



PAROLE BOARD

OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY



PRISONERS RIDING TO WORK FROM BARKLY WORK CAMP

ANNUAL REPORT

2012

The Hon John Elferink MLA
Minister for Correctional Services

I am pleased to provide this report on the activities of the Parole Board of the Northern Territory during the year ending 31 December 2012, in compliance with Section 3H of the *Parole of Prisoners Act*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'S. Southwood', is displayed on a light blue background.

The Hon Justice Stephen Southwood
Chairperson

Purpose of the Annual Report

The purpose of this report is twofold, firstly to meet the statutory reporting requirements of the *Parole of Prisoners Act* as outlined in Section 3H. Further to this however, the Annual Report provides an opportunity to increase public awareness of the role of the Parole Board within the criminal justice system.

The Parole Board of the Northern Territory makes important decisions that affect the freedom of individuals and impact upon victims, their families and the communities into which offenders are released.

Members of the Parole Board take their responsibilities seriously and are committed to affording the public every opportunity to understand the process by which the Board arrives at its decisions.

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YEAR IN REVIEW

Chairperson's Message

I would like to thank all of the members of the Board and the secretariat for their good work during 2012.

The work of the Parole Board of the Northern Territory has continued to grow. During 2012 the Parole Board considered 301 applications for parole and 112 revocation reports. 135 prisoners were released on parole and 64 parolees had their parole revoked. 84 per cent of parolees who were re-imprisoned had their parole revoked for breaches of the conditions of their parole.

Imprisonment rates in the Northern Territory continue to be very high. Both the Darwin Correctional Centre and the Alice Springs Correctional Centre have been full beyond their capacity during 2012 and this has increased the work load of the Parole Board. However, there have been a number of initiatives undertaken by Corrections such as the establishment of work camps which have assisted in preparing prisoners for parole.

During 2012 the secretariat continued to work on a number of important initiatives including moving from paper files to having files and materials accessed by iPad and developing an instruction manual for members of the Parole Board.

Arrangements with the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) and the Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service (CAALAS) continued to be consolidated during 2012. NAAJA and CAALAS provide considerable assistance to prisoners who are seeking parole. They both have employees who educate Aboriginal prisoners about parole, assist them prepare their post release plans

and assist them with their applications for parole. Employees of NAAJA and CAALAS also make detailed written submissions in support of Aboriginal prisoners who are seeking parole and provide through care for prisoners once they are released on parole including assisting them in finding accommodation, employment and rehabilitation counselling and treatment programs. The work done by NAAJA and CAALAS has been of great assistance to the Board.

In order for prisoners to be successfully reintegrated into the community on parole it is important that they receive the maximum assistance that the community is able to provide so that they can successfully manage the triggers that increase the risk of further offending. This includes a good management plan while they are in prison, access to appropriate rehabilitation courses and educational courses while in prison, assistance in developing realistic post release plans prior to being released on parole, assistance with accommodation and employment after they are released from prison, access to rehabilitation programmes after they are released from prison and sufficient supervision from well trained and appropriately remunerated community corrections officers.

It is also important that the community understands the nature of parole and the need for prisoners to strictly comply with their conditions of parole. The cost of these services is a significant cost to government. However, if prisoners can be successfully reintegrated into the community free of further offending the future cost savings to the community will be enormous.

STATISTICS AT A GLANCE

Number of matters before the Parole Board	783
Number of parole applications considered	301
Number of prisoners granted parole	135
Number of prisoners refused parole	90
Number of revocations before the Parole Board	112



PROFILE

The Parole Board of the Northern Territory (the Board) is an independent statutory body established under Section 3A of the Parole of Prisoners Act. The Board consists of ten members who act free of political and bureaucratic influence to make decisions about the parole of prisoners in the best interests of the community as a whole, including the offender and the victim.

Parole is an important element of the criminal justice system as it allows prisoners to serve the balance of their sentence of imprisonment in the community, under supervision and on very strict conditions. The purpose of parole is to release prisoners into the community in a manner that provides support and increases their chances of becoming members of the community who are free of a criminal lifestyle.

The Board may:

- i. Grant a prisoner release on parole;
- ii. Deny a prisoner release on parole;
- iii. Defer consideration of a prisoner's application for parole until a later date;
- iv. Amend or vary a parole order
- v. Revoke a parole order.

The Board makes decisions in relation to both adult and youth offenders and their jurisdiction extends to prisoners serving a sentence of life imprisonment for the crime of murder.

In addition to the standard conditions of parole, the Board has the power to impose additional conditions which it believes are necessary to support the offender and prevent re-offending.

It may also give directions to the Chairperson for guidance about revocation of parole for either:

- a breach of a condition of parole; or
- offending committed by the parolee while on parole.

Decisions of the Parole Board by their very nature have the capacity to impact not only on individuals but on the broader community. Members of the Parole Board are aware of the trust that is placed in them and take the responsibility seriously.

Parole Board members are supported to fulfil their responsibilities by operational and administrative staff within the Northern Territory Department of Correctional Services.

Parole Board Members

Section 3B of the Parole of Prisoners Act stipulates that the Board must have 10 members who are to be:

- a) the Chief Justice or another nominated Judge;
- b) the Executive Director of Correctional Services;
- c) a member of the Police Force nominated by the Commissioner of Police;
- d) a person who is –
 - i) a registered medical practitioner; or
 - ii) a registered psychologist;
- e) a person who represents the interests of victims of crime; and
- f) 5 persons who reflect, as closely as possible, the composition of the community at large and include women and Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders.

Members described in subparagraphs (d), (e) or (f) above are appointed by the Administrator for three (3) year terms, are eligible for reappointment, and may resign their membership in writing to the Minister.

The Chairperson of the Board is the Chief Justice or another nominated Judge. The Chairperson:

- has responsibility for resolving questions of law; and
- a casting vote where votes are equal on questions to be determined by a majority of votes.

In 2012 the Board was chaired by Justice Stephen Southwood. Justice Judith Kelly acted for Justice Southwood on three occasions whilst he was on leave.

In the absence of a member appointed under sub-sections (d), (e) or (f) the Minister may appoint a person to act as a member of the Board. In 2012 no members were appointed to act in positions on the Board.

In 2012 the Parole Board was fortunate to retain current community members but did see a change in the Police representative with Superintendent Helen Braam being replaced with Superintendent Don Fry. Senior Sergeant Jason Rothe acted in the place of the Police representative on three occasions.

During 2012, membership of the Board comprised:

Justice Stephen Southwood
Chairperson

Mr Ken Middlebrook
Commissioner, Northern Territory
Department of Correctional Services

Superintendent Don Fry
NT Police representative

Ms Susan Lowry
Victims of Crime representative, Darwin

Mr Paul Rysavy
Psychologist, Darwin

Mr John Flynn
Darwin

Ms Jill Huck
Darwin

Ms Selina Holtze
Alice Springs

Mr Craig Lambert
Katherine

Mr Harold Howard
Alice Springs



Northern Territory Community Corrections

Secretary

The Secretary of the Parole Board is a statutory role that is held by the Executive Director of Northern Territory Community Corrections. The Secretary provides administrative support and strategic advice to the Board.

Ms Tracy Luke is the Executive Director and held the role of Secretary throughout the year. Mr John Fattore acted in the place of Ms Luke on one occasion. Ms Luke commenced working as a probation and parole officer in 1998, she holds a Bachelor of Social Work and relocated to the Northern Territory in 2008 to undertake a management position with NT Community Corrections.

Parole Board Secretariat

The Parole Board Administrator has the primary responsibility for coordinating and providing all administrative support for the monthly meetings of the Board.

Administration of the activities of the Parole Board continues to increase as a result of:

- new practices designed to increase the application of procedural fairness; and
- an increasing number of matters being heard every month due to the rising number of prisoners.

In November 2012, Northern Territory Community Corrections secured ongoing funding for one additional FTE shared across two positions to provide support to Community Corrections and the Parole Board. One is an operational and administrative support position, and the other provides supervision and management of the secretariat. This will ensure the Board is able to continue to fulfil their responsibilities in a timely and efficient manner.

Parole Officers

The functions of parole officers under Section 3R of the *Parole of Prisoners Act* are to:

- supervise persons released on parole as assigned by the Parole Board;
- supervise persons who are mentally impaired and unfit for trial and are therefore made subject to a non-custodial supervision order within the meaning of Part IIA of the Criminal Code;
- prepare reports as required by the Parole Board;
- maintain case records and statistics as required by the Parole Board;
- carry out the directions of the Parole Board in relation to a parole order;
- investigate and make reports to the Parole Board on the employment and place of living available to each person applying for release on parole; and
- perform such other duties as directed by the Parole Board or the Chairperson.

Parole officers commence working with a prisoner eight months before they become eligible for parole. During this time the parole officer works closely with the prisoners, their family, communities and victims to ensure that Parole Board members are provided with comprehensive, timely and reliable information.



UNDERSTANDING PEOPLE

The Non Parole Period

The Sentencing Act provides that a sentencing court may fix a non-parole period (NPP) for an offender who is sentenced to a term of imprisonment of at least twelve months.

The non-parole period set by the sentencing court stipulates the minimum time a prisoner must serve in custody before being eligible for release on parole. Contrary to other jurisdictions a prisoner does not have a right to be released on parole and is not automatically granted parole on the expiry of their non-parole period.

The Parole Board has full authority over the decision of if and when a prisoner is released on parole. The Board may decide a prisoner is not to be granted parole and should serve the whole of their sentence in prison.

Parole Process

Arrangements for Board Meetings

There are several provisions in the Parole of Prisoners Act which govern the Board in making decisions regarding the release to or revocation of parole. There are additional requirements regarding the consideration for prisoners serving a term of life imprisonment for the crime of murder.

LIFE IMPRISONMENT

Meetings held quarterly

Quorum requires the Chairperson and seven other members

Decisions require a unanimous vote

ALL OTHER SENTENCES

Meetings held monthly

Quorum requires Chairperson and three other members

Decisions require a majority vote

Matters considered at Board Meetings

Parole is a complex legal process; as such the Board may hear a number of different types of matters at each meeting. Some of the matter types considered by the Board are:

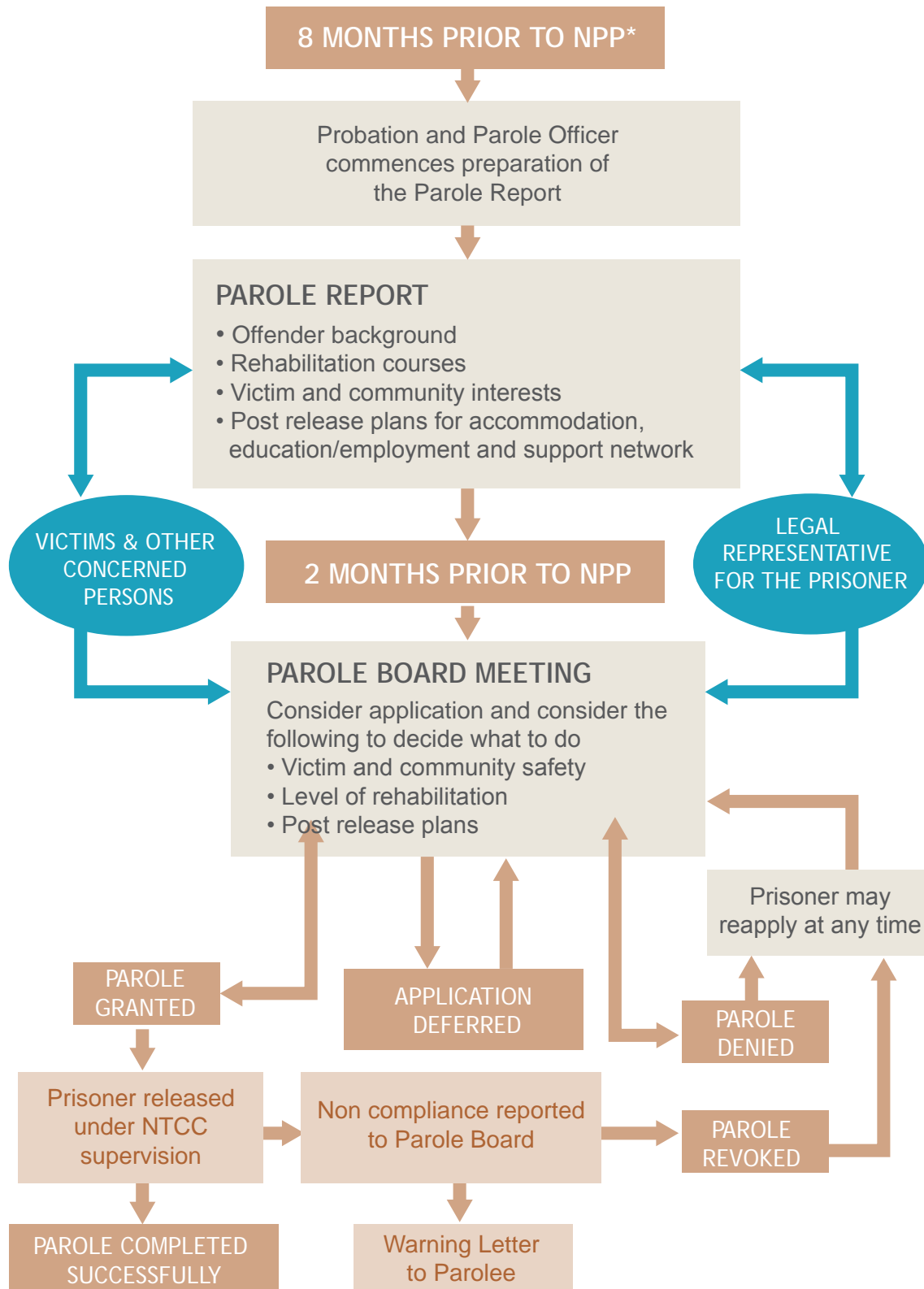
- applications for parole;
- Reports about breaches of parole (revocation reports or advice);
- Notifications that a parolee has completed their parole order;
- Reports providing updates on current parolees and their progress;
- Matters about prisoners declining parole;
- Applications for variations of parole conditions;
- Applications by parolees to travel interstate; and
- Applications by parolees to transfer interstate.

Attendance of Prisoners at Board Hearings

It is the practice of the Board to decide parole matters on the papers without the prisoner being present. The Board is of the view that the materials received or obtained by the Board provide a fair and comprehensive basis to decide whether a prisoner should or should not be granted parole.

The Chairman may require a prisoner to be brought before the Board pursuant to Section 3G of the Parole of Prisoners Act. In 2012, two prisoners were required to be brought before the Board; one via videoconference and the other in person.

Either the prisoner or their legal representative may write to the Secretary of the Board requesting that the prisoner be required to attend their parole hearing. Applications are determined by the Chairperson after consultation with members of the Board.



*non-parole period (NPP)

Prisoners Serving a Life Sentence

When considering application for parole by prisoners serving a term of imprisonment for life for the crime of murder, the Board must have regard to the principle that the public interest is of primary importance and, in doing so, must give substantial weight to the following matters:

- a) The protection of the community as the paramount consideration;
- b) The likely effect of the prisoner's release on the victim's family;
- c) If the prisoner is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander the likely effect of the prisoner's release on that community.

Section 3GB (4) of the Parole of Prisoners Act stipulates that the Board must give reasons for any decision or direction of the Board on a matter concerning a prisoner who is serving a term of imprisonment for murder and those reasons must be included in the record of its proceedings.

Variation of Parole Conditions

The Parole of Prisoners Act Section 5(6) and (6AA) provide the Chairperson with the authority to amend a parole order by varying or revoking a condition at any time before the expiration of the order. Under Section 5(7) the variation does not take effect until the notice of the variation is given to the parolee.

Parole conditions may be varied or revoked because of the extent to which the parolee has succeeded in rehabilitating themselves in the community.

Revocation of Parole Orders

Where a parolee has failed to comply with the conditions of their parole order the parole officer must prepare a report for the Board's consideration setting out the circumstances of the breach of parole.

A breach of parole may fall into one of two categories:

- Re-offending – this means that the parolee has committed a fresh offence whilst released on parole.
- Conditional – this means that the parolee has breached one of the conditions of their parole order.

The Chairperson has the authority to make a decision about the revocation of a parolee's parole order and issue an instrument of revocation under sections 5(6) and (6AA). However, it is the practice that where possible the Board consider recommendations about revocation at Board meetings. If a parole order is revoked the parolee is arrested by police and returned to prison.

Alternatively, the Board may request the Commissioner of Police to have a parolee who fails to comply with their parole conditions arrested and brought before the Court of Summary Jurisdiction for cancellation of the parole order. The parolee may then provide any reasons for non-compliance to the Court.



Principles of Parole

When considering whether to release a prisoner on parole, the Board considers:

- the interests and safety of the community;
- the rights of the victim, including their families;
- the intentions of the sentencing authority;
- the needs of the prisoner; and
- whether the prisoner has recognised the error of their ways and is prepared to change their behaviour for the better.

In making their decision the Board takes into consideration a number of factors:

- The nature and circumstances of the offence(s);
- Comments made by the sentencing Judge when imposing sentence;
- The prisoner's criminal history and patterns of offending;
- The possibility of the prisoner re-offending while on parole and the likely nature of the re-offending;
- The risk of harm to the community and the victim;
- Release plans including accommodation and employment;

- Reports, assessments and recommendations made by a variety of professionals, including medical practitioners, psychiatrists, psychologists, custodial staff and/or community corrections officers;
- Rehabilitation courses undertaken by the prisoner;
- Education courses undertaken by the prisoner;
- Institutional reports in relation to the prisoner's behaviour while in prison;
- The security rating of the prisoner within the prison;
- Victim's safety, welfare and whereabouts;
- Representations made by the victim or by persons related to the victim;
- Submissions made by the prisoner, the prisoner's family, friends and any potential employers or any other relevant individuals;
- Submissions made by the legal representatives of the prisoner; and
- Whether the prisoner can be adequately supervised in the community under the standard conditions of parole or whether further parole conditions should be imposed.

These factors are a guideline only. The Board considers each case on its own merits.

The Board considers a range of material when deciding whether or not to release a prisoner to parole. The documentation will always include:

- A Parole Report prepared by the assigned parole officer;
- An Institutional Report prepared by staff of the Correctional Centre or Detention Centre where the prisoner or detainee is held;
- The facts of the prisoner's offending;
- A record of the prisoner's prior convictions; and
- A transcript of the Supreme Court sentencing remarks, if the prisoner was sentenced in that court.

The Board may also consider such other reports as are relevant for the individual case, including;

- Pre Sentence Reports;
- Psychological/psychiatric assessments and reports;
- Rehabilitation course assessments and reports including assessments and reports about Anger Management Courses, Sexual Offender Programs and the Indigenous Family Violent Offending Programs;
- Medical assessments and reports;
- Assessments and reports from substance misuse programs and treatment facilities;
- Legal submissions made on behalf of the prisoner;
- Letters and/or reports from interstate services;
- Letters from the prisoner or written on behalf of the prisoner; and
- Letters from the victim or victim's representative.



Parole Conditions

The standard parole conditions attached to every Northern Territory parole order are:

- 1) the parolee must be of good behaviour and must not commit another offence during the period of the order;
- 2) the parolee shall be subject to supervision on parole of a parole officer, appointed in accordance with this parole order, and shall obey all reasonable directions of the parole officer appointed;
- 3) the parolee shall report to the parole officer, or other person nominated by the parole officer, in the manner and at the places and times directed by the officer and shall be available for interview at such times and places as a parole officer or nominee may from time to time direct;
- 4) the parolee shall not leave the Northern Territory without the written permission of the supervising parole officer;
- 5) the parolee shall enter into employment arranged or agreed upon by the parole officer and shall notify the parole officer of any intention to change employment before such change occurs or, if this is impracticable, then within such period after the change as may have been directed by the parole officer;
- 6) the parolee shall reside at an address arranged or agreed upon by the parole officer and shall notify the parole officer of any intention to change address before such change occurs or, if this is impracticable, then within such period after the change as may have been directed by the parole officer;
- 7) the parolee shall not associate with any person specified in a direction by the parole officer to the parolee;
- 8) the parolee shall not frequent or visit any place or district specified in a direction by the parole officer to the parolee.

The Board frequently places additional conditions upon the release of an offender, these conditions are tailored to maximise protection to the community, facilitate the prisoner's successful reintegration and reduce the risk of re-offending.

One of the purposes of placing conditions on parole is to address and manage factors that underlie the prisoner's offending behaviour, additional conditions often include:

- not consume or purchase alcohol;
- breath testing and urinalysis;
- no contact, directly or indirectly, with a victim or other specified person;
- residence at a specified community or outstation;
- participation in and completion of an assessment/treatment/counselling regime (residential or sessional attendance) e.g. alcohol programs, domestic violence programs, sex offender programs, psychiatric treatment;
- not consume a dangerous drug or abuse a prescribed substance that is lawfully obtained;
- not to engage in conduct that might lead to a domestic violence order being made; and
- accommodation curfew.

Release Plans of Prisoners

Parole officers take considerable time to consult with prisoners about their release plans including proposed accommodation as it can be a pivotal factor in the success or failure of the prisoner's parole.

Reintegration into the community is a fragile process, during this time prisoners may require the support of State and Australian government agencies, family, friends and community.

Access to suitable accommodation is a vital part of re-integration into the community and can assist a prisoner to remain stable and abstain from the use of alcohol or other drugs.

Transfer of Parole Orders

The Parole Orders (Transfer) Act commenced in 1984 as part of a national scheme under which a parolee can transfer to another jurisdiction and have their parole order registered under the corresponding Act in that jurisdiction.

Upon registration of the parole order with the receiving jurisdiction the parolee ceases to have any connection with the originating jurisdiction. The parole order and original sentence are treated as though they were imposed in the receiving jurisdiction.

National Guidelines have been introduced to streamline the process of transferring offenders on community based supervision orders between Australian jurisdictions.



Extradition

Extradition involves the return of an offender from another jurisdiction, this may happen in number of instances, including:

- When a parolee has left the Northern Territory without permission;
- When a parolee on authorised travel has;
 - failed to comply with parole conditions whilst interstate, or
 - committed further offences.

The Board may consider extradition of the parolee to the Northern Territory so the outstanding balance of their sentence of imprisonment can be served. Each case is considered on its merits.

Victims of Crime

The Board is very cognisant of the rights of victims of crime as contained within the Northern Territory Charter for Victims of Crime and ensures the guiding principles are incorporated into practice and procedure.

Under the Charter the victim may apply in writing to the Secretary of the Board requesting:

- a direction be given to a prisoner not to approach them whilst on parole, and
- for advice about the outcome of any parole proceedings concerning the prisoner.

Parole officers liaise with the Victims of Crime Unit and Witness Assistance Service to ensure victim's concerns are taken into consideration throughout the parole process and that the victim is kept informed of any developments. Victim issues and concerns are frequently identified in reports prepared for the Board's consideration and may result in special conditions being added to a parole order to ensure the safety of the victim.

Supporting Indigenous Offenders

Northern Territory Correctional Services has entered into formal arrangements with NAAJA and CAALAS to operate Prisoner Support Officers programs.

Under these arrangements the following occurs when a prisoner is a client of NAAJA or CAALAS:

- The Secretary of the Board provides the relevant Prisoner Support Officer with a copy of the letter they send to a prisoner, informing the prisoner of the decision of the Board about whether the prisoner has been granted parole or not. This means the Prisoner Support Officer can go through the letter with the prisoner and also obtain further information from the Secretary if necessary.
- Where the Board makes a decision about the parole of a prisoner which is contrary to the recommendation contained in the report of the parole officer a meeting may be held with the parole officer, the Prisoner Support Officer and the prisoner to discuss the Board's reasons for decision.

Both NAAJA and CAALAS have been advised that if the prisoner wishes to make an application to be present at the meeting of the Board which considers his or her application for parole, then this can be done by the Prisoner Support Officer and any such application will be considered on its merits. Further, NAAJA and CAALAS have been advised the Board will consider any written submissions that are made on behalf of a prisoner about parole.



PERFORMANCE

PAROLE APPLICATIONS

Number of parole applications heard	301
Outcome	
- Parole applications granted	135 (45%)
- Parole applications undetermined	56 (19%)
- Parole applications refused	58 (19%)
- Prisoner declined parole	52 (17%)
Total	301 (100%)

PAROLE APPLICATIONS FROM LIFERS

Number of parole applications heard	5
Outcome	
- Parole applications granted	1 (20%)
- Parole applications undetermined	4 (80%)
- Parole applications refused	0 (0%)
- Prisoner declined parole	0 (0%)
Total	5 (100%)

PAROLE CONDITIONS VARIED

11

REVOCATION REPORTS

Number of revocation reports received	112
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Outcomes

- Parole revoked by the Board	55 (49%)
- Parole revoked out of session (Chairperson)	9 (8%)
- Referred to the Court (including extradition) * Matter was referred back to Parole Board and revoked	1 (1%)
- Warning letter sent	23 (21%)
- Stern letter sent	5 (4%)
- No Action	13 (12%)
- Request further information / deferred	3 (2%)
- Amend parole order	4 (3%)
Total	112 (100%)

PAROLEES EXTRADITED	0
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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION APPLICATIONS	3
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PAROLE ORDERS TRANSFERRED

South Australia	1
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BREACHES RESULTING IN REIMPRISONMENT

Type of Breach	74
- Conditional	62 (84%)
- Reoffending	12 (16%)

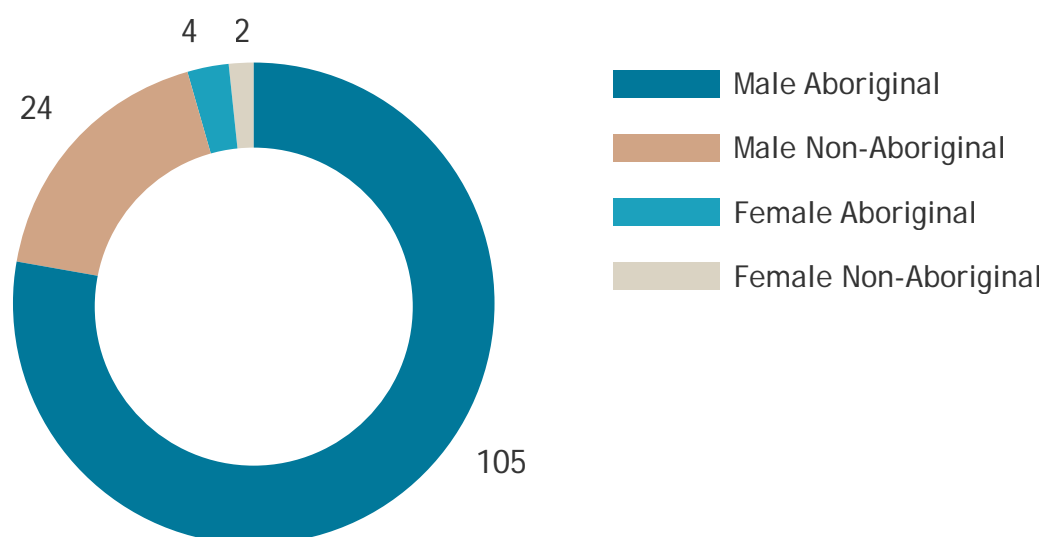
ADDITIONAL PAROLE CONDITIONS SET

Non-consumption of Drugs	65
Non-consumption of Alcohol	120
Breath Testing	120
Urinalysis	62
Residence	
- Treatment/Program	72
- Community/Outstation	50
Counselling	
- Sex Offender Treatment	1
- General assessment, treatment and/or counselling	83
- other *	44
Nil Contact – Victim	41
Nil Contact – Children	7
Home Detention	4
Surveillance	31
Not to be subject to domestic violence order	44
Other **	39

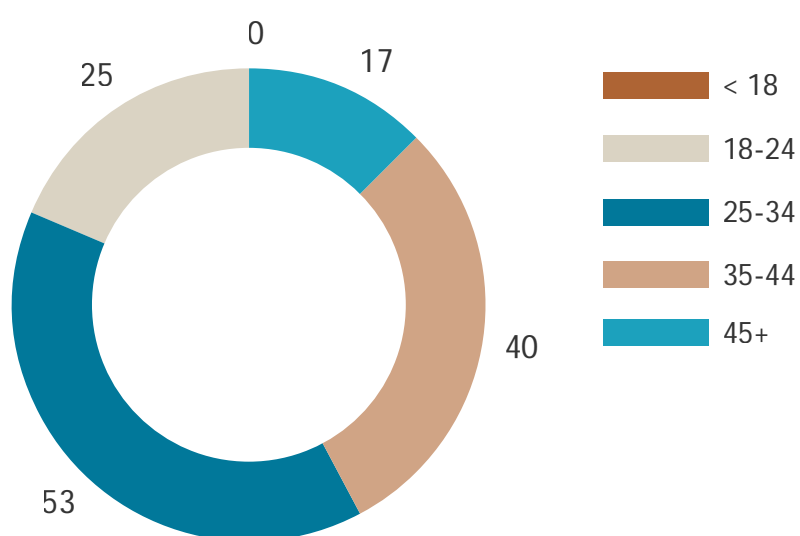
* Includes: Forensic Mental Health counselling, specific anger management, drug and alcohol counselling, Indigenous Family Violent Offending Program

** Includes: Not visit specified communities; not leave Australia; not travel interstate; curfew; not possess firearm/prohibited weapon; not stop/attend specified area.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PRISONERS RELEASED TO PAROLE DURING 2012 BY SEX AND ABORIGINALITY

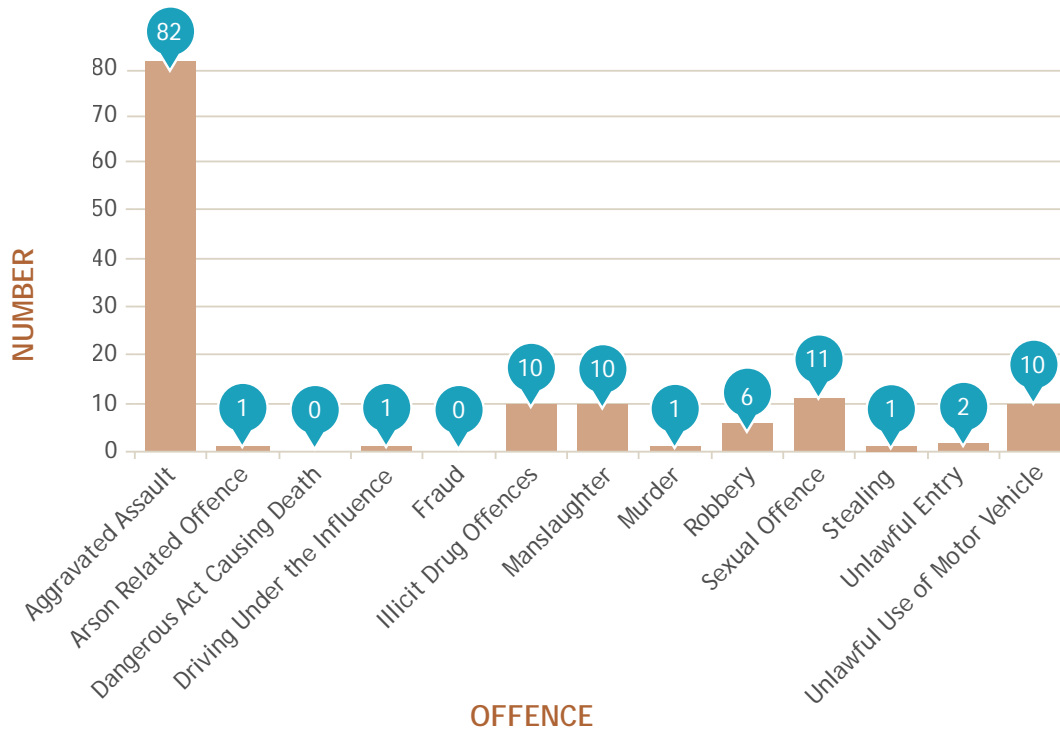


PRISONERS RELEASED TO PAROLE DURING 2012 BY AGE

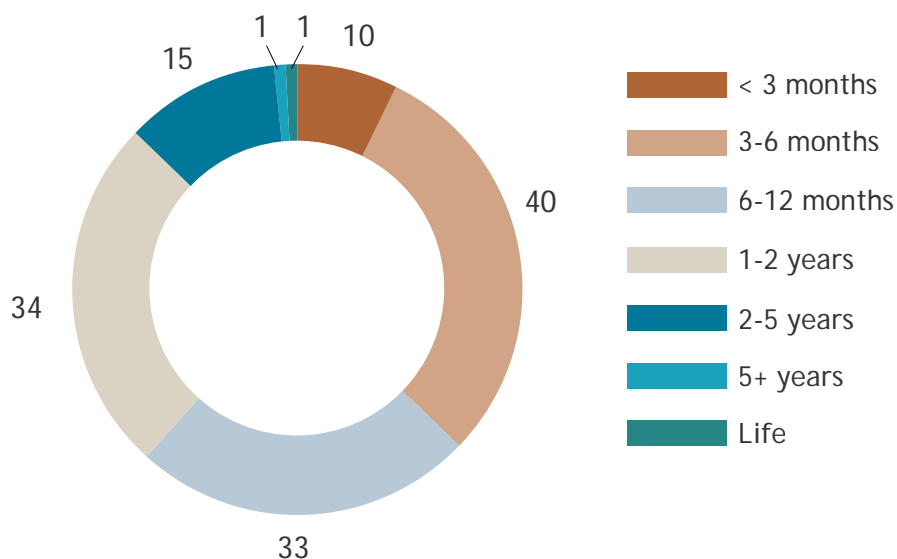




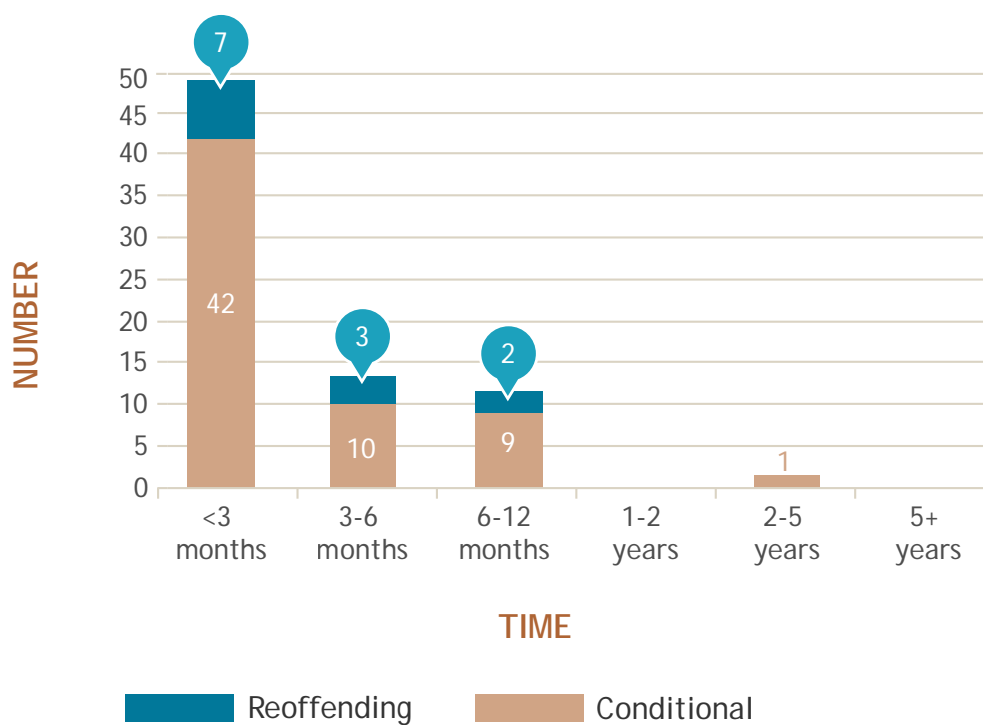
PRISONERS RELEASED TO PAROLE DURING 2012 BY MOST SERIOUS OFFENCE



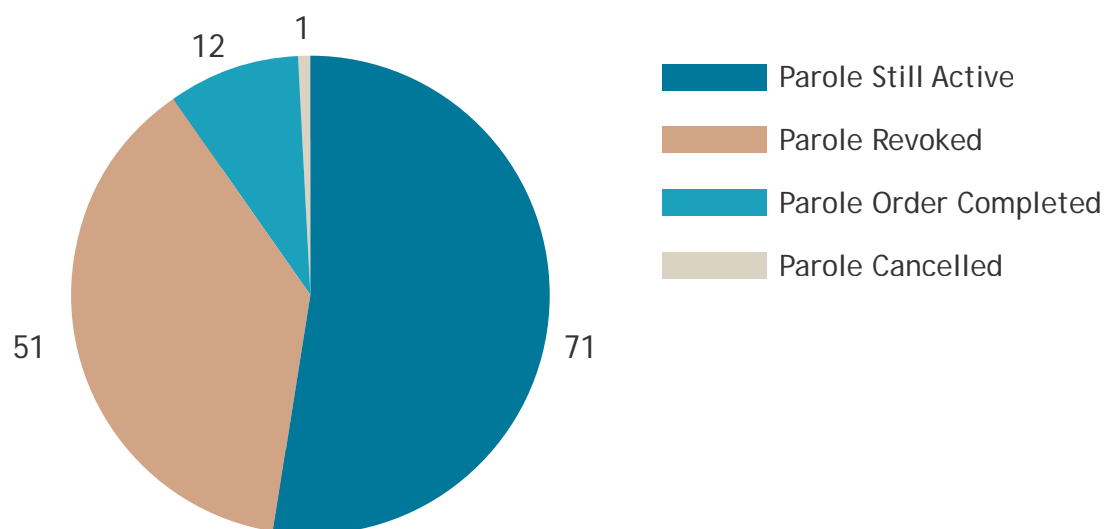
LENGTH OF PAROLE FOR PRISONERS RELEASED TO PAROLE DURING 2012



PERIOD ON PAROLE PRIOR TO BREACH - CONDITIONAL AND REOFFENDING 2012

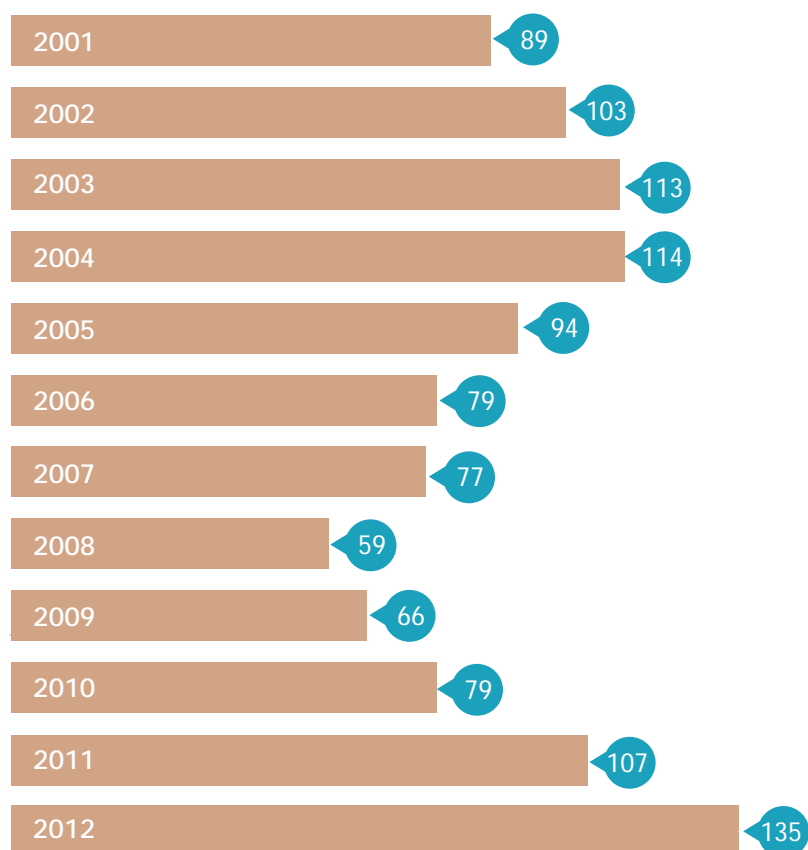


OUTCOMES OF PRISONERS RELEASED TO PAROLE DURING 2012

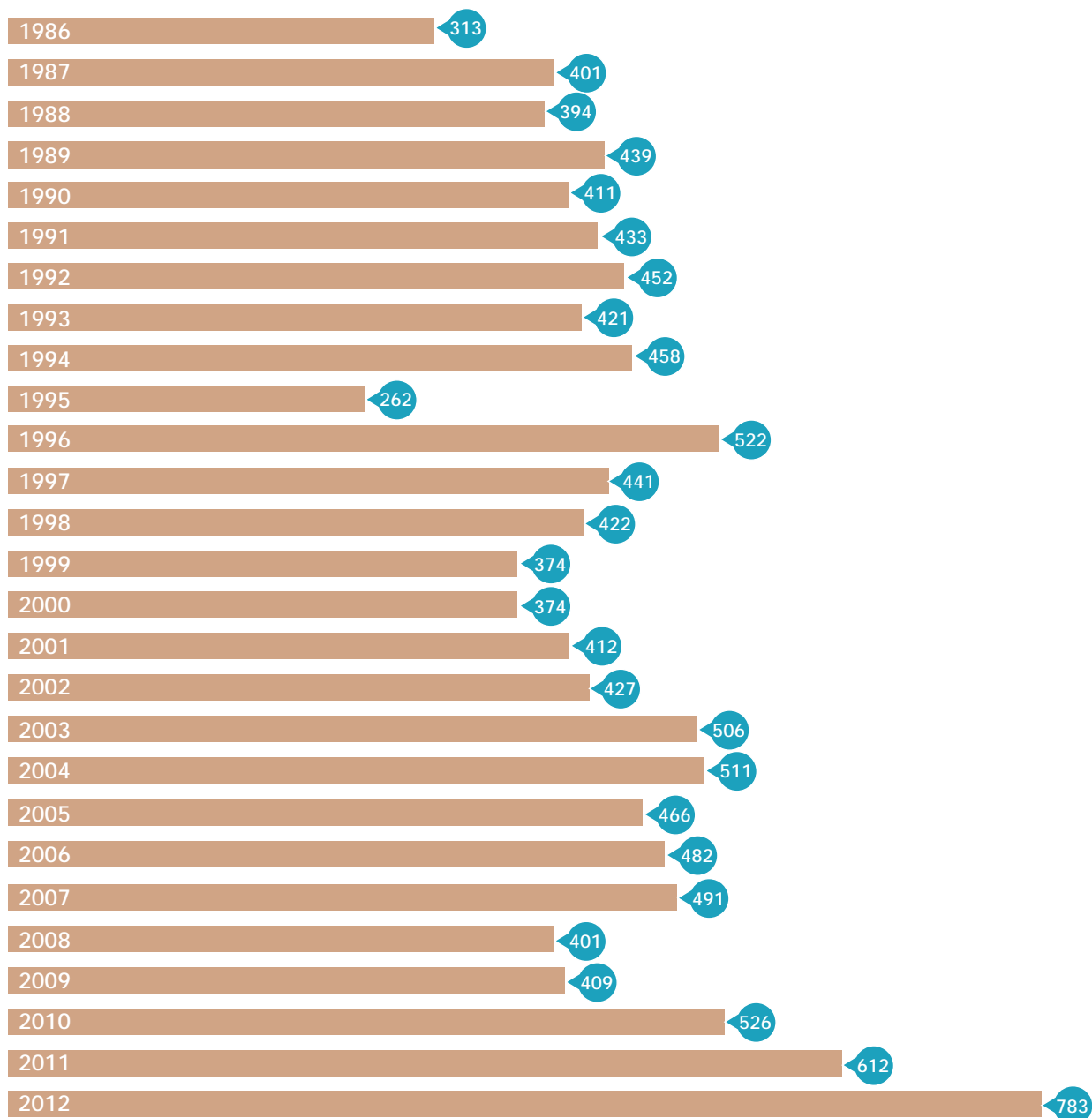




PRISONERS RELEASED TO PAROLE 2001 - 2012



ANNUAL TOTAL OF ITEMS OF BUSINESS 1986 - 2012





PARTNERSHIPS

Offenders on parole face many re-integration barriers that place them at risk of re-offending, including difficulties securing accommodation and employment.

It is hoped that the partnerships developed such as NAAJA's through care program will compliment and supplement the through care provided by the Community Corrections Division.

The purpose of through care is to assist prisoners who are on parole to set realistic goals, identify appropriate support networks and maintain practical plans for re-integration in the community.

North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA)

NAAJA has established a Prison Support Officer Project and an Indigenous Through Care Project.

The Prison Support Officer Project started in September 2009. It has two Prison Support Officers who are based at the Darwin Correctional Centre. Their roles include:

- Supporting Aboriginal prisoners applying for parole by liaising between the prisoner and their parole officer and providing access to legal advice and representation.
- Providing some post-release support to selected Aboriginal prisoners leaving prison to reside in the Darwin region after serving an extended sentence
- Making referrals to the Darwin Correctional Centre's Prisoner Services for prisoners with complex needs including substance abuse, mental health issues, homelessness and other non-vocational barriers to assist them prepare for release.

NAAJA's Indigenous Through Care Project started in February 2010. It has four case managers who each provide case management to up to 15 Aboriginal clients. Their roles include:

- Accepting referrals of clients, including from the Darwin Correctional Centre, the NAAJA Prison Support Officer, external service providers or the family of Aboriginal prisoners
- Assessing the transitional needs of Aboriginal prisoners prior to their release, interviewing Aboriginal prisoners individually to determine their needs for rehabilitation, accommodation, family support and employment prospects
- Developing individual case management plans in partnership with the prisoners who will have identified their goals upon their release;
- Identifying relevant services that can be accessed to achieve their transitional goals upon release
- Working in partnership with key stakeholders to provide the essential services to contribute to the success of transition from prison back into the community. These include community groups and government agencies.

Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service (CAALAS)

In 2011 Northern Territory Correctional Services worked with CAALAS to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to guide two programs:

- Prisoner Support Program; and
- Youth Justice Advocacy Project.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed and came into effect on 23 March 2012. The objectives of the Prisoners Support Program are:

- Assist Aboriginal prisoners to understand parole by explaining the process of parole and the role of NTCC and the Parole Board.
- Assist Aboriginal prisoners to successfully obtain and complete parole by:
 - a) Raising their awareness of the factors contributing to their offending behaviours; and
 - b) Helping them identify relevant rehabilitative programs to be completed while in custody and upon release.
- Assist Aboriginal prisoners to develop viable post-release plans with due consideration for community safety and the position of victims of crime in the criminal justice system. Where appropriate, the PSP will prepare submissions to the Parole Board of the NT on behalf of clients who are seeking parole.

Throughout 2012, CAALAS has worked closely with NTCS and the Board to:

- help prisoners develop suitable release plans and provide them with support in the community; and
- the Parole Board have received an increasing number of submissions from CAALAS on behalf of prisoners.



PROJECTS

Taking the Parole Board Paperless

In 2011 preliminary research was undertaken into the electronic management of Board meetings and papers. At this time the focus of research was upon a model based upon the use of Microsoft SharePoint.

In 2012 research continued with the engagement of a consultant to undertake a business process review of Parole Board functions, including the use of the Integrated Offender Management System (IOMS).

The review established the need for IOMS to remain the 'source of truth' with regards to offender management and that all documents to be used by the Parole Board should be accessed through IOMS.

The review was completed in May 2012 and identified a broad range of changes to business processes and information systems to facilitate the implementation of an electronic system.

One element of background work required was the scanning of hard copy records for active clients, with each document saved and named individually so they can be uploaded into IOMS.

The first round of changes to IOMS were implemented in September 2012, further changes are anticipated to be released in early 2013.

The project has also explored the options for a more user friendly system to overlay SharePoint, a number of options were explored and after much research and

consultation a product called eScribe was selected.

eScribe is a paperless meeting management system that is designed to work with Microsoft SharePoint and has an iPad application to allow maximum flexibility for users.

In November 2012 a gap analysis of eScribe was undertaken, it was identified that the system delivers against essential requirements of the Parole Board without customisation. In December 2012 discussions were ongoing for the deployment of eScribe to the NTG environment.

In 2013 work will focus on the completion of enhancements to IOMS, uploading of scanned files to IOMS, the deployment of eScribe to the NTG environment, end to end system testing (IOMS & eScribe) and training.

Development of Aboriginal Language Resources

This project has emerged as a result of feedback from key stakeholders, internal and external, expressing concern about the level of understanding of community based orders, their conditions and the role of the parole officer.

The 2011 Parole Board Annual Report identified that 89% of breaches of parole resulting in reimprisonment were the result of breaching conditions.

In March 2012 Community Corrections called for quotes to conduct consultation sessions and market research to determine:

- The types of tools that would be useful; and
- Provide a plan for the development of resources.

Consultations were undertaken during May and June 2012, target groups for the consultation included:

- low security offenders in the three correctional centres;
- government and non-government staff working with offenders, particularly indigenous organisations;
- legal organisations; and
- community corrections staff.

The final report was received in July 2012 and evidence gathered supported the initial concerns about lack of understanding of community based orders amongst aboriginal offenders their families and communities.

The report made a total of thirteen recommendations over seven broad areas, these were:

- Improve the understanding of the orders
- Increase the use and availability of interpreters
- Employ the right tools for the task
- Empower stakeholders as partners and educators
- Improve access to information for offenders
- Work with communities to support offenders
- Empower staff to improve awareness

Planning for the second phase of this project has commenced and procurement for development of resources based upon the recommendations of the report is scheduled for early 2013.



CONTACT DETAILS

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MANAGING REMOTE OFFENDERS IN THE TENNANT CREEK REGION



PAROLE BOARD
OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY