The Salvation Army
Tasmania Division

Breaking the Cycle
Tasmania Corrections Plan
2010-2020

Discussion Paper Response
The Salvation Army

Core Values

ᯇ  Hope
ᯇ  Justice
ᯇ  Community
ᯇ  Compassion
ᯇ  Human Dignity

Contact

Grant Herring
The Salvation Army (Tasmania)
Alcohol, Other Drugs & Corrections
250 Liverpool Street  Hobart 7000

Phone:  (03) 6234 1803
Fax:   (03) 6234 1867
Mobile:  0408 124 390
Email:  grant.herring@aus.salvationarmy.org
Table of Contents

Introduction .................................................. 1
Background .................................................. 2
Outcome 1 Sentencing Options ......................... 4
Outcome 2 Community Engagement .................. 5
Outcome 3 Offender rehabilitation and reintegration and community safety 5
Outcome 4 Integrated and accessible service delivery 7
Outcome 5 Workforce development and support .... 8
Outcome 6 Integrity and governance ................. 8
Additional Comments ......................................
  • Social inclusion ...................................... 9
  • Improved connections and partnerships .......... 10
  • Improved access and client-focused approach ... 11
  • Continuous Quality Improvement ................. 12
References ................................................. 14
Introduction

This document contains feedback from The Salvation Army (Tasmania) regarding the Tasmania Corrections Plan 2010-2020. It reflects the organization’s willingness to engage in consultation and productive activity regarding issues that impact on people who are affected by contact with the justice system; either as an offender, a victim of crime or of offending behaviours. The Salvation Army seeks to address issues around delivery of justice and community safety that reduce people’s ability to participate in the community and economy.

The Salvation Army supports an efficient and compassionate response to the needs of people who are offenders and those offended against. The Salvation Army is compelled to advocate on behalf of people who are engaged in the justice system in Tasmania. However, we also support the important contribution made by the government in terms of provision of Community Corrections services, Tasmania Prison Service and Court mandated diversion programs.

The Salvation Army welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the discussion paper and the possible actions suggested for the implementation of a plan which can make positive cultural change across our community by providing means for economically, emotionally and effectively dealing with management of offending behaviours.

Currently, The Salvation Army provides services for prisoner support supported with funding from the Justice Department. The Xcell Program’s service delivery model concept is closely aligned with the suggestions in the discussion paper and would seek to further develop its capability for holistic and collaborative provision of programs identified already as of significant value in offender’s community reintegration.

Xcell and other Salvation Army programs needs to ensure that when services support clients with high and complex support needs there are incentives for them to engage and to maintain engagement. Some of these incentives are suggested in the discussion paper and in our response.


**Background**

In 1865 William Booth and his wife Catherine formed an evangelical group dedicated to helping people living in appalling poverty in London. Their ministry recognised the interdependence of material, emotional and spiritual needs. In addition to preaching the gospel, they became involved in the feeding and shelter of the hungry and homeless, and the rehabilitation of alcoholics.

The Salvation Army has, for more than a 100 years, continued to meet the needs of the homeless and disadvantaged in many communities around the world. The basic social services developed by the Booths have remained a visible expression of The Salvation Army’s religious principles and values. More than 30 million people each year receive support and assistance from services provided by organisation globally. **For 125 years The Salvation Army has been engaged with prison services in Australia.**

Major James Barker began conducting chapel services in the Melbourne gaol in the early 1880’s. The work quickly developed to include a ministry for ex-prisoners whereby Salvation Army officers (the ‘Prison Gate Brigade’) would stand at the prison gate and invite men upon release to “start a new life.” The service aimed to keep people from returning to their old lives of crime. Major Barker opened a prison-gate home in Carlton in 1883.
Background (Cont.)

In 2009 The Salvation Army in Tasmania meet the physical and community welfare needs of over 15,000 Tasmanians. There are currently many challenges facing community service organisations, including the large increase in the number of people seeking affordable housing, support and rehabilitation services over the past 18 months.

The increased level of need and the complexity of the social issues facing disadvantaged people limit NGOs ability to respond appropriately. There is an unmet need for emergency accommodation, transitional and long-term support in Tasmania. The gap between the employed and disadvantaged is widening and this poses difficulties for disadvantaged and homeless people to access affordable, social or private rental accommodation.

Persons with a history of imprisonment or close contact with the justice system as offenders have a level of disadvantage which potentially affects whole communities. ‘Employability’ of former offenders has been affected by detachment from workplace culture, vocational skills depletion, literacy and numeracy issues and social phobias created by incarceration. Opportunities to build offender vocational capability become positive investments in community capacity building when effectively applied.
Outcome 1  *Sentencing Options*

Sentencing options, including more diversionary programs or pathways to fit a restorative process will deliver more effective and acceptable outcomes.

The effect is clearly that the wider community is able to balance more effectively the economic and emotional cost of crime, punishment and the restoration of an offender. Tangible restorative effort by offenders can be seen by community as ‘tougher on crime’ than incarceration or other sentences which can create a recidivist culture. Community safety measures become much more apparent when an offender is engaged in returning value to those offended against, rather than being imprisoned and thus divorced from personal responsibilities.

The diversionary pathways through a restorative model become owned by whole communities, wherein offenders are more able to understand ‘cause and effect’ in regard to their crimes, by interaction with victims and other community members.

It is clear that not every offender will be suited to diversion and restorative justice practices. The initial difficulties may be in assessment by Justice Officers or others, where hope, potential and promise would need to be found in information gathered from communities in regard to the individual offenders.

Sentencing options for diversionary pathways should include lifestyle based personal development programs. These packages are much used in other States and have become a significant tool for courts and for society, in making productive changes to offender lifestyles.

It is expected that there would be a shift in infrastructure, giving much more responsibility to the community sector and to Community Corrections. This creates more opportunity for the Prison system to better manage its reduced population and to create and deliver longer term solutions to the issues faced by incarcerated offenders. The cost to maintain a Community Corrections client is 25 times less than of the cost of incarceration, so shifting infrastructure should generate significant direct savings as well as the savings in reduced crime rates which are a most likely result of this process.
Outcome 2  Community Engagement “It takes a whole village to raise a child.”

Community Justice Panels or similar groups would not only ensure that communities had a greater awareness of justice issues but would create a level of ‘ownership;’ of collective responsibility for management of community safety and restoration of both the damages done in committal of crime as well as in restoration or rehabilitation of the offender.

Creation of Community Justice Panels including Local Government, Police, educator and health worker representatives as well as victim representatives or others from (say) Service Clubs and Churches would be able to provide a strong network of support.

Monitoring of offenders within the structure of a Community Justice Panel would be very effective and adds a strong dimension to the development of productive lifestyle and community safety. Communities in this model are much more able to deal with reasons for offending behaviour as they develop in individuals, or at least to identify risk.

Outcome 3  Offender rehabilitation and reintegration and community safety

The construction of an effective and varied suite of programs and their delivery within the Justice system would be a high priority. Sentenced offenders could (as part of a sentence plan) engage in appropriate programs which could form part of diversionary pathways. Many prisoners should be required to participate in either the development programs or accredited training processes which would support change from offending behaviour.

Opportunities exist for vocational development of inmates while in prison and more effective pathways should be made available for these initiatives to be completed. Linking with complementary or continuing training post release should be a requirement of community re-entry or transition. These training modules are monitored by Registered Training Organisations which could be easily linked to Community Corrections for parolees or probation client services.

Transition or reintegration with community following release can be supported at any stage of an offender’s progress through the Justice system; ie family support, housing, health, alcohol or other drugs services.
Earlier intervention has been shown to provide significant return on investment as these services are delivered to address the reasons for offending behaviour.

Self-determination of direction for offenders should be a tool for effective reintegration in a case managed model. Unless case management principles are adopted, the monitoring of the individuals progress towards their own determined objective becomes very difficult. Self-determination could be the result of productive task completion or successful growth activity within the case-managed environment.

Effectiveness of reintegration of offenders is judged by the community. The community should then, actively participate in the reintegration processes of offenders at all levels. Satisfaction of the fundamental offender needs for employment, accommodation and transition is achieved with engagement of employers, landlords and the wider community.

Empowering communities to better manage the transition processes; to recognise employability; to value former offenders as potential neighbours is a challenge which should be supported by Governments at all levels.

Engagement of offenders pre-release or during probation or parole should be a priority. Issues of literacy/numeracy or vocational training gaps in individual skill sets should be identified early in an offender’s relationship with the Justice system. Assessments can be used to identify educational needs or vocational possibilities where appropriate and reskilling opportunities should be explored either by community based organisations, private providers or Government agencies as part of an effective diversionary model.

Maintenance of a corrections-based (or prison based) employment service through which pre-release employment options can be identified, pre-employment training facilitated and employment places secured is critical in the re-entry of offenders to the workforce. Our community identifies employability and work ethic as strong social measures, so support for development of these factors while in prison or community corrections can provide positive return on investment. Currently, The Salvation Army is delivering an employment services program (STAR: ‘Special Training and Reintegration’) funded through the Department of Economic Development and Tourism). This pilot clearly identifies the potential of a comprehensive service, dedicated to offender employment.
Outcome 4 Integrated and accessible service delivery

Increased interagency cooperative collaboration is critical to effective outcomes for offenders and the broader community. This must be effectively resourced and planned for long periods. Short-term funding models create more difficulties within communities than are appropriate, so in keeping with a ‘ten year plan,’ interagency arrangements should be structured with this in mind.

Corrections should be a ‘whole of Government’ responsibility. Education, infrastructure, workforce development, health and justice are closely interwoven in fact, as should be in the services delivered by Government. Closer connections and holistic service delivery will reduce offending behaviours and recidivism, making our communities safer while developing a culture of mutual support.

Rural and regional centres or individuals will require an outreach style of service delivery to effectively and equitably engage offenders additional to those services accessed in major social centres. These services are paralleled by those currently provided by The Salvation Army in drought relief, family support and alcohol and other drug services.

Community confidence in the current Justice system or lack of confidence, can be born generally of a lack of awareness of alternative justice delivery models. The discussion paper outlines some alternatives which can provide meaningful development of community confidence. Incarceration should not be anything other than a final resort for either dangerous individuals or those for whom alternative justice measures is not appropriate. The notion of prisons being the best response to crime has not been supported through history and has cost our community dearly in lost opportunity and damaged human capital.

Alternative justice models can provide more equitable remediation for victims of crime and for communities, as well as constructing effective rehabilitative processes for offenders.
**Outcome 5  Workforce development and support**

All corrective services staff as well as external agencies working in the justice areas should have capabilities in regard to delivery of positive outcomes for the community. This could mean that an individual with a strong collaborative approach is able to develop more effective outcomes for individuals in the justice system by harnessing or managing every required resource appropriate to the re-entry of those individuals to the community.

Workforce development across the Justice sector would allow for the development of more collaboration and cooperative approaches by all participants, towards the ‘wrap around’ of services. This certainly is a significant pathway for effective and sustainable outcomes.

**Outcome 6  Integrity and governance**

Shifting community and system awareness towards a more holistic and sustainable delivery of justice remains a significant challenge. The long-held ‘lock up criminals’ view does not provide any sustainable solution to questions of community safety or positive lifestyle growth.

Establishment of a restorative style of justice delivery can, alternatively build community confidence and certainly, build capacity both through skills development and reduced capital cost. The social capital generated from a model of this nature has significant potential to modify offending behaviour.

With a plan as suggested in the discussion paper, a ten-year retrospective view should indicate less people imprisoned (allowing for more targeted and effective service delivery to inmates), strong Community Corrections links through active engagement with external agencies and community members and well-developed vocational and social pathways for offenders and potential offenders. This type of model delivers significant cost savings to the community, allowing for enhanced sustainability, skills growth and educational development for those sentenced to community-based justice. It also supports delivery of effective rehabilitative programs and services to prisoners, through capacity building from cost savings.
Additional Comments

1. Social Inclusion
Social Inclusion is a relatively new policy framework in Australia. There is some theoretical discussion regarding its meaning, and debate concerning the actions that need to be undertaken in order to achieve ‘inclusion’ for people who are seriously ‘excluded’, such as those disadvantaged through periods of incarceration.

Social Exclusion originated in France in the late 1990’s with an emphasis on social citizenship and social cohesion. It was suggested that concepts such as disadvantage and poverty were the outcome of a process of exclusion and they were inherently derogatory. It is a popular policy framework in the United Kingdom and European Union, which have invested energy and resources to develop indicators of social inclusion (or exclusion) to measure the health and well being of citizens.

The Salvation Army supports the adoption of a broad social inclusion framework because it affords an opportunity to address issues of disadvantage holistically, considering spiritual, social and material needs.

Social Inclusion also provides an opportunity to consider discrimination and stigmatization in relation to homelessness, and its role as a barrier to accessing support and community resources that might otherwise be considered a person’s right.

The Social Inclusion principles articulated by the Australian Social Inclusion Board (2008) have considerable applicability in designing responsive programs and flexible services to support homeless people.

The principles include three aspirations and eight approaches:

1. Reducing disadvantage
2. Increasing social, civil and economic participation
3. Developing a greater voice, combined with greater responsibility
4. Building on individual and community strengths
5. Building partnerships with key stakeholders
6. Developing tailored services
7. Giving high priority to early intervention and prevention
8. Building joined up services and whole of government solutions
9. Using evidence and integrated data to inform policy
10. Using locational approaches
11. Planning for sustainability
2. Improved Connections and Partnerships

The Salvation Army recognises that in order to provide positive and lasting outcomes for homeless and family violence clients, organisations must work more collaboratively. There is a need for formal and informal partnership arrangements providing significant levels of integration, and a holistic approach to the provision of support services. The success of service responses to clients’ needs is made possible by practice partnerships. These partnerships include major hospitals, domestic violence refuges, mental health services, community health services, refugee advocacy organisations, legal services, counselling programs, transitional housing programs and Centrelink. The move towards more integrated and coordinated service delivery could be focused by outcome driven imperatives.

The best partnerships are based on a mutual recognition of the inherent value of working together, rather than a commercial imperative, tendering opportunity or regional policy imperatives. It is important to recognize that practice partnerships take time and resources to develop. However, once they have matured, practice partnerships can provide significant individual and systemic outcomes for homeless people. This has been the experience of The Salvation Army’s XCell and TSMP programs that have been working successfully with the Tasmanian Prison Service for several years to achieve good support outcomes for ex-prisoners who are at risk of compounding their level of disadvantage on release.

‘Breaking the Cycle:’ Discussion Paper Response 10
3. **Improved Access & Client Focused Approach**

Effective programs ‘wrap services around an individual’ with high needs. The Salvation Army recognises this as the best approach to working with disadvantaged people. This means that the support works for the client rather than the client being required to find their own way from service to service. Client centered services are driven by the needs of the individual and not by the needs of the system or service providers. Services should not be constrained by rigid timeframes and narrowly defined service parameters other than those defined through the sentencing process.

Clients should be able to receive assistance early and effectively to ensure that their situation is not made worse by the service system. Instead their needs should be addressed as quickly and compassionately as possible. Service providers should be encouraged to work with individuals to deal with issues and provide options or creative solutions to problems, which may not always conform to a limited or rigid set of guidelines. The client should be encouraged to make progress and achieve their goals. The adoption of a client-focused approach will reduce demand management systems that have been put in place in several service areas.

The desire for improved access to services requires cooperation and good communication. It needs to be based on mutual understanding and respect. Competition can enhance service delivery in the market place but it also has the capacity to undermine trust between services dealing with market failure. If we are to promote a greater level of practice partnership the role of competition should be used to enhance service delivery outcomes rather than drive down funding levels and quality.

The Salvation Army understands the need for people to develop a sense of community and engage in activities that will build self-esteem and a sense of belonging. In many community services, this is achieved by involving disadvantaged people in activities they would not otherwise have the chance to experience. Often a bond is formed between the worker and client that has a profoundly positive impact on the client.
4. **Continuous Quality Improvement**

The Salvation Army recognises the value of service standards in order to achieve better client outcomes. Several government departments at both a state and federal level have developed service standards. There is a need to coordinate these jurisdictional efforts into one mutually recognised consistent set of service standards and to work towards quality assurance processes that support continuous improvement. This type of initiative builds on what has been done to date and would represent a component of sector infrastructure development. It will also reduce duplication and unnecessary bureaucratic processes that detract from client focused service provision.

The regulatory burden on many NGOs to comply with Quality futures has been significant. Therefore we suggest that the regulatory burden on non-government agencies needs to be streamlined and become a whole of government issues. The Salvation Army (2009) suggests that

- Human service standards should incorporate a continuous quality improvement approach
- Review and accreditation should be independent of government
- Peer review should be promoted
- A national approach to quality standards for human services should recognise and complement State standards
- Australian human service standards should have a ‘systems’ approach to quality standards requirements including, for example, ongoing evaluation of how and what is being required of whom and to what effect
- Community sector learning’s arising from external reviews need to be captured and discussed with government, including discussion of implications for service models, and funding models as part of a systematic approach to service quality on the part of government
- There should be a research base to specific standards sets (possibly as a prerequisite to adoption or at least within the next three years for existing standards) that demonstrates the cost/benefit impact on client outcomes in the short, medium-and long term, compared with other standards and no particular standards.

- Service users should be involved in the consultations and ongoing evaluation about service standards.

- Additional funding is required to enable services to undertake the additional activities involved in engaging with review processes without impacting existing service capacity and to purchase services of review bodies and cover ongoing costs of agencies’ engagement with those bodies (e.g. membership).
References


The Salvation Army (Tasmania Division) Prison Brief: Discussion in developing a Tasmanian Salvation Army Prison Support Service Model

The Salvation Army (Tasmania Division) Prison Support Service Model of Service (Sept 2003)

The Changing Boundaries: What Place Community Organisation in Change and Reforms of the Criminal Justice System - Eileen Baldry – UNSW.

Council of Europe; Committee of Ministers
Recommendation Rec (2006)2 (adopted)

Restorative Justice – A discussion Paper for use by people in Methodist, Presbyterian and Cooperative Venture Parishes.
http://www.socialissues.godzone.net.nz/publications/resjust.html

Restorative Justice: Emerging Views – Chris Cuneen, University of Sydney