usefulness of this experience post-release.

In interpreting the results of this section of the study it needs to be kept in mind that the sample of inmates interviewed in correctional centres comprised only a small portion of the inmates in each of the business units included in the study and therefore the information presented may not be definitive. In addition, there may be inmates that disliked the work in the business units and applied to the ASI to be moved to other areas of employment and the opinions of these inmates were not sought.

Interviews with inmates reflected very positively on employment in CSI business units. This study along with other studies found evidence that employment in correctional centres contributes to the wellbeing of inmates and the orderly operation of correc-

tional centres.

(c) Post-release employment

Stage 3 of the study investigated the post release employment of parolees in order to answer the following questions: the number of offenders employed since release; the time taken by offenders to commence employment; the success of offenders in maintaining employment and to test for any differences between the groups (business units & services and work release & non-work release) on the outcomes to these questions.

A one page questionnaire was mailed to supervising officers in the Probation Service seeking employment information on parolees. A high response rate (90%) was achieved. Therefore errors in results due to non-response are minimal, portending well for the reliability of the study.

Information on employment was available for 260 parolees. Thirty six per cent of the parolees in the sample had commenced employment within three months of release. At 12 months after release the percentage that had commenced employment had increased to 58 per cent. In a previous study (McHutchison 1991), which investigated the employment of parolees released from the NSW Department of Corrective Services, 72 per cent of parolees were found to have commenced employment after release (data was collected at an average of 11 months after release). The difference in results between the two studies is likely the consequence of the different time periods in which the studies were undertaken reflecting different stages in the economic cycle. The data for the previous study was collected for parolees who had been released during 1988 and 1989 before the recession had commenced. The data for this present study was collected in 1994 when the economy was

still emerging from the recession.

The number of parolees in the post release sample found to be not working is much higher than the unemployment rate for the population in the general community. Some of this is a result of parolees not endeavouring to locate work (this is discussed later).

An analysis was undertaken to identify variables which may influence employment outcome. When the business units and services groups were compared there was no significant difference between the groups in time taken to find work after release. In McHutchison (1991) there was a difference between these groups on this measure.

McHutchison (1991) found parolees that had worked in the business units for longer than six months were more likely to have worked since release and were quicker at commencing work than parolees who had worked in services for longer than six months.

An explanation for some of this difference between the two studies is that since the time of the previous study a policy has been instituted within NSW correctional centres which aims to make service positions more vocationally relevant. Each service industry work position is now covered by a formal job description against which an inmate's work performance can be measured. Workplace education encompassing employability and technical skills training is now applicable to service positions as well.⁵⁴

In this present study the work release group was compared with the non-work release group on time taken to commence employment after release. The work release group was significantly more successful at finding work than the non-work release group. At least some of this swiftness in commencing work by the work release group can be

attributed to the work releasees continuing with the same employer after release.

Parolees whose most serious offence was an offence in the property category were significantly slower at commencing work than the other parolees. This group may have been experiencing greater problems finding work or were less motivated to find work than the parolees in the other offence categories.

There is some indication that parolees with an offence in the homicide category were quicker at finding work than parolees in the other offence categories. This finding was not sustained when the work release variable was included in the analysis reflecting the likelihood that the success of parolees in the homicide category was due to their participation in a work release program.

Older parolees that were not on a work release program were slower at finding work than younger parolees that had not participated on a work release program. It may be more difficult (despite their determination) for older offenders without a stable work history to make their way back into the workforce than younger offenders. Over the past decade there has also been a general movement by employers in the labour market towards a preference for younger employees. Discrimination based on age would likely be acute in those types of employment that require strength and endurance such as labouring and semi-skilled work which is the usual employment sought by offenders.

Parolees did not appear very successful at retaining their first job. Only fifty per cent of parolees that had worked since release continued in their first employment for more than three months. It is likely that many parolees who did not continue with their first employment had been employed on a casual basis. In Australia in recent years

there has been a growth in the number of casual and part-time positions compared to permanent full-time positions⁵⁵. Thus, the length of time a parolee spent in their first job may not be a reflection of the parolees' ability to retain their employment, but a reflection of the present nature of the Australian labour market.

There was some evidence that parolees with a previous sentence were less likely to stay with their first employment than other parolees. These parolees may be finding it difficult to gain permanent work as a result of criminal history, their intermittent work history or they may not be persevering with legitimate employment because of the attraction of criminal activities.

There was some evidence too that older parolees and parolees that had served longer sentences were more likely to continue in their first employment.

(d) Unemployment

There was no significant difference between the business unit group and the services group in the percentage of time they had spent unemployed since release. There was a significant difference in percentage of time unemployed between the work release groups. The parolees that had participated in a Community Employment Program had spent significantly less time in unemployment since release.

A large number of parolees had been unemployed since release. It appears that about half this unemployment can be attributed to the parolees not seeking work. Probation officers nominated 58 parolees (22% of sample) as not attempting to locate work because they lacked motivation, or had health problems. Yet these parolees had during their sentences worked in correctional centres for many months. It is unlikely

that all the inmates with health problems developed these problems since their work in correctional centres. It may be that this situation is the result of: employers in private industry insisting on a higher level of physical capacity in their workforce than prevails for correctional centre work; the level of energy and perseverance necessary to locate work in the general community; inmates may be more motivated to work whilst serving a sentence than when they are in the community; it is possible also that the Department of Social Security is placing offenders on disability pensions when their employment prospects look particularly grim.

Thirty one offenders were not working because, according to probation officers, they were not motivated to work yet these parolees too had worked in correctional centres for many months. Within the correctional system work offers inmates privileges, wages, an opportunity to learn things and the avoidance of boredom. Work in the general community may not be so attractive. Inmates that refuse to work in the correctional system are not paid any income. In the general community social security payments offer a meagre lifestyle but these can be supplemented with assistance from family and friends or with income from illegal activities.

Activities involved in seeking work can consume a great deal of time and energy. Perseverance would be encouraged by the expectation of a positive outcome. Parolees may feel that their lack of skills will make it unlikely that they would find work. In addition, the enthusiasm some offenders have towards seeking work may be undermined by actual or anticipated discrimination as a consequence of their criminal record. In the post release interviews (n=14) the existence of a criminal record was the most common obstacle nominated by parol-

ees in the way of their finding work. CSI supports the Employment Development Program which promotes employment opportunities for former offenders. The role of this program includes making contact with employers willing to hire former offenders and placing these employers in touch with agencies which attend to the needs of former offenders including their employment needs. Employers of offenders released from the Correctional system are eligible for subsidies provided for employers of the long-term unemployed.

Parolees should be encouraged to utilise employment placement agencies which serve the general community as this may facilitate their assimilation back into the general society. However, it is important that offenders are also made aware that agencies exist which specialise in providing assistance to them in case they have difficulty locating work or feel inhibited seeking work because of concerns about revealing their status as a former offender. Publications produced by the Department for inmates such as, 'I'll need a job when I get out' should list the employment assistance available from these specialised agencies. Information on post-release assistance should be made available to all inmates due for release including those that are to be released from maximum and medium correctional centres. An information stand containing this information should be accessible to inmates in all correctional centres. This stand should also contain information on the work undertaken in business units (as mentioned previously) as well as information pamphlets from the DEET (Department of Employment Education and Training).

(e) Recidivism

Stage 3B investigated the rate of recidivism of the sample and tested for any differences on recidivism (between the business units

and services, and work release and non-work release).

There was no difference in the rate of recidivism between the business unit group and the services group within 18 months. Offenders in the work release group were less likely to recidivate over the time period than the non-work release group.

Older offenders were less likely to recidivate over the time period than younger offenders. Offenders with previous sentences were more likely to recidivate than offenders that did not have previous sentences. This is consistent with a study conducted in NSW specifically on recidivism (Thompson 1995).

The rate of recidivism in this study (for all those (n=99) released for over 18 months) was 19% within eighteen months. Unfortunately this rate of recidivism cannot be reliably compared with the recidivism rate in other jurisdictions because of the lack of standardisation between jurisdictions regarding offences for which a subsequent conviction brings re-imprisonment. Also the recidivism rate in this report may not be representative of all NSW parolees. As shown in a study which included all inmates in NSW (Thompson 1995). Recidivism is not only related to age and criminal history but also varies according to the most serious offence and the security classification on discharge. The parolees in this current study will not be representative in respect to most serious offence and security classification since they were selected from specific correctional centres and were required to have worked for at least three months in a specified area to be included in the sample. There was found to be no difference in recidivism between parolees that had worked since release and those that had not when other characteristics were held constant.

(f) Interviews of parolees

Fourteen parolees from the post release sample agreed to be interviewed, however, such a small number is unlikely to be representative of the sample of parolees in this study. Nevertheless, the interviews do provide evidence of possible outcomes from correctional centre work.

Through the interviews evidence was gained that correctional centre work, in both the business units and services, provided parolees with experience which made it possible for some of them to gain employment positions in the general community that they would have been unlikely to otherwise achieve. Other parolees that may have been able to gain their positions without their correctional centre experience were able as a consequence of their correctional centre experience to bring additional abilities to their present post release employment.

The interviews also found that work in the business units can also provide offenders with skills they can use in their spare time to keep themselves occupied, increase their standard of living, and be of assistance to their families and friends.

(g) General

In investigating post-release employment and recidivism this study used a sample of parolees. Offenders serving fixed terms do not have a parole period and therefore are not included in the sample. Also in the NSW correctional system inmates released to parole have aggregate sentences which are greater than six months. This sentence length means that offenders convicted of minor offences were also not included in the sample. Parolees may have different characteristics from the general population of inmates, therefore the results in this study may be different from those which would be

obtained if the entire population of inmates were included in a study.

This study found no difference in employment outcome and recidivism outcome between the business units and services groups. Thus, the business units do not appear to provide a benefit to inmates over and above that which is provided by services. The interviews with parolees revealed that experience gained in either the business units or services had assisted parolees to find work after release. The opportunity to work during their sentence would appear to have positive implications for inmates whilst serving their sentence as well as post-release. CSI by operating a variety of business units makes employment possible for a greater number of inmates and increases the range of vocational positions beyond that available if employment in services was the only employment available.

This study used a group of parolees that had worked in services as a control group against which the performance of parolees from the business units could be measured. In the NSW correctional system a range of privileges accrue to inmates through work and nearly all inmates chose to work. It would not be worthwhile to compare outcomes for parolees that worked in the business units against a group of offenders that did not work whilst in the NSW correctional system. Such a study would be unlikely to produce valid results because inmates that refuse to work in the NSW correctional system would be likely to have different characteristics from the general population of inmates. Any differences between the groups in post release employment and recidivism outcome may be attributable to these characteristics and not to their correctional centre employment status.

This study found that offenders who participated in Community Employment Programs

were more successful in obtaining employment after release and in not recidivating than those that did not participate in these programs. This may be a consequence of the program itself or it may be that offenders that participate in a Community Employment Program have different characteristics from other offenders. In this study adjustments were made for age, offence category, sentence length and previous sentence but there may be other characteristics that differentiate the work release group from the non-work release group. Older offenders are less likely to recidivate than younger offenders even when they do not participate in work release programs. This is the case in this study and in other studies (Thompson 1995). Moreover, inmates must apply for Community Employment Programs and inmates that do apply may be differently motivated than those that do not. Inmates must also (after application) be selected for the program and pass an assessment stage of three months before being permitted to attend work release. Therefore, Community Employment Programs through the selection procedures, which contain a preference for inmates that have served long-term sentences and whose conduct during their sentence has been of a high standard, may be selecting inmates with a greater likelihood of success than other inmates. Thompson (forthcoming) is looking at the relationship between Community Employment and recidivism in more detail and this may provide greater information on this matter.

At the time of writing this report a review was being conducted within the Operations branch of the NSW Department of Corrective Services into Community Employment.⁵⁶ This review should take into consideration the findings of this study and Thompson (forthcoming) with regard to Community Employment.

As the number of females in the post-release

employment sample was low gender comparisons between male and female parolees could not be undertaken. As at 30th June 1995 there were 409 female inmates in the NSW correctional system⁵⁷ and represents only a small proportion (6%) of the total inmate population. Any empirical research on female parolees would need to be conducted over a prolonged period in order to obtain a sample sufficiently large for quantitative analysis.

In conclusion, the provision of employment appears to be an important factor in maintaining inmate wellbeing and in the good management of correctional centres. There is also some evidence that correctional centre work can give offenders vocational skills which provide them with admission to areas of employment they would have not otherwise had access to. Offenders returning to their usual employment after release have been able to bring additional abilities to their work as a consequence of their correctional centre work.

Endnotes

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ANNEX 1

Table 14: Number of inmates interviewed in correctional centre work locations

Correc-tional Centre	Private sector business units				CSI business units					Services
	Panama Develop-ments* (nursery)	Smorgon	Billprau Pty Ltd	Hard Rock Bakery	Correct-print*	Corfum	Cornet	Cortex	Agricor	
Mulawa	7				6					
Parklea						6				
Emu Plains		2**								
Reception & Induction			4	5						
Industrial Training Centre						6				4
Cessnock							8			
Cooma								6		
Mannus									7	

* Panama Developments and Correctprint employ female inmates.

** Only two inmates were working in Smorgon at this time because they were ahead of production.

Table 15: Highest level of education reached

	Number of inmates		
	Males		Females
	Business units	Services	Business units
Primary	1		
Year seven high school	7	2	
Year eight	2		2
Year nine	12		5
Year ten	12	1	4
Year eleven	2		1
Year twelve	5		
Tertiary	2	1	
Unknown	1		1
Total	44	4	13

Table 16: Age at leaving school

	Males		Females
	Business units	Services	Business units
8 yrs	1		
11 yrs	1		
13 yrs	4		
14 yrs	6	2	4
15 yrs	12	1	2
16 yrs	9		7
17 yrs	3		
18 yrs	4		
19 yrs	1		
21 yrs	2		
22 yrs	1	1	
Total	44	4	13

Table 17: Things inmates liked about present work (some inmates gave multiple responses)

	Private sector business units				CSI business units					Services
	Panama Developments	Smorgon	Billprau Pty Ltd	Hard Rock Bakery	Correct-print	Corturn	Cormet	Cortex	Agricor	
Time goes faster			1	1		6	3	1		
Stops boredom	2		2		1	3		2	1	
Money		1		1				2		
Like the work because - of its nature, or it is new experience or it is interesting.	2	1	5	2	3	5	2	1	1	1
Like learning things	2		1		2	1	1	2	3	2
Gets you out of gaol - away from others									4	1
People - atmosphere			1			1	2			
Stops thinking about other things			1			1			1	
Keeps you out of the weather								3		
Total	6	2	11	4	6	17	8	11	10	4

Table 18: Responses of inmates - main benefit of current job

	Private sector business units				CSI business units					Services
	Panama Developments	Smorgon	Billprau Pty Ltd	Hard Rock Bakery	Correct-print	Corturn	Cormet	Cortex	Agricor	
Learn things	3			3	3	3	2	2	5	1
Gain experience	1			1	1	2				
Money	2		2	1			2	1		
Time passes quicker	1	1		1	1	1	1			1
Occupied - not bored		1	2			2	2	3		1
Good for mental health						1	1			
Like the work						2				1
Content - happy			1	1		1				
Left alone								1	2	
Atmosphere							1	1		
Total	7	2	5	7	5	12	9	8	7	4

Table 19: Corrective Services work location of parolees included in sample for Stage 3

Industries - business units (males n=123, females n=6)										Services (males n=128 females n=3)
	Correct-print	Panama Developments (nursery)	Smorgon	Corfum	Hard Rock Bakery	Billprau Pty Ltd	Cornet	Cortex	Agricor	cleaning kitchen garden maint clerical laundry
Mulawa	3(2)	3(2)								3(4)
Parklea				14						19(2)
Emu Plains			9(1)							8(1)
Reception & Induction					1	5(2)				20
Industrial Training Centre				19 (1)						38
Cessnock							38(2)			27(1)
Cooma								23(6)		11
Mannus									14(1)	5(3)

Note: numbers in brackets are parolees for whom information on post release employment was not available but will be included in the analysis on recidivism

ANNEX 2

DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS UNITS

The description of the activities undertaken in the business units are under the titles of the business units below.

Agricor

Centre: Mannus Correctional Centre in the Southern Highlands of NSW.

Core business: this business unit operates a farm of approximately 4000 acres. The main activity of this business unit is the production of cattle, fat lambs and wool which are usually sold at open auction. A 25 acre vineyard and apple orchard are also being developed. Scientific methods are used by Agricor to increase the productivity of stock, pasture and soil.

Number of inmates employed: approximately 36 inmates are employed in Agricor.

Employment induction: inmates are given an explanation of what is expected of them, a description of the work Agricor is involved in and the wages system. At Mannus inmates are allocated to a work location for a month after which if they have performed well are then allowed some choice in the type of work they are allocated.

Type of work: as Agricor is involved in the production of agricultural commodities the actual tasks the inmates perform are largely dictated by the seasons. If inmates are employed with Agricor for a year they experience the full cycle of seasonal work which takes place on a farm.

Cattle - cattle are produced for meat consumption and breeding. For six months during the colder months of the year inmates are required to mix feed (hay or oats with supplements such as magnesium) for cattle and drop feed from a tractor. Inmates also undertake the mustering and herding of cattle into yards usually on horseback with the assistance of dogs. Throughout the year cattle are regularly drenched (oral insertion of anti-parasitic drugs), given selenium orally and vaccinated. After birth each calf has its ears tagged with the same number as its mother and

the information is recorded. All calves are branded and the males castrated when three months old.

Animal husbandry is used to improve the quality of the stock. Inmates have the opportunity to learn about livestock performance and are fully involved in recording weight gain and the selection of sale stock and breeder stock.

Sheep - sheep are produced for fine wool and meat production. The usual sheep farming activities take place in order to keep the sheep in good condition. Crutching is undertaken twice a year, tails are docked and sheep are treated to eradicate lice and blow flies. Hand feeding takes place with grain for 3-4 months of the year. Lambs are marked to aid identification.

Shearing takes place over a four week period during which wool is sorted and baled using a hydraulic wool press (standard equipment on most sheep properties). Inmates work alongside a professional wool classer and learn the fundamentals of shearing, shed skills and wool preparation. The overseers believe that an average inmate who is motivated can shear well after two weeks. Inmates who work in the shearing shed over this period are able to complete a course and obtain a certificate in 'shed skills'.

Pasture - pasture improvement is undertaken by spraying chemicals from a boom spray mounted on a trailer which is pulled by a tractor. Pasture establishment involves soil separation, sowing and supering. Oats, canola and rape are produced as pasture. Inmates are also involved in tractor maintenance, the planting and the care of trees, the surveying and layout of paddocks and the driving of the backhoe.

Vegetables - vegetable cultivation involves ploughing, digging, weeding and sowing potatoes and other vegetables. The placing of additional soil on top of potatoes to increase yield (referred to as hilling) takes place every two weeks over a three months period. Vegetables are irrigated every day in summer. Irrigation requires pipe moving and pump irrigation and maintenance. During harvesting a harvesting machine is used to dig the potatoes out of the ground for collection by the inmates. Potatoes are then graded and packed. In past years snow peas were also

produced, packaged and labelled and sent to the Sydney markets.

Orchard and Vineyard - inmates currently in Agricor are developing the apple orchard and vineyard. This required spraying grass with herbicide, ploughing the paddock, levelling the ground and adding lime to counteract the acidity of the soil. Some 8000 apple trees were planted which required measuring, spacing, digging in and pruning. Covers are placed on the trees when first planted to stop rabbits eating them. It will be two to three years before the orchard is producing apples. The vineyard is expected to be producing grapes for the chardonnay market in three years.

Building and Maintenance - inmates are continuously involved in checking fences, building and rebuilding fences and in the maintenance of other equipment. Fence posts are made of concrete and new fence posts are produced by pouring concrete into moulds and removing the moulds once the concrete has set. Holes for fence posts are dug using a post hole digger which is carted by tractor.

Inmates are also involved in the extension of shearing sheds, the erection of fences and the maintenance of these structures.

Training: informal on the job training by overseers and inmates. Inmates that assist with the shearing of sheep during shearing season can gain a certificate in 'shed skills'. Horticulture modules are conducted concurrently with major projects such as the establishment of an orchard and Vineyard. Successful completion of these modules meets the entry criteria for the Horticulture Course at TAFE. Inmates can also fulfil the requirements for the Backhoe Certificate.

A number of courses are available at Mannus Correctional Centre. Courses of particular relevance to a rural environment are Rural Welding (TAFE accredited) and the Bush Fire Fighting Course (certificate from the CES).

Billprau

Centre: Billprau Pty Limited is a private sector business unit within the Reception and Industrial

Centre at the Long Bay

Core business: Billprau produces what the unit describes as 'simple round neck t-Shirts' for the private market. The t-shirts are put together in the workshop ready for dyeing or printing at another location.

Number of inmates employed: approximately 52 inmates are employed in this business unit.

Employment induction: in this workshop inmates commencing work are allocated to particular work according to existing vacancies, personal ability or dexterity. Before undertaking any machining inmates are instructed on the threading and care of machines and practice machining on scraps of material.

Type of work:

Cutting - material is weighed and sorted into dyelots, and marked off against invoices. Markers are made on newsprint paper from patterns for t-shirts. Material is "laid up" on the cutting table using the laying up machine and pulled taut. The appropriate level of tension needs to be applied as too tight a tension can produce unacceptable levels of shrinkage and too loose a tension can lead to growth in each panel. Up to two hundred layers of material can be cut at once using an electrical straight knife.

Batches of components are marked to ensure the components which go to make the t-shirt are from the same roll. This is to ensure the exact matching of colour. Barrows are filled with an equal quantity of shirts (front, back, sleeves).

Machining - the labelling of garments using the flat bed machine is considered the easiest machining work. Inmates can also do machining work using flat top hemmers which are used to hem the garments. Overlockers are used to sew the components together and to latch back at the end of a seam (resew over existing sewing). The latch back is a means of securing thread and ensuring the seam will not come undone.

The front and back of each t-shirt is joined at one shoulder and the collar is attached in a continuous "banding roller" process that results in all the

garments in that bundle being joined together by a common collar. This join then has to be individually cut before the second shoulder can be sewn. To complete the garment the sleeves are inserted and the rest of the garment 'closed off' and sealed by a latch back stitch. The correct tension of fabric at overlocking must be maintained at the collar, sleeve and 'closing off' stages to ensure that the correct shape is achieved in the finished garment. Seams around the neck band are cover stitched using a twin needle machine. The cover-stitch process requires a high level of skill as any "oversew" will damage the garment.

Labels are attached using flat bed machines and the t-shirts are then sent to inspectors.

Checkers and Packers - clippers are used to clip ends of cottons from the garments taking care not to damage the garment. Inspectors check the garments to ensure a high standard of workmanship has been attained in the completed garment. Garments are subsequently folded into bundles of ten and placed into individual orders according to size and colour by packers.

Training: TAFE has provided, on some occasions, initial training for inmates on the use and care of machines. Informal training is conducted by overseers and inmates.

Corfurn (Parklea)

Centre: Parklea Correctional Centre, on the outskirts of the metropolitan area of Sydney. This correctional centre operates the Young Offenders Program which is designed to facilitate the rehabilitation of young offenders (under 25 years) and the operation of Corfurn at the centre takes place within the program's framework.

Core business: Corfurn operates a workshop manufacturing timber furniture. Items produced include book cases, tables, mobile draws and executive office furniture for the Department of Education and TAFE. Also produced are display units for a kitchen manufacturer and prototypes of furniture which are used to gain production contracts.

Number of inmates employed: an average of 40 inmates are employed, most of them work three hours a day with core workers working six hours. Both young inmates (under 25 years) and older inmates (over 25 years) work in the shop.

Employment induction: inmates are interviewed to establish their previous work experience. The rules and regulations of the workshop are covered and conditions of pay are detailed.

Type of work: within Corfurn there are a number of different sections in which inmates can work. These include a machine shop which has a range of saws and wood working machinery, the cabinet making section and a spray booth in which lacquer is sprayed on to furniture using spray guns.

The metal frames used in the production of desks and furniture are manufactured at Parklea Correctional Centre in the Cormet business unit for Corfurn.

Inmates new to the workshop may commence work either as sweepers or as production workers at the cabinet work bench using a variety of carpenter's hand tools such as sanders. Inmates can then progress to assembly work, in which the wooden components of the furniture are attached to the metal frames using drills and self-tapping screws. Later inmates are likely to progress to the use of machines such as the hand plane and various types of saws, such as the band saw, docking saw, rip saw, panel saw. Inmates can also gain experience on other machines such as the thicknesser, edge banders, routers, spindle moulders, and multi-borer machines.

The 'setting up' of machinery is considered a more difficult task than the operation of the machinery and inmates need to have reached a high level of skill before this can be undertaken.

Inmates are required to follow written instructions which contain drawings and measurements. In addition, some clerical work is required of shop floor inmates due to stage by stage documentation. This documentation is required to maintain and retain accreditation necessary when tendering for Government contracts.

Training: inmates receive informal on the job training from overseers and inmates. Formal TAFE training has not been conducted in recent years because of the average short-stay of inmates and the effect of the operation of the 'structured day' which does not allow the number of hours required to support this particular type of education. Officers claim the operation of the split shift, necessitated by the structured day in which most inmates work either three hours in the morning or in the afternoon, reduces an inmate's commitment to their work and the acquisition of skills. Since the researcher visited the business unit formal training in the form of a Wood-machining Course (a TAFE accredited course) has commenced within the workshop.

Corfurn (Training Centre)

Centre: Training Centre within the Long Bay Complex, Metropolitan Area of Sydney.

Core business: produces timber products for State and Federal Government Departments as well as special items for the private sector and community organisations. A large number of orders are received from TAFE for student desks and teacher tables.

Number of inmates employed: the workshop employs approximately 50 inmates.

Employment induction: on arrival in the Corfurn Business Unit inmates are required to fill in a questionnaire concerning release date, classification, employment experience and any physical impairment. They are also required to sign a form stating they have been made aware of health and safety requirements and hours of work. Inmates are given the opportunity to walk around the shop so as to observe the range of work being performed by the other inmates and identify any work or area of work they particularly like.

Type of work: within Corfurn there are a number of different sections in which inmates can work. These include a machine shop which has a range of saws, the cabinet making section and a spray booth in which lacquer is applied to furniture using spray guns.

The metal frames used in the production of desks and furniture are manufactured at other business units for Corfurn. However, two welding bays are maintained to rectify faults or to make an order at short notice.

On commencing work unskilled inmates undertake production work at the cabinet work bench using a variety of carpenter's hand tools such as sanders. Inmates can then progress to assembly work, in which the wooden components of the furniture are attached to the metal frames using drills and self-tapping screws. Later inmates are likely to progress to the use of machines such as the hand plane, the dovetail machine (which shapes the sides of drawers) and various types of saws, such as the band saw, docking saw, rib saw, sheet saw and computerised beam saw. Inmates can also gain experience on other machines such as the thicknesser, edge banders, routers, spindle moulders, angle grinders and multi-borer machines.

The 'setting up' of machinery is considered a more difficult task than the operation and inmates need to have reached a high level of skill before this can be undertaken.

Inmates are required to follow written instructions which contain drawings and measurements. In addition, some clerical work is required of shop floor inmates due to stage by stage documentation. This documentation is required to maintain and retain accreditation necessary when tendering for Government contracts.

Corfurn has a business office in which management tasks have been highly computerised. Five inmates are employed in the office and these inmates usually possess skills gained in previous employment in payroll management, job costing and accountancy.

Training: inmates receive training on the job from overseers and inmates. Formal training is undertaken by TAFE one day per week in a training room within the workshop. This training consists of three modules from the first year of the accredited Carpentry Course. The modules are of 10 weeks duration and are run consecutively. Occasional excursions to TAFE colleges are arranged to introduce inmates to equipment not available in the business unit.

Inmates that qualify may be permitted to attend what is referred to as "industrial training" in which they are allowed to work in private industry, outside the correctional centre for two days per week.

The overseers in the workshop consider that the average inmate would need six months in Corfum before they would be sufficiently skilled to be of an employable standard for private industry outside the correctional system.

Corfum staff are currently being trained in Quality Systems I.S.O. 9002 and expect accreditation shortly.

Cormet

Centre: Cessnock Correctional Centre is in the Hunter Valley wine growing district of NSW.

Core Business: Cormet operates two light engineering workshops at the centre engaged in the production of tubular steel furniture. One workshop, referred to as the bottom workshop, is situated outside the main perimeter fence of the centre and supplies the component steel parts for assembly in the upper (main) workshop inside the centre. Eighty per cent of production is in response to orders placed by private industry. This work involves the production or refurbishment of tables and chairs and other furniture for clubs and private hospitals. Government sector work involves the production of furniture for schools and hospitals. The refurbishment of furniture is a joint effort between Cormet and two of the other business units at this correctional centre, Corfum (timber production) and Corcover (upholstery production). A powder coating service for the painting of metal is available and has been provided to pool fencing contractors and engineering firms.

Number of inmates employed: the bottom workshop has a workforce of approximately 12 C3 (low security) inmates. The main workshop inside the centre has approximately 40 inmates employed.

Type of work: unless inmates are skilled they normally commence work in the shop as sweep-

ers or grinders. The duties of sweepers involves sweeping the factory floor and ensuring particularly that it is clean of shavings. Sweepers also clean the office and toilets and empty rubbish bins. Grinding involves using air angle grinders to 'finish' metal after welding.

Welders are required to read drawings, take measurements, ensure components are square and weld components together using MIG (metal inert gas) welders set at the appropriate heat settings. All welding in the shop is performed using MIG welders. Inmates can also be involved in the setting up of jigs which holds metal in place for welding or grinding.

Inmates referred to as 'hangers' lift the furniture requiring painting on to a continuous conveyor line and lift off the product once it has been painted. A crucial part of this work is examination for any defects in the product and ensuring the product is up to standard. Once products are on the continuous conveyor they travel through the phosystem which removes grease and dirt, and etches the surface for paint adhesion. The conveyor then takes the product into a gas drier ready for painting.

Inmates can also work as painters at the 'powder coater reclaiming booth' where furniture is powder coated. Furniture is powder coated in the booth by robotic arms with spray jets and small 'touch ups' are done (usually to corners etc) using tribo electric hand guns. The product then goes into a gas oven to bake.

Once furniture is complete either castors are attached using a spanner or plastic feet are attached using a rubber hammer. Furniture is wrapped with packing foam and stacked ready for delivery trucks.

A clerk compiles financial reports and keeps pay records using a computer.

A forklift vehicle is used to move pallets thus providing inmates with the opportunity of obtaining a fork lift ticket (this is obtained by clocking up several hours experience and passing a test set by Workcover).

An inmate storeman has the responsibility of

keeping records of all tools which have been issued for use during the day, checks the tools off at night and ensures sufficient supplies of paint.

In the bottom workshop everything is cut to size, punched or bent per specification from drawings. Cold brobo saws are used for cutting, bench drills are used for drilling and edges shaped using the edge beveller. Some welding occurs for repairing of farm machinery and building maintenance. The shop utilises both an overhead crane and a forklift vehicle.

Training: informal training takes place on the job by overseers and inmates. Formal training consists of a module on powder coating from a TAFE accredited Industrial Spray Painting course which is conducted for six hours a week over a 12 week period. A forklift ticket can be gained as mentioned above. Recently prerequisite welding and thermal cutting courses have commenced through TAFE.

Correctprint

Centre: Correctprint was situated within the Mulawa Correctional Centre at the Silverwater Complex in the Metropolitan Area of Sydney. Only female inmates are detained at Mulawa Correctional Centre. Correctprint ceased operation at Mulawa in 1995.

Core business: this business unit engages in what is commonly referred to as instant printing or offset (lithographic) printing and basic book-binding. This printing shop produces the Department of Corrective Services Bulletin and other Departmental magazines and forms. Orders are also taken from the private sector for newsletters, fliers and business cards etc.

Number of inmates employed: the number employed varies between 15 and 23.

Employment induction: inmates are required to sign a form stating their conditions of employment. An officer discusses with the inmate their length of sentence, previous experience and interest in learning the printing industry before a decision is made on the position the inmate will be employed at when commencing work in

the print-shop.

Type of work: there are four main areas of work in which the women are employed, computer art work, printing room, table hand work and office work. Computer art work (i.e., desk top publishing) is used to design forms using software such as Pagemaker or Wordperfect. Some typeset is referred back to its source for proof alterations (i.e., The Bulletin). Original copies are rectified according to the proof reading marks.

In the printing room plates for the printing press are made out of plastic laminated cardboard using the Silvermaster plate maker. Plates are attached to the printing press, ink and water balanced and paper placed in trays before printing commences.

The 'table hands' are involved in finishing which includes using the computerised guillotine, collating, stamping, folding, binding, quarter binding, packaging and dispatching.

The office clerk answers the phone, attends to fax machine, types quotes, invoices clients and writes job tickets for orders as well as some record keeping of inmate wages. The stores clerk attends to stock control.

Inmates usually commence work as table hands and if they display interest are trained on the printing press. By working in the print shop the women can learn the terminology of the printing trade and learn skills that can be adapted to other areas such as office work.

Training: informal training takes place on the job by officers and other inmates. At the time the researcher visited the business unit no courses were underway because of the high turnover of women. Previously in 1993 a TAFE accredited course Lithographics Technique Course was conducted. After hours in the education block a TAFE accredited course in Pagemaker (desk top publishing course) is conducted. The Pagemaker computer package is widely used in the printing industry.

Cortex

Centre: Cooma Correctional Centre is a medium security correctional centre situated in the city of Cooma approximately 400 km south of Sydney.

Core business: Cortex is primarily engaged in the production of hospital linen such as sheets, pillow cases surgical wraps, nappies, geriatric bibs, mattress covers, face washers and instrument wraps. The business unit has achieved international certification under Australian Standard AS/NZS ISO 9002 - Quality Systems and Accreditation. Cortex abides by the 'Australian Standard' by ensuring all work is consistent with 'OP12 Operating Procedures Manufacturing Specifications for Flat Work'.

Number of inmates employed: approximately 75 inmates are employed.

Employment induction: inmates are shown a video which describes the purpose and conduct of CSI. Instruction takes place regarding the rules of the production area such as safety precautions, specifically safety features of machines, wage system and working hours. A tour of the workshop takes place and inmates are asked about the type of work they would like to do in Cortex. Inmates are interviewed and a record is kept of their education and skills. Machinist positions are chosen most often because despite the repetitive nature of the work it provides the opportunity to earn a higher income. Machinists are required to spend some time practising their skills and reach a high standard before they are allowed to join the production line.

Type of work: record keeping is required at every stage in the production process in order to keep the Production Planning Schedule up to date. Inmates are required to understand the codes used to identify the items of production. These are the same codes as used in hospitals.

Inmates work in Cortex in the following positions:

Store person - the length of material must be checked when it arrives at the workshop to

ensure consistency with the invoice. Records are kept of stock on hand.

Cutters - Production Planning Schedules stipulate the measurement of material to be cut and the processing required. The required number of layers of material are spread on cutting tables and held by a spreader at both ends which is set at the required length. Material is pulled taut and lines are drawn on material where it is to be cut. The layers of material are cut through using electric cloth cutters.

Machinists - two types of machines are used to sew material; flat bed machines and overlocker machines. Inmates first commence sewing on a flat bed machine and if they attain a high standard at this they can later advance to an overlocker machine. Machinists are required to set up their machines with the correct settings for tension and stitch length. A very high standard of sewing is required.

Checkers and Packers - checkers examine items to ensure the required standard of workmanship and keep a tally count of items for machinists (machinists level of remuneration partly relies on the piece work method). Sewing is given its first check and snips are used to cut hanging threads.

Sewing is checked again and then folded and placed in boxes which are labelled and sealed using a tape gun. Boxes are then placed on pallets. When the pallets are fully loaded the boxes are wrapped with shrink wrap.

Training: there is some formal training on arrival in the shop otherwise informal training is conducted by overseers and inmates. Some inmates attended a course titled Quality Concepts conducted in the education block. This course is a module from the Total Quality Management course which is an accredited TAFE course. The course of six weeks duration is conducted two hours per week (one hour of this is during production time). At the time of writing this report a Textile/Clothing Assembly Course had commenced with TAFE.

Hard Rock Bakery

Centre: the Hard Rock Bakery is a private sector business unit within the Reception and Induction Centre at the Long Bay complex in Sydney.

Core business: this business unit produces bread, buns, cakes and pastry items and pizza for NSW correctional centres and for private distribution.

Number of Inmates employed: approximately 36 inmates are employed.

Type of work: prerequisites apply for this type of work - inmates must be able to read and follow recipes. They are required to weigh accurately as this is crucial for the quality of items and operate ovens and other bakery equipment.

Bread production - inmates who commence work in the bakery usually commence work on bread production. If the inmate is involved in bread production he has responsibility for the entire cycle of production from the initial dough making stage through to the packaging of bread ready for distribution. Water and flour are combined and the dough is mixed in heavy duty 'dough mixers' for which timers and speeds need to be set. Once mixed to correct consistency (usually 8 minutes in the dough mixer) the dough divider machine divides the dough into 780 grams (this machine can also be adjusted to allow for other weights). The dough is placed on a conveyor belt which takes it through a machine where it is moulded and cut into four pieces. Each loaf of bread is made in four sections in order to extend the period in which the bread retains freshness. Inmates place the dough into tins which have been sprayed with water based oil. The tins of bread are placed on racks which are wheeled into the prover which controls the temperature and humidity at 35-37C for 45 minutes to accelerate the growth of dough.

The bread is baked at 210C for 27-28 mins removed from the oven and placed under a fan for approximately an hour to allow it to cool down. The slicer is set with the appropriate settings for width, height and length. The blades of the slicer need to be checked regularly to ensure tightness. Once bread is cut it is put in

plastic bags and grouped according to orders.

Rolls are made using the same method as bread with smaller pieces of dough.

Pizza - the production of Pizza comprises a significant part of overall production. Pineapple which arrives in large tins is drained and this and other ingredients are cut into smaller pieces.

Pastry Items - there is a pastry team who produce pies, sausage rolls, pasties, croissants and apple rolls. Pastry is made by using pastry gems and flour and salt which is combined in a slow mixer. The pastry is put through a dough break which flattens the dough. The operator folds the dough as it comes out of the machine and feeds it back through again. The dough is placed on the table in sheets and is cut into widths. Meat pies are manufactured using prime mince beef which arrives raw and is cooked on the premises. The manufacture of pies requires two different types of pastry. Puff pastry is placed on the top portion of the pie covering the meat. Pastry for pies is cut with a cycle cutter and placed in foil by hand. The cooked mince beef is placed in the pastry shell.

Croissants - croissants are produced by using a croissant machine. Pastry is rolled and fed through the machine and the croissants are extruded into a rolled long torpedo shape but need to be bent by hand for their characteristic crescent shape.

Apple/Sausage Rolls - apple mix comes in tins ready for inclusion in apple rolls. Sausage rolls are made by hand. The filling (i.e., mince and other ingredients), is prepared on the premises.

Lamingtons - sponges for lamingtons are produced in large slabs. The slabs are placed in the freezer. Cocoa is cooked and then reduced to room temperature. Lamingtons are placed in a tray which holds a large number of lamingtons and dipped into chocolate. The excess chocolate is allowed to drain off and then the lamingtons are tumbled by hand in coconut. The lamingtons are then placed in baskets or serving trays according to purchase orders. Some lamingtons are left plain while others have cream added.

Sponges can be decorated with icing and cream using a torch which is operated by air. Custard and cream are injected into sweets using an inserter.

Maintenance - all bakery staff are required to be involved in the cleaning of premises, equipment and machinery. The bread slicer is cleaned by using an air hose. Regular maintenance of machinery and equipment is undertaken by officers and inmates. Private contractors are only called in for major repairs of machinery.

Training: training is informal and is conducted on the job by overseers and inmates. A TAFE accredited course the Baking Trade Certificate is conducted. The course is conducted in three month modules for three and a half hours twice a week. At the time the researcher visited the business unit the course had been temporarily suspended due to a dispute regarding the funding of the overtime salary of an officer. Regulations stipulate an officer must be present during the course to supervise the inmates. The correctional centre considers the overtime salary the responsibility of the Hard Rock Bakery. The Hard Rock Bakery considers the officer's salary should be funded by the correctional centre stating that they already provide a great deal of assistance to the course by the provision of raw materials and access to the machinery as well as allowing inmates some time away from work. At the time of writing this report in July 1995 the Bakery Course had recommenced in the workshop.

Panama Developments

Centre: Panama Developments is situated on two acres of land within the Mulawa Correctional Centre at the Silverwater Complex in the Metropolitan Area of Sydney. Only female inmates are detained at Mulawa.

Core business: this business unit operates a plant nursery which specialises in 'potted colour' i.e., annuals and cottage garden plants such as marguerites, lavender and hebe, and climbing plants. Plants are sold through the company's five retail outlets. Currently other retail outlets are being sought for the plants as well.

Type of work: propagation takes place from cuttings or seeds. Sometimes tube stock is brought in but this is more expensive than propagating plants on the premises. Cuttings are dipped in striking powder and planted in pots. Seeds are planted in pots at different depths depending on type of plant. Some plants are re-potted once they reach a certain size. Maintenance of plants takes place which involves weeding, watering, pruning and spacing the pots. Pots are moved to different areas in the nursery so as to expose them to different levels of sunlight. When orders are received from retail outlets inmates are required to select out the appropriate plants and place them in a trolley and load plants on to trucks.

Inmates usually commence work potting plants and can move to other areas if they show initiative and/or interest.

The overseer considers that inmates can learn basic skills in three to six months but it would take three years to be of nursery hand standard.

Training: informal training by overseer and other inmates. TAFE Training is not currently taking place in work area because the majority of the inmates working here are only serving short sentences. Mulawa correctional centre does have a Horticultural Operations Course, which is TAFE accredited but the women presently undertaking this course do not work in the nursery. Some women undertaking this course are working as correctional centre gardeners. At the time of writing this report in July 1995 a Horticultural course was being considered for commencement in this work area.

Smorgon

Centre: Smorgon Plastics Recycling is a private sector business unit which operates within the Emu Plains Correctional Centre on the outskirts of the metropolitan area of Sydney. This is a minimum security centre which contained male inmates. Since March 1995 only female inmates are detained at the centre.

Core business: this business unit is involved in the recycling of plastic drink bottles. Plastic

bottles are delivered to the plant in bales after being collected by various councils in Victoria, Queensland and NSW. Plastic is sorted and fragmented ready for further processing at another location.

Number of inmates employed: approximately between 10 and 11 inmates during peak periods. At the time the researcher visited this centre it was a male only centre and thus male inmates were working in this business unit. In March 1995 female inmates were transferred to the centre and the business unit continued production with a female work force.

Employment induction: required to sign form agreeing to safety procedures.

Type of work: duties carried out by inmates are as follows:

	<i># of inmates</i>
Driving the forklift	1
Debaler cutting straps prior to bale passing through machine	1
Employed on main sorting line	6
Operating hopper and scale recording production figures	1
Assisting with maintenance of machines with site supervisor	1
Cleaning duties.	1

Inmates commencing work in the plant are required to spend some time working on the 'on line grading of bottles' before being employed in other positions. The civilian overseer considers this the appropriate position for inmates to commence work in the workshop as they learn first hand the different types of plastic and the overseer has the opportunity to assess their ability to "settle down to work". Inmates are taught to identify the different types of plastic and discard those which are not suitable for this operation i.e., plastic must be PET (Polyethylene Terephazate).

Inmates use forklifts to unload bales from trucks and place them in the de-baling machine connected to the conveyor line. An inmate cuts and pulls the straps on the bales of plastic bottles and shuts the door to the debaler. Once the door to the debaler is shut bottles are fed on to on a conveyor line from where unwanted material such as PVC is segregated and placed in rubbish

bins. Further along the conveyor line plastic is filtrated through a metal detector where metal cans and caps which have been missed on the first inspection are now discarded through a chute.

The bottles are then carried through a grinder which breaks the bottle into fragments which are fed into a hopper which separates paper from the plastic. Bags are then weighed using a computerised weighing machine and tagged. Record sheets are filled out identifying bags and their weight and passed on to the overseer.

The granulated plastic is sent to another Smorgon factory in the suburb of Silverwater for further processing into bottles for household use or it is placed in containers to be sent overseas.

Inmates assist with the maintenance of machinery including regular lubricating. Some welding is required to maintain equipment. The grinding machine has its blades sharpened using a grinding stone.

Inmates who are considered good workers are encouraged in taking over duties involved in the administration of the daily operation of the plant such as recording of deliveries, production figures and stock control.

Training: informal on the job training by civilian overseer and inmates. Inmates have the opportunity of obtaining fork-lift tickets if desired.

ANNEX 3

Selection of sample for stage three

All males released to parole during 1993 and between 1st January and June 30th in 1994 were listed for inclusion in the sample. From this list of parolees the ORS was used to identify male inmates who had worked in the business units or services industries included in this study (see Table 20) for three months or more during their last sentence i.e., the sentence for which they had been released to parole. To ensure the study reflects recent events, only those cases in which the transfer date from the employment location (business units or services industries) occurred after 1st January 1991 were included. In those cases in which these requirements were fulfilled the work locations of the inmates and length of time employed in that location was recorded.

Parklea Correctional Centre had not at the time of the study established employment records on the ORS. The Industrial Training Centre's employment records on the ORS were incomplete. To overcome this situation the ORS was used to establish if any of the inmates listed as being released to parole had spent part of their sentence at either of these two centres. These centres were then visited by the researcher and the employment files of the centre examined to identify those inmates recorded as having worked in the relevant work locations.

All females released to parole during 1993 and between 1st January and 30th September 1994 were listed for inclusion in the study. The criteria for the inclusion of females in the study was the same as for males. However, employment records had not been retained on female inmates who were previously at Mulawa Correctional Centre. In anticipation that these employment records would be able to be retrieved the details on all women who had been released to parole were recorded.

As the intention was to undertake as part of the analysis, a comparison between the post release employment experience of inmates who had worked in the business units with those who had worked in services, these two groups needed to be distinguished. This was done by excluding inmates that fitted the criteria for the Services group from the sample if they (as recorded on

the ORS) had worked in any business unit for one month or longer i.e., between one and three months.

The ORS was used to establish the Probation Service office each parolee included in the sample was reporting to and the date for the termination of their parole period. Probation officers maintain a file on each parolee they are responsible for supervising. Once a parolee's parole period is completed their file, after some time, is sent to archives for storage. To ensure supervising officers still had access to information on the parolees in the sample only those parolees due to terminate their parole after 30th March 1994 were included in the study.

In summary the criteria for selection of the sample was:

- males released to parole between January 1993 and June 1994 and females released to parole between January 1993 and September 1994;
- worked in a business unit or services work location included in the study for three months or longer during their last sentence (the sentence for which they were released to parole);
- the date of completing this period of work in their correctional centre employment location was after 1st January 1991;
- if a parolee fulfilled the criteria for inclusion because of their work in services they must not have worked in any industry during their last sentence for longer than one month;
- were due to terminate their parole after 30th March 1994.

Mailing of Survey

The names of officers supervising parolees in the sample were obtained from the Probation Service. A one page questionnaire eliciting information on the parolee's employment experience since release and a covering letter was sent to the supervising officer of each parolee in the sample.

Table 20: Sample for post-release analysis

	Sent	Returned	No information post-release employment	Total for post release employment analysis
Male	271	267	16	251
Female	39 only 17 found to be suitable	15 Suitable	6	9
Total	310(288)	282	22	260

In total three hundred and ten questionnaires were mailed to supervising officers of 271 male and 39 female parolees.

In anticipation of information on employment for women previously at Mulawa becoming available the one page questionnaire was sent to supervising officers of all those female parolees due to terminate their parole between March and December 1994.

In December 1994 information became available on the employment location of women previously at Mulawa. This was provided by the ASI and was used to select out those women who had worked in the relevant work locations for three months or longer. The one page questionnaire was sent to the supervising officer of these women if this had not already been done i.e., those who were due to terminate parole after December 1994.

In all those cases in which questionnaires were not returned within five weeks a reminder letter was sent to the supervising officers. If five weeks later there was still no response the officer was contacted by phone. If the questionnaire had been lost a new one was sent. Supervising officers who still had not responded 5 weeks later were then sent a second reminder and a duplicate questionnaire (if a duplicate had not already been sent).

Two hundred and sixty seven questionnaires on male parolees were returned leaving four unaccounted for. Although thirty nine questionnaires regarding females were sent out, only seventeen of these were found to fulfil the criteria established for the inclusion of parolees in the study, once information from Mulawa became available. Fifteen of these questionnaires were returned. Some of the returned questionnaires 16 males and 6 females did not contain information

regarding the parolees post release employment because their supervision had finished or their supervision had been transferred interstate and their probation records had been sent to archives. In those cases in which the questionnaire was not returned (6) or returned without information on employment (22) these parolees could not be included in the analysis of employment outcomes. All parolees in the sample (n=288) could however be included in an analysis on recidivism as this information is available on the ORS.

The small number of females in the sample did not allow for a separate analysis on employment and recidivism outcomes for females or a comparison of female with male outcomes because of the lack of reliability of statistical tests on small samples. Females were included with males for the statistical analyses unless otherwise specified.

Table 20 contains the number of questionnaires mailed and returned and suitable for analysis.

Other data considered relevant to the study such as date of birth, most serious offence of current sentence, the length of their sentence, the existence of a previous sentence, and period if any on a Community Employment Program was taken from the ORS. Information on the Community Employment of females was provided by the officer in charge of the work release program at the Norma Parker Centre.

Information regarding recidivism (new conviction leading to full time custody) was taken from the ORS on 8th May 1995 and entered into the data set.

All information gathered on the 288 parolees in the sample was entered into a data set for analysis by SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).