

1.1 CORRECTIONAL INDUSTRY PHILOSOPHY

The provision of inmate training and employment opportunities through correctional industry programs represents an essential inmate program endeavour in contemporary correctional management. In compliance with Article 22 of the International Labour Organisation Constitution, the employment of inmates in NSW correctional centres is on a voluntary basis where inmates apply in writing to participate in work and other programs including education and criminogenic programs.

This recognises that work, and the engagement of individuals in training and work, is a cornerstone of a successful society. It also recognises that empirical support exists substantiating the link between offender employment deficits and recidivism.

Over recent years correctional jurisdictions have also introduced the notion of evidence based programs often referred to as 'what works' in inmate programming. Within this context the development and implementation of an employability skills framework to support work programs, as part of inmate case management, is intended to increase the likelihood of successful community reintegration of offenders.

A clear commitment exists to provide inmates within the NSW correctional system with the obligation and opportunity to work. That expectation is underpinned by the following policy objectives:

Primary Objective:

To develop and maintain inmate work programs which facilitates the integration of broader program and service delivery and contributes to the development of inmate employability skills which enhance their successful return to the community.

Detailed Objectives:

- To contribute to the employability training and attitudinal development of inmates to enhance their opportunity to gain and retain post-release employment so as to facilitate their successful return to the community.
- To contribute to effective correctional centre management by providing selected inmates with the opportunity of engaging in work programs which provide a continuity of productive activity and are complementary to other program endeavours.
- To provide the opportunity for inmates to contribute to the self-sufficiency of the correctional system and to provide reparation to the community.

It is stressed that correctional industry programs throughout the world are often daunted by what is referred to as the competing dilemmas of operation (i.e. do correctional industry programs exist for inmate

development, correctional centre management or economic functions). In NSW correctional industry programs exist for all three objectives and an optimised approach is taken to their implementation.

The critical link in providing this optimised implementation is to ensure that inmate training and work programs reflect, as far as possible and practicable within a correctional environment, the rigours and expectations of a community workplace including productive capacity, employability skills and commercial goals. This aspect is further explored in CSI policy manual section 8.3 – Commercialisation.

CSI policy manual section 1.2 – Correctional Industry Definition and Dimension sets out the scope of inmate employment programs through service industries, CSI business units and community based programs. The breadth of correctional industry programs is established at a level which fulfils the national performance indicator (NPI) of 72.3% of inmates employed relative to the correctional population.

Correctional industry programs provide, within an employability skills framework, a range of employment skills, through four skill clusters, which provide confidence to future employers that inmates possess the attitudinal and employment skills necessary to succeed within contemporary community employment endeavours. This also seeks to ensure that correctional industry programs are able to co-exist with and complement other program endeavours as part of the throughcare model.

Issue date: January 2014