



# Research Bulletin

## NSW Corrective Services Industries and Offender Post-release Employment

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Research Officer

**Research Bulletin No.14**  
**April 1991**  
**ISSN 0729 2422**

**NSW Department of Corrective Services**

Material published by the  
Research Division includes  
Research Digests, Research  
Bulletins, and Research  
Publications.



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Department of Corrective Services

**N.S.W. CORRECTIVE SERVICES  
INDUSTRIES  
AND  
OFFENDER POST-RELEASE  
EMPLOYMENT**

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**Research Bulletin No. 14**

Research and Statistics Branch.

Strategic Services Division

Release Date: April, 1991

ISSN 0729 - 2422

## **FOREWORD**

The Research Report prepared by Judy McHutchison which sought to evaluate the impact of Prison Industry upon Prisoner Post Release Employment provides an important philosophical basis for the current program of Prison Industry revitalisation.

Whilst the Report evaluated only a limited sample it does provide a very clear indication of the positive value of Prison Industry related to prisoner perception of creative and worthwhile endeavour whilst incarcerated. The Report also clearly establishes that if prisoners participate within commercial based Prison Industry there is a greater likelihood of their gaining post-release employment.

In this context, the importance of the current extensive program of Prison Industry expansion and commercialisation is evident. That program which has now resulted in more commercially based work positions being created in three years than existed after 200 years of Corrections provides a very symbolic implementation of the substance of the research report.

Other elements of the Report setting out attitudes of prisoners to various forms of work and the structure of Prison Industries will be embraced as existing and new Industries are rationalised. It will also be extremely valuable to extend the scope of the Report to embrace a later evaluation of the two most recent Private Sector Prison Industry initiatives.

**WAYNE RUCKLEY**  
Executive Director  
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18 April 1991

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank the many people who assisted with this project.

Firstly a special thanks to the following staff at the institutions of the Training Centre, Bathurst Gaol, Cessnock Corrective Centre and Parklea Prison for their assistance with this project:

- Corrective Services Industry Managers and Industrial Officers for sharing their knowledge and for assistance in arranging interviews with inmates;
- Superintendents of these gaols for their opinions and assistance;
- Assistant Superintendents of Industry (Prison Employment), for sharing their knowledge, and their offices while employment records were examined; in particular Bill Wright, Assistant Superintendent of Industry at the Training Centre, and Alex Bishop, Assistant Superintendent of Industry at Parklea Prison;

- Thanks to the forty-eight inmates in the above institutions who spoke so frankly of their experiences.

Thanks also to the officers of the Probation and Parole Service for their assistance.

Special thanks to the twenty-four offenders who, despite having their freedom, were willing to make their time available to the researcher for interviews.

Thanks to staff in the Research and Statistics Division:

- Lisa Conolly, (former Research Officer) for her advice in many areas and assistance with data collection;
- Angela Gorta (Chief Research Officer) for her comments on the draft report and her assistance with editing;
- Barbara Thompson (Research Statistician) for comments on the report and assistance with statistical analysis.

## **SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The primary aim of the study was to investigate the success of Corrective Services Industries in their stated objectives of developing the work ethic in prisoners and improving their vocational and employability skills. The research was conducted in two stages. Stage 1 was concerned with the experiences of inmates working in Corrective Services Industries (metal, timber and upholstery) and the Services section (kitchen, sweeping and maintenance) within gaol, while Stage 2 was concerned with comparing the post-release work experiences of parolees who had worked in Corrective Services Industries with parolees who had worked in the Services section. The principal findings are outlined below.

### **Stage 1**

- Corrective Services Industry workshops operate as revenue producing shops. Inmates are trained while they work on production. In some workshops this production based training is supplemented by participation in accredited TAFE trade courses.
- Inmates said they had learnt new things by working in Corrective Services Industries and most thought their work would be helpful in employment after release as they had learnt and practised skills.
- Most inmates thought that enough time was spent teaching them how to do things properly in workshops. Criticisms offered by some inmates were that officers were more supervisors than teachers, that inmates should have a greater understanding of why they do things, and that sometimes they were only shown new procedures once and lacked confidence in attempting these.
- Both inmates and staff thought that TAFE training was important for work inside the gaol because it increased learning, enabled inmates to do superior quality production work and provided them with an interest. All offenders enrolled in TAFE courses expected this to assist them with employment after release.

- When asked what if anything they liked about working in gaol, most inmates stated they liked working because it kept them occupied and made time go quicker. Some inmates suggested that they liked work because it was satisfying or because they learnt new things.
- Inmates in both Corrective Services Industries and those in Services thought working was a helpful way of passing the time.
- When asked what if anything they disliked about working in gaol, the most common response was that the wages were too low.

### **Stage 2**

Data were collected so that differences between the offenders in the Industries group and in the Services group could be tested on four variables: whether the offender had worked since release; whether or not the offender was presently employed, the time between the release date and the date of commencement of first employment; and recidivism within three months of release. Data were collected for offenders released to parole who had spent at least three months working in the same employment location.

- When all the data were included there was no difference between the groups in the numbers who had worked since release, the numbers who were presently employed or on the time taken to find work. However, when only data for offenders who had worked longer than six months in their work location in gaol were included, offenders in the Industries group were significantly more likely to have worked since release than those in the Services group. The Industries group also took significantly less time to find work than the Services group. Yet there was no significant difference between the groups on whether they were employed at the time of data collection.
- There was no difference between the two groups in rate of recidivism after six months.

Twenty-four offenders who had worked in Corrective Services Industries were interviewed.

- Most of the offenders claimed there were serious obstacles to their finding work. The most common problems described were having a prison record, a break in work history (as a result of gaol) and a lack of transport. Probation and Parole Officers suggested that contributing factors to inmate unemployment for the other offenders in the sample were a lack of available work and drug and alcohol problems.
- After working in Corrective Services Industries, most of the offenders who found jobs when released returned to relatively unskilled work similar to that in which they were engaged before prison. Despite this, some were able to put skills they had learnt in Corrective Services Industries to use in their new employment. One offender out of the twenty-four interviewed was able to re-enter the workforce in a more highly skilled occupation as a consequence of his time in a Corrective Services Industries workshop.
- Since their release, some offenders had put the skills they had learnt in Corrective Services Industries to constructive use in their leisure time by making or repairing items.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 UNEMPLOYMENT

There has long been an association between unemployment and criminal activity. Many previous studies have found that offenders, particularly those sentenced to prison, have experienced higher unemployment than the general population. For example Bates and Nunn (1986) found that 64% of a random sample of inmates at H.M. Prison Woodford, Queensland, were unemployed at the time of their offence. Eighty-eight per cent of the sample experienced an episode of unemployment during the two year period prior to committing their offence. In a study of young offenders in NSW prisons, 45% reported that they did not have work at the time of their offence (Gilchrist, Young & Elliot, 1989). A similar finding was found for West Australian prisoners in a study by Broadhurst, Maller, Maller, & Duffecy (1988). Nationally 40.8% of the prison population have been found to be unemployed at the time of their arrest (Walker & Biles in Noad, 1988). In a South Australian study unemployed people appeared in summary courts at approximately eight times the rate of those who were employed (Office of Crime Statistics, 1987). This study also found that robbery, break and enter, and unlawful use or theft of a vehicle all had particularly high percentages of unemployed defendants at 61.6%, 66.9% and 70.5% respectively.

Although the relationship between unemployment and crime has been the subject of considerable research, results concerning causality tend to be inconclusive. It may be that the unemployment rate has some influence on crime rates but this influence is mediated through other variables. Most of the unemployed do not commit crimes and female unemployment rates have been found not to influence female crime rates (Naffine & Gale, 1989).

The prisoner population as well as being characterised by high unemployment, also has an over-representation of the under-educated and unskilled (Windschuttle, 1980, p.91).

Moreover, a disproportionate number of prisoners are unskilled labourers, a group that tends to be at the end of the employment queue. When unemployment is running at high levels, which it has done in Australia for many years, such workers experience enormous problems obtaining work (Black & Rouse, 1989).

Almost all offenders who are sent to gaol are returned to society. Correctional institutions, at the very least, need to ensure that prisoners are not made worse by their prison experience. At best, the imprisonment of an offender provides correctional institutions with an opportunity to develop in inmates qualities valued by society.

The rehabilitation of offenders has long been a goal of many of those concerned with correctional centres. However, the successful formula for prisoner rehabilitation has been elusive. There is, nevertheless, some reason for slight optimism in regards to vocational training. In a report on NSW parolees, a lack of marketable skills was reported by the highest percentage of parolees as a reason for employment instability (Gorta, Gooney, George, & West, 1982). Studies in Great Britain and America have repeatedly found that prisoners who find stable employment upon release have approximately half the recidivism rate of those who face unemployment (Braithwaite, 1980, p.12). The training of offenders with employable skills and a positive attitude towards work would appear to have benefits for both the offender and society as a whole. If vocational programs increase employability they may be one of the few types of interventions which have some impact on crime (Braithwaite, 1980 p.19). However, there appear to be few studies which attempt to assess the effect of gaol vocational programs on offenders' employment experiences after release. Those studies which could be located (Glaser 1964, and two cited in Braithwaite 1980 - Pownall 1966 and Abt Associates 1971) failed to sufficiently describe the type of training in vocational programs and thus were not very instructive in regards to factors in vocational programs which may lead to success. The content of vocational programs could vary widely between institutions. The studies cited post-release employment and recidivism as



measures on which to judge the effectiveness of vocational programs.

In a study by Glaser, 140 inmates released from four major US cities were followed up over a period of 4.1 months. Thirty per cent of the successes (those who had not yet reoffended) stated improved work habits or skills acquired from gaol employment as a reason for not returning to crime (Glaser, 1964).

In 1971 a major study was undertaken to evaluate 30 institutions funded under the United States Manpower Development and Training Act providing inmates with trade training, mainly welding, auto-mechanics and upholstery, with about half the offenders provided with job placement assistance as well. The post-release experiences of 2,877 of these offenders were compared with those of 1000 matched controls. It was found that trainees were more likely than controls to be employed full-time after three months but less likely after six months in the workforce. However, the recidivism of those involved in vocational training was found to be three to five per cent lower than that of controls (Abt Associates 1971 cited in Braithwaite 1980).

Pownall, in a US study using Federal Prison releasees found that inmates who had received some vocational training in prison were no more likely to find employment than those offenders who had not received training unless they had received that training for at least a year (Braithwaite 1980, p.32). Both Glaser and Pownall found that less than a third of those who received vocational training used it in their first job upon release, a result they viewed as disappointing.

## **1.2 OUTLINE OF EMPLOYMENT IN NSW GAOLS**

Prisoners working in NSW gaols either work in the Services section where their duties are to attend to tasks required to operate or to maintain the gaol, or in Corrective Services Industries which operates a range of revenue producing industries within the gaols. Work in the Services section includes work in such areas as in the kitchen, laundry, maintenance, gardening and cleaning (sweeping).

Corrective Services Industries is divided into six product divisions. These are Metal Products, Timber Products, Plastic Products, Textile, Leather and Upholstery Products, General Services and Agricultural Services. In Corrective Services Industries workshops, inmates are engaged in production work under the supervision of Industrial Officers. Some of the inmates may also participate in TAFE (Department of Technical and Further Education) trade courses during production time. The Assistant Superintendent of Industries (Prisoner Employment) is responsible for allocating all work to inmates within the gaol. There are no standardised criteria for the allocation of inmates to work locations within the gaol system. Each Assistant Superintendent of Industry (ASI) allocates inmates on the basis of their own criteria and the demand for workers within the different work locations in the gaol. The ASI may also take into account recommendations from the Classification Committee, Reception Committee and Program Review Committee. The inmate's work preference is also taken into account, as are the characteristics of the inmate such as: the inmate's work experience (before gaol and in gaol); whether or not the inmate was on methadone; whether or not the inmate had a history of violence; and the inmate's expected length of stay in that institution. The inmate's security classification may also influence where an inmate works as some industries are situated outside the main walls of the gaols and only inmates with a low security rating may work there.

Once allocated to a work location a number of events can bring an inmate's stay in that work location to an end. For instance, an inmate may apply to be re-assigned to another work location. If the ASI officer agrees to this, the inmate can commence work in the preferred location or if a position is not available at their preferred location they may stay in their present work locale until a position does become available. Inmates can also be dismissed from their work location. Usually this would occur if an inmate refused to work or for other serious misbehaviour. An inmate's stay in a work location can also come to end as a result of bail, or

transfer to another institution or release. Transfers between institutions are frequent and are generally the result of a reclassification of the inmate's security rating or, in some cases, a means whereby Superintendents deal with inmates they perceive as troublesome.

### **1.2.1 Wage Structure**

Once in a Corrective Services Industry workshop, inmates can make their way through the four skill levels: 'unskilled', 'semi-skilled', 'skilled' and 'proficiency'. Before April 1990 inmates were paid at a weekly rate. As inmates increased their skill level, their wages increased from the basic rate of \$9 per week to a proficiency rate of \$17 per week. Inmates could also earn a bonus based on a productivity allowance which can be up to 100% of their wages or an extra \$22 a week for those at the proficiency level. An inmate's entitlement to a bonus is at the discretion of the officer-in-charge of the workshop. There is a limit on the number of inmates who can be paid at the proficiency level. Where inmates were prepared to work but no work was available, they were categorised as "unemployed" and received \$7 a week. If an inmate was not prepared to work or had been sacked from their work, they were classified as a "non-worker" and received \$3.50 a week. Changes were introduced to the prisoner wages system from the beginning of April 1990. Basically if a prisoner does not work then he/she does not receive any payment whatsoever (Department of Corrective Services Information Bulletin, 1990). The unemployment rate was reduced from \$7 to \$4.50 per week and employed inmates are henceforth to be paid at an hourly rate instead of a weekly rate.

As well as wages, other privileges may be given to inmates who work, such as extra visits that exceed the number stipulated by regulation requirements. These privileges are at the discretion of the superintendent of the gaol. A system of remissions was in operation at the time inmates involved in this study were in gaol. Inmates who worked in gaol and were considered to be working diligently could be recommended by their officer-in-charge to

receive two days remission per month off their minimum sentence.

### **1.2.2 Aims of Corrective Services Industries**

Gaol industries have long been a part of the NSW prison system. In recent years interest has been generated at management level to "revitalise" gaol industries. The present Minister of Corrective Services, the Honourable Michael Yabsley, has used the slogan "every gaol a factory - every prisoner a worker" to emphasize the Government's commitment to the expansion of industries within the NSW gaol system. Currently Corrective Services Industries has a philosophy which encompasses a broad range of objectives. These include prisoner rehabilitation, prison management, economic measures and community expectations. These are given in detail in a report prepared by the Director of Corrective Services Industries (Ruckley, 1989, p.6). The rehabilitation aims are (Ruckley, 1990):

1. To develop the 'work ethic'; and
2. To develop vocational/employability skills of prisoners complementary to basic education programs.
3. As a basis of enhancing:
  - (a) Prison Industries employment, and
  - (b) Post-release employment.

The focus of this research was to investigate the effectiveness of Corrective Services Industries in achieving the three rehabilitative aims as quoted above. Therefore the aims of this study were:

1. To describe the work performed in Corrective Services Industries workshops, the training provided and the skills learnt;
2. To investigate the attitudes of offenders who work in Corrective Services Industries towards working in Corrective Services Industries.
3. To ascertain whether those offenders who had worked in Corrective Services Industries for some time, are assisted by this experience in attaining employment after release;
4. To investigate what factors may contribute to the success or lack of success of post-release employment;
5. To ascertain whether working in Corrective Services Industries provides offenders with skills they can use in their recreational time.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

Because of limitations of time and finance, not all industries operating in NSW gaols nor all institutions in NSW could be included in this study. The industries chosen for inclusion in the study were chosen on the basis of the number of inmates working in those industries and the accessibility of those industries from Sydney. The study includes data gathered on inmates who have worked in the Corrective Services Industries product divisions of Metal, Timber, and Upholstery (a component of Textile, Leather and Upholstery Products). As a comparison group was required against which the post-release employment experiences of Corrective Services Industries could be compared, inmates who had worked in the Services section (kitchen, sweeping and maintenance) were also included in the study.

Four institutions were included in the study. These were the Training Centre, Parklea Prison, Bathurst Gaol and Cessnock Corrective Centre. The Training Centre is a minimum security institution within the Long Bay complex of prisons in Sydney. At the time of this study the Training Centre contained industries in the product divisions of Metal, Timber, Plastics, and Agricultural Services which operates a tree nursery. Bathurst Gaol is a medium security country institution that contains industries in the product divisions of Metal, Timber, Textiles, Leather and Upholstery, and the General Services Division which has an electronics workshop. There are two Timbershops at Bathurst, "Timber Tech" and the "Joinery". The Metalshop at Bathurst (Metal Tech) and Timber Tech placed priority on the training of inmates rather than production. There are also in Bathurst two work areas concerned with upholstery. The external upholstery workshop is located outside the main walls of the gaol and the inmates in this workshop produce metal furniture frames. Cessnock Corrective Centre is also a medium security country institution and has Metal, Timber, and Upholstery workshops as well as the refurbishment of demountables (portable classrooms) which is in the General Services Division, and other activities that come under the Agricultural Services Division.

Parklea Prison is a maximum security institution within the metropolitan area of Sydney and has Metal and Timber workshops and a Printing and Binding workshop. As at 21st May 1989 the prison populations for the institutions involved in the study were: Training Centre 237, Bathurst Gaol 236, Cessnock Corrective Centre 402 and Parklea Prison 207. As at 24th May 1989 the number of inmates working in Corrective Services Industries at these institutions were: Training Centre 90, Bathurst Gaol 129, Cessnock Corrective Centre 212, and Parklea Prison 105.

This study was divided into two stages. In Stage 1 of the study, data were collected from inmates who were working in the relevant work locations within the four gaols described above. Stage 2 was concerned with data collection from offenders who been released into the community with after-care supervision provided by the Probation and Parole Service.

### 2.1 STAGE 1

In Stage 1 of the study, data were collected regarding skills inmates were learning and their attitudes towards working in gaol. Unstructured interviews took place with Industrial Officers, Corrective Services Industries Managers, Education Officers, Superintendents, Psychologists and Assistant Superintendents of Industry.

Structured interviews were conducted with 48 inmates using an interview schedule. Thirty-six of these worked in Corrective Services Industries (Metal, Timber and Upholstery) and twelve worked in the Services section (kitchen, sweeping and maintenance).

As this part of the study was concerned with the collection of qualitative data, selection of a random sample was not considered necessary. Up to five inmates were interviewed in each Corrective Services Industries workshop. Officers-in-charge of workshops were asked for the names of inmates who had been in the workshop for a short period, inmates who had been in the workshop for approximately three months, and inmates who had been in the workshops for longer periods. Once provided

with these names the research officer then randomly chose the inmates to interview. At the time interviews were conducted, inmates included in the sample for Stage 1 of the study had been in their work locations from one week to four years.

Data collection for Stage 1 occurred during July and August 1989 and inmates were each interviewed for approximately one hour. The work locations of the inmates and number of offenders interviewed are shown in Table 1.

institution. The offender's employment history includes whether the offender was willing to work but with no work available ("unemployed") or unwilling to work ("non-worker"), and lists his places of work and the date he started and finished in these work locations. Work records of some institutions also record other information such as the offence committed and the release date. Work records remain at the gaol when the inmate is transferred or released. When an inmate leaves the gaol his work record

**Table 1: Work Locations of Inmates Interviewed in Gaol**

WORK LOCATION	GAOL				Total
	Training Centre	Bathurst	Cessnock	Parklea	
Industries					
Metal	4	2	3	4	13
Timber	5	2	3	4	14
Timber Tech	N.A.	3	N.A.	N.A.	3
Upholstery	N.A.	4	2	N.A.	6
Services					
Kitchen	2	1	1	2	6
Sweeping	2		1	1	4
Maintenance			1	1	2
Total	13	12	11	12	48

**N.A. = This industry not operating at this gaol at this time.**

## 2.2 STAGE 2

Stage 2 of the study was concerned with investigating offenders' post-release employment experiences. The sample of offenders was to be divided into two groups: those who had worked in Corrective Services Industries and those who had worked in Services. Only offenders who had worked three months or longer in the same work location within Corrective Services Industries or Services were to be included in the sample to be followed up.

The sample for Stage 2 of the study was obtained from inmate work records kept by the institutions. These work records detail the employment history of the prisoner whilst at that

is taken from the current files and placed with past ("dead") files, the work records of other offenders who have left the gaol.

As Stage 2 of the study was concerned with the employment of offenders upon release, the files of inmates who had left the institution were examined. The study was interested in gaining information that would, as closely as possible, reflect the contribution Corrective Services Industries was presently making to offender employment. Therefore only those offenders who had worked in gaol in recent years were desired for inclusion in the study. However, in the choosing of a cut-off date which would select out those offenders who had most recently worked in the areas under study there was also

a need to allow for a sufficient time period that would permit a large number of offenders to be included in the sample. A decision was made to only include those offenders who had worked in their work locations since 1st January 1988. Thus information was taken from the files of inmates who had spent any time in the work locations of Metal, Timber, Upholstery and in Kitchen, Sweeping or Maintenance after 1st January 1988. However, this date had to be altered in the case of Parklea Prison when it was realised that the non-parole periods on the offender employment cards made it unlikely that most of these offenders would be released in time to be included in the study. Parklea is a maximum security institution and it may take prisoners some years after being transferred from there before they make their way through the medium and minimum security gaols and are released. The names and MINs (master index numbers) of the inmates and the dates they started and finished in their work locations were recorded. Data were collected for inmates who had left the gaols (transferred or released) between the dates shown in Table 2 and had worked in the work locations for any time after 1.1.88 for gaols other than Parklea, and after 1.1.87 for Parklea. Information was extracted from employment records firstly during late July and August 1989 and then a second collection took place in November 1989 and early January 1990.

At the time of the study, Cessnock Corrective Centre was the only institution in the study which had fully computerised its employment records. This therefore required a different means of collecting details on offenders than the other gaols. Information on employment histories for inmates could only be gained by obtaining discharge sheets for inmates who had been released and the names on this list used to access computerised employment records. Work records for Cessnock were those for offenders who were recorded as released when discharge sheets were examined on 18.08.89. At Bathurst Gaol many of the work records for inmates whose surnames began with A-E were missing as they had been destroyed in a fire around April 1989.

**Table 2: Periods For Which Past Employment Records were Examined**

Gaol	First collection	Second collection
Training	1.1.89-24.7.89	1.1.88-31.12.88
Bathurst	1.1.88-13.8.89	
Cessnock	18.6.88-16.8.89	
Parklea	1.1.88-31.12.88	1.1.87-31.12.87 1.1.89-31.12.89

Once information was gathered on starting and finishing dates in work locations, the number of days worked in each location was calculated for each inmate. A list was made of those inmates who had worked for longer than three months in the work locations under study. Probation and Parole computer files were then examined to establish which offenders were reporting to the Probation and Parole Service. Adjustments to supervision periods of parolees occurred on 25th September 1989 as a result of transitional arrangements concerned with the enactment of the Sentencing Act, 1989. The effective period under supervision was reduced and this meant many offenders who had been listed for involvement in this study had completed their supervision earlier than the research officer had anticipated and could not be included in the sample.

Sufficient numbers of offenders were not left in the sample from Parklea Prison, the Training Centre and Bathurst Gaol. Further collections were made from work records at the Training Centre and Parklea Prison of offenders who had worked longer than three months in the relevant work locations and had left the gaol during the periods indicated in Table 2. No further records could be obtained from Bathurst because all available data for inmates who had worked after 1st January 1988 had already been included.

**Table 3: Work Locations of Offenders in the Sample****NUMBER OF OFFENDERS IN SAMPLE**

(Number for whom post-release employment available given in brackets.)

Work location	Training Centre	Bathurst	Cessnock	Parklea	Total
Industries					
Metal	11 (2)	9 (7)	18 (5)	14 (6)	52 (20)
Timber	19 (12)	4 (2)	35 (17)	12 (9)	70 (40)
Timber Tech	N.A.	3 (2)	N.A.	N.A.	3 (2)
Upholstery	N.A.	5 (1)	9 (2)	N.A.	14 (3)
Subtotal	30 (14)	21 (12)	62 (24)	26 (15)	139 (65)
Service					
Kitchen	2 (0)	1 (1)	4 (3)	9 (4)	16 (8)
Sweeping	6 (5)	7 (6)	6 (4)	10 (4)	29 (19)
Maintenance	13 (11)	2 (1)	4 (2)	5 (4)	24 (18)
Subtotal	21 (16)	10 (8)	14 (9)	24 (12)	69 (45)
Total	51 (30)	31 (20)	76 (33)	50 (27)	208 (110)

**N.A.= This industry not operating at this gaol at this time.**

The resultant sample for Stage 2 of the study consisted of 208 offenders who had worked in Corrective Services Industries or the Services section for longer than three months and were now out on parole. The sample was divided into two groups so that the post-release work experience of Corrective Services Industries inmates could be compared with that of Services inmates. The work locations and numbers of offenders in the sample is presented in Table 3.

### 2.2.1 Corrective Services Industries Sample

There were 139 offenders in the Corrective Services Industries sample. Letters were sent out by the Acting/Executive Officer Probation and Parole Service to the Officers-in-Charge of those Probation and Parole offices where offenders in the sample were reporting. The Officers-in-Charge were later contacted by the researcher and given a list of the offenders required for interview. Supervising officers were asked to approach the offenders to ascertain their willingness to be involved in the study and

to arrange a time when the offender could be interviewed by the research officer.

Although the intention was to interview all offenders in the Corrective Services Industries sample, gaining access to most of the offenders proved very slow and difficult. The reasons for this were that it was during a period of flux in the Probation and Parole Service as some offices were closing down and their caseloads were being distributed to other offices. Thus despite negotiations to arrange interviews having taken place with a supervising officer, the offender's supervising officer could change and such negotiations had to recommence. As attempts to arrange interviews commenced in October and continued over the Christmas holiday period, this was a time when many officers were taking leave. Problems in delay were exacerbated by the fact that many offenders only report monthly. The heavy workload of those in the Probation and Parole Service may have led to a lack of commitment to assist with the arrangement of interviews for this study. Also some offenders did not want to be interviewed. Although the researcher was expressly informed

of four offenders who did not want to be interviewed there may have been others. Six offenders who agreed to be interviewed, did not turn up at the arranged time.

In January, 1990 Probation and Parole offices outside the metropolitan area but within approximately two hours' travelling time from Sydney were contacted regarding offenders in the sample reporting to these offices. Four interviews were able to be conducted outside the metropolitan area, two at Maitland and two at Lakes Entrance.

Interviews were conducted with a total of 24 offenders who had worked in Corrective Services Industries. Each offender involved in the interviews was given a brief explanation of the nature of the research, told that participation was voluntary and that their replies would remain anonymous.

Supervising officers in the Probation and Parole Service were contacted by telephone to gain data from the files of the remaining 115 offenders in the sample who had worked in Corrective Services Industries. These data were considered essential for the quantitative analysis of the study. A one page questionnaire was filled in by the researcher with information provided.

Data were obtained over the telephone from Probation and Parole officers from information available in the files of 41 offenders. Thus information was available for 65 offenders who had worked in Corrective Services Industries. No data were obtained for 74 offenders as 38 had returned to gaol, 20 had completed parole, two had died, the whereabouts of 13 were unknown and one had been extradited. These records were not followed up as the location and interpretation of all the files would have required considerable expense and allocation of time.

### 2.2.2 Services Sample

The comparison group in this study consisted of 69 offenders who had worked in the Services section of the relevant gaols for over three months and were now released under the supervision of the Probation and Parole Service. To gain employment information on this group,

Officers-in-Charge of Probation and Parole offices where these offenders were reporting were, in January 1990, sent a one page questionnaire for each offender with a covering letter from the Acting/Executive Officer, Probation and Parole Service. Only twenty-nine of these questionnaires were returned. This necessitated the researcher phoning Probation and Parole officers to obtain information for the remaining 40 in the sample. Information was obtained over the telephone for another 16 offenders in the sample.

Of the 69 offenders in the Services sample, no data were obtained for 24 as 16 had returned to gaol, four had completed their probation or parole and the whereabouts of four were unknown.

As shown in Table 4 the method used to obtain data was either by interview using the interview schedule, or by a questionnaire that was completed by Probation and Parole Officers or the researcher from information supplied by Probation and Parole Officers.

**Table 4: Method Data Obtained**

NUMBER OF OFFENDERS

Group	Questionnaire		Total
	Interview	naire	
Industries	24	41	65
Services	-	45	45
Total	24	86	110



### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1 STAGE 1:

In Stage 1 of the study interviews were conducted with a total of 48 inmates and 18 industrial staff working in several work locations (see Table 1). Thirty-six of these inmates were working in Corrective Services Industries. Since a comparison group for Stage 2 of the study was to be drawn from the Services section, twelve inmates were interviewed in the Services section as well. From these interviews, it is possible to give a description of the type of work, the skills offenders were learning and their access to TAFE training. Each work location (metal, timber, upholstery, kitchen, sweeping, maintenance) will be discussed in turn following a description of the sample.

**Table 5: Highest Level of Education Commenced**

	Percentage of inmates (n=48)
Primary	2
Year seven high school	4
Year eight	17
Year nine	31
Year ten	29
Year eleven	0
Year twelve	6
Education completed overseas	10

**Table 6: Age at Leaving School**

	Percentage of inmates (n=48)
13 years	6
14 years	27
15 years	29
16 years	15
17 years	8
18 years	4
No information	10

#### 3.1.1 Description of the Sample

Trade courses had been completed by 19% of the sample. During the two year period before coming to gaol, seventeen per cent had not had any employment for the entire period, forty-four per cent of the sample had been labourers, eight per cent had been working in unskilled factory work, fifteen per cent had been working as skilled tradesmen and eight per cent had been in administrative work while the remainder were in semi-skilled work.

#### 3.1.2 Work Performed in Corrective Services Industries Workshops

In the industries under study, items are produced in workshops by limited production runs (where perhaps anywhere from five to a hundred of the same item are produced) or "jobbing" where as little as one item at a time is produced. Inmates commence working in the workshops between 7.30 am and 8.00 am and finish at approximately 3.00 pm. They have twenty minutes to an hour off for lunch and other time off for "smoko".

When a prisoner arrives in a workshop he may, particularly if he has no skill (which is true of most inmates), be instructed to commence work as a cleaner (sweeper). Industrial Officers feel that a week of being a sweeper gives the inmate time to come to terms with their new surroundings and gives the inmate an opportunity to learn the layout of the work area.

##### a. Metal

The Metalshops are light engineering workshops which engage in general metal fabrication for Government Departments. At the Training Centre, Cessnock, and Parklea, production in metal is largely concentrated on manufacturing metal-framed furniture using tubular steel. A large proportion of the production is desks and tables for the Department of School Education and Department of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) or furniture for other government departments. The Bathurst Metalshop produces such things as linen trolleys, weight machines and exam tables. In the Metalshops unskilled workers are likely to proceed to the task of grinding metal and later

to using machines for cutting, bending, drilling and welding metal. The type of welding most often used in the Metalshops is Metal Inert Gas (MIG).

The setting up of machinery and welding equipment is a more complex task than the operation of the equipment and inmates who can do this are likely to be considered "skilled". Lathe work and milling work are considered highly skilled and have a greater potential for injury. Metalshops also have a spray booth where inmates use a spray gun to paint metal products. In their work inmates may be supplied with drawings (simple plans) which they follow to produce an item.

#### **b. Timber**

The Timbershops produce the timber component of the furniture for the Department of School Education and TAFE. The Timbershop at the Training Centre also produces beds, cupboards, wardrobes and some top of the range furniture such as 'work stations' and conference tables. The Timbershop at Bathurst has been producing clip boards, apple crates and items of furniture for the gaol.

In the Timbershops unskilled inmates are likely to commence production work at a bench using a variety of carpenter's hand tools. Inmates can then progress to assembling work, then to the use of machines such as various types of saws, edge banders, routers, spindle moulders, angle grinders and multi-borer machines. At the Training Centre inmates may also use lathes. Again the setting up of machinery is a more difficult task than the operation and inmates performing this work are likely to be considered "skilled". Timbershops also have spray booths where lacquer is applied to the timber products using a spray gun. Inmates are also given drawings that contain instructions and measurements that they adhere to in order to produce an item.

#### **c. Upholstery**

Upholstery workshops are involved in upholstering new furniture or refurbishing used furniture. This work is for Government Departments and includes furniture such as office chairs, dining chairs and lounges. Inmates in

these workshops will initially commence work by sweeping, or stripping furniture that is to be refurbished. Then they may be placed with a crew for metal repairing or timber repairing. Inmates may also gain experience at making patterns, cutting material and sewing on a machine. Assembling takes place using air screw drivers, air drills and staple guns.

### **3.1.3 Work Performed in Services Section**

In the Services section inmate labour is applied to support the operation of the gaol by maintenance, cleaning, and food preparation. Inmates employed in maintenance spend similar hours at work to inmates in the workshops. Sweepers may complete their allotted cleaning tasks in two hours but may be called on for other tasks. Kitchen staff can work seven days a week and their hours vary according to meal times.

#### **a. Sweeping**

Sweeping involves cleaning and polishing. Wing sweepers may also liaise between inmates and Wing Officers as well as having the responsibility for allocating fruit and milk.

#### **b. Kitchen**

Inmates working in the kitchen have responsibility for keeping it clean, preparing vegetables, cooking and serving food or placing it in "dixies" (containers that preserve heat). Some inmates work in kitchens that serve units (perhaps as little as twelve inmates) while others are involved in preparing meals for the entire gaol, or as in the case of the Training Centre, several gaols and therefore some inmates are involved in preparing meals for hundreds of other inmates.

#### **c. Maintenance**

Inmates who worked in maintenance could be involved in a wide range of tasks. These include cleaning, painting, electrical, plumbing, repairs and ground maintenance such as mowing lawns.

### **3.1.4 The Skills Learnt**

Inmates were asked, "Are you learning any new things in this job?". Many inmates in Cor-

rective Services Industries thought they had learnt something new since commencing work in their workshop. Inmates said they learnt how to use metric measurement, read drawings, do calculations, distinguish types of wood, use hand tools, operate machinery, do welding, and learn safety procedures.

Inmates were asked, "Do you think having worked in this job in gaol will be helpful in your work after you get out?". Most inmates thought work in gaol would be helpful and thought this to be so because they had the opportunity to learn and practise skills. Those inmates who thought that their present work would not be helpful after release said that they intended to work in an area that was not related to their present work. Four inmates said that they were already experienced in the type of work they were doing.

Most inmates stated they would be willing to look for work after release in the same industry in private enterprise as that in which they were working in gaol. Inmates who did not intend to look for work in the same area after release said they would go back to what they were doing before gaol or they preferred work in the open air, did not like the conditions (noisy, dirty), or for health reasons. Three inmates in Timbershops and one in a Metalshop suggested they did not believe they would have the required skills to succeed in gaining employment in this area. For example:

"I will not have qualifications. I may not be able to meet the employers' expectations."

Inmates working in the Services section also thought they had learnt new things. Kitchen workers mentioned learning to cook and learning new types of cooking such as vegetarian. A sweeper said he had learnt about hygiene as a result of his job. Inmates working in maintenance mentioned learning how to cut glass and repair toilets.

Inmates were asked if they had learnt anything that would be useful in their spare time after release. Most inmates thought they had learnt skills that would be useful in their spare time. In the Metalshops inmates mentioned repairing farm machinery and cars, building garages and making gardening sets. Inmates working in Timbershops mentioned making wardrobes, shelves, kitchen cabinets and small items such as jewellery boxes, ashtrays and goblets, as well as repairing chairs and house maintenance. Upholstery shop inmates mentioned repairing furniture and restoring old furniture. Inmates working in kitchens mentioned that having learnt how to cook roast lamb and corned beef would be useful in their lives after release. A sweeper mentioned now knowing how to keep things clean.

Most Industrial Officers thought that inmates did not spend long enough in workshops to be trained to a standard where they possessed employable skills. Data were obtained from records kept by Assistant Superintendents of Industry in order to calculate the average time (in days) inmates spent in the work locations included in the study. Past records (for inmates

**Table 7: Percentage of Inmates Who Worked In Workshops For Longer Than Three Months - Past Records (N=1261)**

	Training Centre	Cessnock	Bathurst	Parklea
	%	%	%	%
<b>WORKSHOP</b>				
Metal	23	26	38	59
Timber	32	35	26	55
Timber Tech	N.A.	N.A.	38	N.A.
Upholstery	N.A.	31	10	N.A.
Upholstery (external)	N.A.	N.A.	17	N.A.

**N.A.= This industry not operating in this gaol at this time.**

**Table 8: Median Number of Days Inmates Spent in Employment Location - Past Records (N=1261) (Average number of days in brackets)**

	Training Centre	Cessnock	Bathurst	Parklea
<b>WORKSHOP</b>				
Metal	18 (54)	44 (66)	43 (81)	113 (181)
Timber	54 (72)	57 (79)	42 (69)	110 (177)
Timber Tech	N.A.	N.A.	47 (93)	N.A.
Upholstery	N.A.	30 (100)	26 (49)	N.A.
Upholstery (external)	N.A.	N.A.	34 (56)	N.A.
Kitchen	17 (59)	48 (67)	47 (66)	61 (83)
Sweeping	52 (77)	63 (75)	26 (40)	106 (205)
Maintenance				
-Building	N.A.	46 (57)	N.A.	52 (137)
-External	38 (61)	N.A.	40 (76)	N.A.
-Internal	48 (71)	N.A.	36 (47)	N.A.

N.A.=This industry not operating in this gaol at this time.

who had since left the institution), were examined.

The frequency distributions for the number of days worked were highly skewed, i.e. many more inmates worked for a small number of days than those who worked for longer periods of time. Taking into consideration this skewness of the distributions, the median rather than the mean provides a better indication of central tendency for the number of days worked by inmates.

Table 7 and Table 8 show number of days worked by inmates who had worked in the employment location for any time after 1st January 1988 and had since left that institution during the periods stated in Table 2 under "First Collection".

The median number of days worked by inmates at Parklea were higher for all work locations than the number of days worked in these locations in the other gaols. This is particularly so for metal, timber and sweeping.

### **3.1.5 The Training Provided in Corrective Services Industries**

Workshops of Corrective Services Industries operate as revenue producing shops. Training takes place while inmates work on production.

Industrial Officers oversee the training of inmates, either instructing inmates themselves or placing inmates with other inmates who have acquired some proficiency in production tasks. The training of inmates is dictated by production schedules. At Metal Tech and Timber Tech at Bathurst Gaol greater emphasis was placed on training than in the other workshops in the sample. In these two workshops TAFE instruction took place two days a week and production work three days a week. In some other workshops (see Table 9) production based training was also supplemented by approved trade courses conducted by qualified TAFE teachers for one day or one half day per week.

Offenders were asked, "Was enough time spent teaching you how to do things properly here?". Most offenders thought enough time was spent teaching them how to do things properly and referred to the instruction they received from both officers and their fellow inmates. The following are examples some of these responses:

"Yes, they set you up and show you and check on you that you're cutting it to the right length.";

"Yes, if you want to learn the crims will go out of their way to help you.";

"My offsider was a big influence, the work had to be perfect. I'm still learning from him."

In those instances where inmates said that not enough time was spent teaching them, they claimed that Industrial Officers were more "supervisors" than teachers. They claimed that sometimes they were only shown a procedure once and did not feel confident in attempting these procedures. They also expressed a desire to have a greater understanding of why they were doing things. The following two quotations typify these responses:

"It doesn't worry me, but for the others not enough time is spent with them. Someone should be there for training. At the moment Industrial Officers are more supervisors than teachers.";

"They don't explain why you do things. They only give you enough knowledge to finish a job."

Inmates were asked "If you need help who do you ask?". Responses suggest that generally inmates felt free to approach the Industrial Officers when they wanted guidance. For example:

"I ask the Officers, they don't bag you when you do something wrong."

As commonsense would suggest, many inmates who came across a problem initially asked for advice from inmates working alongside them. If no solution was found for the problem inmates then approached the Industrial Officers. Some inmates spoke of the willingness of their fellow inmates to teach them:

"Teaches me more at lunch time, because it is quieter and I can hear what he is saying."

Each correctional centre in NSW is allocated funds for education. The Officer-in-Charge of the workshop or the Corrective Services Industries Manager at that gaol can approach the Education Officer at the gaol to initiate a TAFE course in the workshop.

The access offenders had to TAFE training in the workshops varied from workshop to workshop. Some officers did not initiate any courses for the inmates under their supervision. Officers in the Timbershop at the Training Centre and the Timbershop at Cessnock Corrective Centre, when asked about courses in the workshops, suggested that they had not initiated any courses because they viewed their workshop as a production area.

According to some Industrial Officers interviewed in workshops, the benefits of TAFE trade courses were that the courses developed in inmates a real interest for their work and that this interest was reflected in a better quality product. Industrial Officers also suggested that TAFE training enhances communication between inmates and themselves because inmates who have been involved in trade courses know the correct terms to use for procedures, materials and tools. Greater awareness of safety was another benefit Industrial Officers thought TAFE training provided. One officer said that involvement in a TAFE course helps inmates' self esteem:

"It helps their self esteem. They know the course they are doing is the same as people are doing on the outside. It gives contact with the outside and has a humanising effect. We

**Table 9: Types of TAFE Courses in Workshops**

INSTITUTION	METALSHOP	TIMBERSHOP
Training Centre Bathurst	Welding Metal fabrication Fitting & Machining Automotive	Carpentry & Joinery
Cessnock Parklea	Welding Fitting & Machining Welding	Carpentry & Joinery

\* Upholstery shops were not included in the table as they were not conducting any TAFE courses at the time.

haven't got the time to teach them everything TAFE can teach them in more depth."

Inmates were asked, "Have you been able to pursue the training you wanted whilst in gaol?" A large number (46%) claimed not to have been able to pursue the training they wanted whilst in gaol. Three inmates interviewed at Cessnock spoke of a welding course they were attending in the Metalshop. This course was scheduled to commence after work hours, when production work had finished for the day. However, this course was discontinued because of the lack of funds to pay an officer overtime to supervise inmates whilst they received their training from the TAFE instructor. A number of other inmates were not the correct security classification to attend the courses in which they were interested. Other courses were not available, had a waiting list, or were held at a time when the inmate had to be elsewhere.

Inmates, with the exception of sweepers, were asked if they thought TAFE training was important for work inside the prison. Nearly all inmates responded "yes" to this question. TAFE training, they claimed was important because it assisted learning and enabled them to do superior quality work. Inmates also mentioned that participating in TAFE courses gave them an interest and an opportunity to show what they are capable of:

"Keeps an interest in what you are doing. Can grow to enjoy it. Can have greater appreciation for what is possible.";

"You need to learn theory first so you know what you're doing. If I had some TAFE before going into the workshop I would have had more confidence."

Mentioned also by a couple of the inmates was their fear of failing in their courses and their inclination to discontinue the course so to avoid this failure. These and other inmates spoke of their surprise at the good results they were able to achieve in course assessments. One offender stated:

"I was surprised. I thought I was dumb. I was kept back at primary school."

Inmates undertaking TAFE courses were asked, "Do you think TAFE training will help you to get a job when you get out?" All the offenders asked this question responded "yes". The most common reason given for this was that TAFE provides certificates which verify the training received.

### **3.1.6 Preparation for Work in Private Enterprise**

Inmates were asked, "In general, do you think work in gaol prepares an inmate for the routine of work on the outside?"

Most inmates in Corrective Services Industries thought that working in gaol prepared them for the routine of work outside, for example:

"It gets you into a routine that is part of your life on the outside. Being the breadwinner you have to work, you can't survive on the dole."

The 14% who responded "no" to the above question all suggested that the working hours in gaol did not sufficiently replicate those in private industry to prepare them for the routine of work.

Inmates were asked, "Are you aware of any differences between work in prison and work outside?" Inmates suggested that in work outside in private enterprise they would earn more money and work more hours. Other differences mentioned were that there was more responsibility and more pressure in work outside gaol. Inmates also stated that work in gaol was different because at the end of the day they were not allowed to go home.

Thirty-eight per cent of the sample in Stage 1 were recidivists. During their past sentences they had done a variety of work in gaol in both Corrective Services Industries and the Services section. Nearly all thought that the work they had done previously in gaol had not assisted them to obtain work on release. This was because the work they did in gaol was not related to the work they did on release. Inmates suggested that during past sentences they had worked in Corrective Services Industries as a means to cope with the restraints of gaol life and not with the intention to gain a trade. Two typical responses were:

"Work in gaol is not the sort of work I would look for outside.";

"It's just a back up in case I need it."

### **3.1.7 Attitudes of Prisoners Working in Corrective Services Industries**

To obtain a greater understanding about inmates' attitudes to Corrective Services Industries and factors which may motivate inmates to work in workshops, a number of questions were asked. Inmates were asked "What, if anything do you like about work in gaol?" All 48 inmates nominated something they liked about work in gaol. The most common responses were related to dealing with time. Most responses were able to be categorised under the headings "keeps you occupied" or "time goes quicker". Other common responses were "work is satisfying" and "you learn things". Some examples of individual prisoner's responses are provided below followed by the workshop the offender was in, the gaol and the length of time the inmate had been in that workshop:

"It fills in the day. There's more freedom. The officers leave you alone if you know what you are doing." (Metal, Parklea, 10 months);

"It takes the boredom away which is the biggest problem in gaol." (Timber, Parklea, 1 year 8 months);

"The satisfaction of seeing a finished product. It gets a bit boring getting the bits and pieces together but once it's assembled you know what it's all been for." (Timber, Training Centre, 2 months);

"Just making things, you stand back and you go 'hey man I did that'. Friends, good screws. I have a good time at work, you learn something everyday." (Metal, Training Centre, 5 weeks);

"I like working with wood. You start with nothing and you end up with something nice." (Timber, Parklea, 2 years);

"It's more interesting than most work in gaol. It's varied and not production work. Responsibility. You know you're doing something most people couldn't do." (Upholstery, Bathurst, 3.5 months);

"Don't like factory work but this is not like that, this is different, you can see what you've done so you make an effort to do it a little better." (Metal, Training Centre, 4 months).

Inmates were asked, "Is working in gaol a helpful way of passing the time?" The entire sample of inmates, both those who worked in Corrective Services Industries and those who worked in Services, answered "yes" to this question. Inmates were asked "Why is work in gaol a helpful way of passing the time?" Again most responses could be categorised under "keeps you occupied" or because "time goes quicker". Responses under these headings also suggested that work assists the welfare of some inmates and in maintaining security in the gaols. Examples of responses which suggested that work in gaol assists both the welfare of inmates and gaol security are provided below:

"Very important to make time go quicker. If there's not much work in the shop I look for it, because if I work I don't think too much." (Metal, Parklea, 3 months);

"You don't want to do it hard. I'd rather keep myself occupied. It gets a lot of emotional stress off my mind." (Metal, Training Centre, one week);

"You're not thinking about getting out or your family all the time, which can get you upset." (Upholstery, Bathurst, 11 months);

"Helps me stay sane. Everything else is very boring. At work I do my best and my day goes quick." (Upholstery, Bathurst, 3.5 months);

"If you're not working it starts too much friction, that's why you get so many fights at Parramatta and Long Bay." (Metal, Cessnock, 3 months);

"You don't get into that much trouble. You don't get time to think. Same routine as outside. Helps you to ignore the fact you are in gaol. Feel that I am out of gaol for the day and after work I go back in." (Metal, Parklea, 6 months);

"If you're in the right job and you're using your mind creatively time passes, the week goes quicker than the weekend." (Timber, Training Centre, 2 months);

"Was at CIP for 10 weeks. The days were too long. Working in the metalshop has occupied my mind and has kept my mind off my problems." (Metal, Parklea, 10 months);

"If you weren't working you'd be getting pissed off with the world and getting into trouble." (Timber, Parklea, 2 years).

Officers were mentioned as something inmates liked about their work and a reason why working in gaol was a helpful way of passing the time. In the responses to these questions officers were liked because they "leave you alone", called inmates by their first names, let inmates call officers by their first names, were "easy going", treated inmates with "courtesy", shared jokes, made inmates feel "respected" and told them when they had done a good job. Examples of responses include:

"I like officers, they don't yell at you, they don't tell you what to do, they ask you." (Timber, Cessnock, 6 months);

"Gets rid of boredom. You have fun. You get to be normal. You find out screws are just like us, you can have a laugh." (Metal, Training Centre, 5 weeks);

"Gets you away from being in gaol. You can talk to the officers and you don't get condemned by heavies. Can call officers by their first name. You can't do this over the back because inmates get suspicious. You get respect from officers over here which gives you back a bit of dignity." (Timber, Parklea, 1 year 8 months).

Inmates were asked what, if anything, they disliked about working in gaol. Of the sample of 48 inmates, 10 (21%) did not nominate anything they did not like. Of the rest, wages was the most common thing nominated as disliked with 20 inmates nominating this response. Some examples of these responses are given below:

"Wages are low. In the two years I've been here, prices [at buy ups] have doubled but wages haven't changed." (Upholstery, Bathurst, 1 year 8 months);

"Wages too low, would solve a problem if inmates were made responsible for their families outside not welfare. Production would

increase because increased wages are an incentive." (Metal, Parklea, 3 weeks);

"Wages low for the money the shop is making. There's no incentive to work in gaol, I'm a heavy smoker I spend \$30 a week on smokes." (Metal, Cessnock, 7 months);

"Money, not enough of it. You have to have money put in from the outside for buy ups." (Timber, Training Centre, 2 months);

"There's greater productivity outside because the wages are low here. You're not going to come here and bust your guts for \$28 a week and you're not expected to, I don't think." (Metal, Parklea, 10.5 months)

## 3.2 Stage 2

### 3.2.1 Description of Sample

There were 110 offenders in the sample for Stage 2 (Industries=65, Services=45). Twenty-four offenders in the Corrective Services Industries sample were interviewed. The data for the other 86 offenders (Industries=41, Services=45) were obtained by completing a questionnaire with information provided by Probation and Parole Officers who were supervising the offenders.

Subjects for Stage 2 were selected on the basis of having worked for at least 90 days in the gaol work locations sampled. For this truncated sample, the average number of days worked in these work locations was 229 days while the median was 172 days. There was a minimum of 90 days and a maximum of 968. The mean for the Industries group was 239 days and the mean number of days for the Services group was 214 days. This was not a statistically significant difference ( $t_{105}=0.8$ ,  $p>0.05$ ).

The average age for the entire sample was 32.4 years with a minimum age of 19.6 years and a maximum of 56.3 years. The average age was similar for both groups, 31.8 years for the Industries group and 33.2 years for the Services group. This was not significant ( $t_{108}=0.8$ ,  $p>0.05$ ).

Both groups spent similar periods of time in gaol with 28 months the average for the In-



**Table 10: Most Serious Current Offence**

MOST SERIOUS OFFENCE	GROUP		
	Industries n=65 %	Services n=45 %	Total n=110 %
Murder/manslaughter	4.6	4.4	4.5
Assault	3.1	6.6	4.5
Sexual	12.3	0.0	7.3
Robbery	13.8	28.8	20.0
Stealing	26.1	28.8	27.3
Drug	9.2	11.1	10.0
Other	9.2	0.0	5.4
No information	21.5	20.0	20.9

dustries group and 27 months for the Services group ( $t_{84}=0.26, p>0.05$ ). As at 1st January 1990 the Industries group had been released for an average of 328 days while the Services group had been released for an average of 285 days. This difference was not statistically significant ( $t_{106}=1.4, p<0.05$ )

### 3.2.2 Employment Since Release

Data were collected so that differences between the Industries group and Services group could be tested on three variables. These variables were whether the offender had worked at all since release; whether or not the offender was presently employed (employed at the time of data collection), and the time between the release date and the date of commencement of

**Table 11: Worked Since Release**

	GROUP		
	Industries n=65 %	Services n=45 %	Total n=110 %
Yes	80	60	72
No	17	31	23
Unsure	3	9	5

first employment.

Offenders in the interview sample and Probation and Parole Officers supervising the other

offenders in the sample were asked if the offender had worked since release.

Table 11 shows that a larger percentage of the Services group (31%) had not worked at all since their release compared to the Industries group (17%). However, when a chi-square analysis was performed on the 'yes' versus 'no' responses for the groups this difference was not statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 2.9, p>0.05$ ). When only data for offenders who had worked in their work locations in gaol for six months or longer were included, 94% of the

**Table 12: Percentages of Offenders Working at the Time of Data Collection**

	Industries n=65 %	Services n=45 %	Total n=110 %
Yes	54	47	51
No	38	44	41
Unsure	1	7	4
In gaol	4	1	5

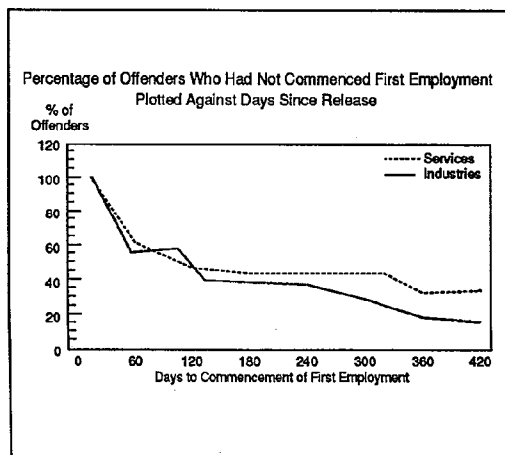
Industries group had worked since release compared to 56% of the Services group. When a chi-square analysis was performed, the Industries group were significantly more likely to

have worked since release than the Services group ( $\chi^2 = 7.8, p < 0.05$ ).

Offenders or Probation and Parole Officers were asked if the offender was presently employed. The proportion of the Corrective Services Industries group (54%) who were presently employed, did not differ significantly from the proportion of the Services group (47%) who were presently employed ( $\chi^2 = 0.3, p < 0.05$ ). Nor was there a significant difference when offenders who had worked longer than six months in their work locations in gaol were compared.

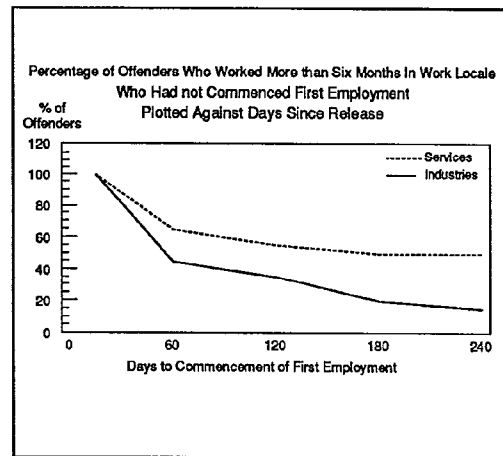
The full date for commencement of work after release was only available in 37 of the cases (Industries  $n=19$ , Services  $n=18$ ). In those cases (44) where the month and year of commencement of employment were available but not the day, the day was nominated as the 15th day of the month. A commencement date was then available for 81 cases (Industries  $n=46$ , Services  $n=35$ ). A log rank test was performed on the proportion of offenders who had not commenced work at any time. Figure 1 shows the number of days offenders took to find work. For those who found work, the average time taken was 132 days for the Industries group and 145 for the Services group. There was no significant difference between the groups in the length of time taken to commence first employment (log rank = 1.32,  $p > 0.05$ ).

Figure 1



When only data for those offenders who had worked in their work locations in gaol for six months or longer was included (Industries  $n=21$ , Services  $n=14$ ) the Industries group commenced work more quickly (an average of 94 days), than the Services group (an average of 174 days). This was a significant difference (log rank = 4.3  $p > 0.05$ ). The number of days taken to find work for offenders who worked in their work location in gaol for over 6 months is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2



### 3.2.3. Recidivism

All the offenders in the two groups ( $n=208$ ) were compared for recidivism. Because many of the offenders in this study had only been released for a short while, recidivism was defined as a conviction leading to return to gaol within six months of release. This could be for a breach of parole or a new episode. The proportion of the Services group (13%) who had returned to gaol did not differ significantly from the Industries group (15%) who had returned within six months ( $\chi^2 = 0.6, p < 0.05$ ).

### 3.2.4 Looking for Work

Twenty-four offenders who worked in Corrective Services Industries were interviewed to gather some information on when and how offenders looked for work, what if any difficulties they had locating work and what skills they used. Offenders were asked, "How long after

release did you start to look for work?" Two offenders were on Work Release and another became a student. Of the other offenders, five started looking for work within two days of release. At two weeks following release most offenders (16) had started to look for work. Four offenders did not commence searching for work until more than a month after release. One such offender who had served a life sentence waited eight months (the longest period of the 24 offenders interviewed) before looking for work. His explanation for this was that:

"I needed a break after spending eleven hours [a day] locked behind a door. When I got bored I started to look for work."

As shown in Table 13, offenders used a variety of means to locate work. As well as using the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) and newspapers to locate positions available, word of mouth from family and friends also kept some offenders informed about where jobs were available. In some instances family or friends would put in "a good word" about the offender to the employer. One offender used a private employment agency and another said "Workout" (a Government funded body that as-

**Table 13: Methods Used by Offenders to Locate Work**

	Percentage of Industries Interview Sample (n=24)
Newspaper	50
CES	38
Asked an employer	17
Friends	13
Brother	8
Uncle	4
Sister	4
Girlfriend's uncle	4
Private agency	4
Workout	4

\* Percentages add up to more than a hundred because some offenders used more than one means to locate employment.

sists the long-term unemployed by organising courses and providing advice) found him a job.

Four offenders stated that they had enquired about work at businesses that had not advertised for employees. One offender who had worked in a Timbershop said he went to industrial areas in Sydney's west and walked from factory to factory asking for work. This offender was still unemployed at the time of the interview and attributed his lack of success to his criminal record, age (41 years), health (diabetes) and not having a car which would facilitate his search.

Two offenders were able to obtain casual work by approaching people they saw working in the street. One offender saw some men demolishing a restaurant. After he approached them he was given several months' work. The same offender later saw a tiler working next door to the CES. After he approached this person he was given a day's work to demonstrate his ability and then employed until the job was completed. Another offender, a former heroin addict who had not worked for at least two years before going to gaol but had worked in a Timbershop whilst in gaol, stated:

"I saw a guy painting the neighbour's house. I asked him if he had a job for someone down and out. He said 'Yes, see you at 7.30.'"

This offender later obtained work as a groundsman after he approached a man mowing a lawn.

Three offenders voiced criticism concerning the CES. One offender claimed an obstacle to his finding work was that the CES told potential employers that he was on parole. The other two offenders stated:

"I did not use the CES. Don't believe in the CES, too much bullshit. I don't need the government's money to survive so I didn't register for unemployment. The CES takes a long time waiting around. I don't need them to get a job for me.;"

"The CES sends you to shit jobs because they know you're just out of gaol."

One offender did not know how to fully utilise the CES service. This offender thought that all the positions the CES had available were dis-

played on the notice boards and so did not enquire at the counter.

### **3.2.5 Problems Finding Work**

Offenders in the Corrective Service Industries interview group were asked, "Were there any obstacles in your way when trying to find work?" Although some offenders described finding work as "easy", most (15) reported obstacles to achieving employment. The most common problems mentioned were prison record (7), break in work history (as result of gaol) (4), and lack of transport (5). Other reported problems were tattoos, lack of trade certificates, and lack of experience. Limited financial resources also posed problems in gaining work because of the need for suitable clothing for interviews and work, boots for work, tools for work and the payment of union tickets without which they were not permitted to commence work.

Many offenders expressed their lack of work history as a consequence of imprisonment, and the discrimination towards convicted criminals as their major problems in successfully gaining employment. Offenders seeking employment are faced with a decision of whether or not to inform prospective employers about their prison record. Some offenders interviewed were concerned that if they did not bring their parole status to their employer's attention, the employer might find out later and the offender's failure to reveal such information maybe held against him. Some offenders claimed that even when applying for unskilled factory work application forms requested information regarding criminal convictions. Positions as truck drivers and storemen also sought this information. Nearly all offenders who provided the correct information to employers said they were unsuccessful in their application. Many offenders chose not to reveal their prison record and therefore had to invent a work history, either claiming members of their families and their friends as former employers, or stating that they had been self-employed. A small number of offenders told employers they had been on "holidays". An offender found he was unable to return to his previous area of work in the security

business or as a bouncer because of his criminal conviction. The following quotations typify the responses from offenders in the Industries interview sample who experienced such problems:

"You have to lie about it and get a friend or family to say you've worked for them. Otherwise how do you explain where you have been?";

"I spent almost 4 years in gaol, they (employers) want to know what you were doing during this time";

"You're having to fight your record all the way along. It's like an amputee trying to go to the Olympics. There's tremendous discrimination against you if you apply for any reasonable job. If you don't tell them about your record, they find out".

An inmate who had experienced discrimination after a previous sentence took a defeatist attitude. He stated:

"When I came out last time I tried to get a job and couldn't. If I went looking for a job now it would be difficult because they would want to know where I had been. No one is going to employ you if they know you come from gaol. It is difficult for us".

Transport was considered a major problem for five of the offenders when looking for work and getting to work once they were employed. Transport arose as a problem because offenders could not afford to purchase a car or they had had their licences cancelled. It appears that some industrial areas are not well served by public transport. Taxis were not viewed as an alternative because of their cost. One offender stated:

"My first job was five miles from the station. I had to walk. My second job, I had to walk from Chullora to Panania in the middle of the night because I finished late and there was no transport".

The Probation and Parole Officers who were supervising the 86 offenders in the study who were not interviewed were asked, "If the parolee has not worked since release or has been unemployed for some time, do you have any suggestions as to why this has occurred?". The

most common responses could be categorised under “non-availability of work” and “drugs or alcohol”. Other factors mentioned were “prison record”, “health” and “age”. One offender after a previous release could not renew his licence to operate his restaurant because of his criminal record. Some typical responses from Probation and Parole officers were:

“Drinking and drugging. Easily led by his mates and does stupid things”;

“Lacks motivation, using drugs, is now on methadone”;

“One of the highest unemployment areas of the state. Not enough work.”

The Probation and Parole Officers who cited lack of available work as a reason for unemployment tended to be in offices located in Sydney’s south-west and western suburbs and in country areas including Newcastle and Wollongong.

### **3.2.6 Using Skills**

A list of the type of employment predominantly engaged in since release for offenders both in the Industries group and the Services group is provided in Appendix 1. It appears unlikely by the nature of this work that many offenders who worked in Corrective Services Industries are using skills they had learnt and/or used in their gaol work.

The offenders in the Industries interview group were asked, “Did you, in any of these jobs you have had since release, use any skills that you had used in gaol?” Eight of the twenty-four offenders interviewed said they had used skills that they had used working in Corrective Services Industries in their work since release. Some offenders had learnt these skills in gaol, others had acquired them before gaol.

Three offenders who were unskilled before gaol tried to find work in the industry for which they believed that working in Corrective Services Industries had trained them. One offender was successful, two were not. An offender who considered himself semi-skilled in metal, timber and textiles having spent approximately a year each in metal and textiles, and two years in timber, had problems finding a job in which he

could use his skills. He thought he would be successful at a “sewing factory” which made pyjamas. However, he was unsuccessful in gaining this position and now attributes this lack of success to replying truthfully to questions about where he gained his experience: “You’re taught to be honest, but it’s your downfall.” This offender eventually obtained work as a labourer.

An offender who looked for welding work but was unsuccessful believed his lack of success was as a result of having no welding certificates, and as a consequence of informing employers honestly when they enquired as to where he gained his welding ability. This offender also considered that other obstacles in the way of his finding work were his lack of fluency in English and tattoos on his hands. After doing a short cleaning course organised for him by Workout he gained a cleaning position in a hospital.

Twenty-four offenders were interviewed. Three of these possessed trade qualifications before gaol, while one was an apprentice. Only one offender out of the other twenty interviewed was able to progress from a relatively unskilled job (in this case as a builder’s labourer) before working in Corrective Services Industries, to a highly skilled job afterwards. This offender worked in the Metalshop at Parklea Prison for over two years. He completed some TAFE courses in welding receiving outstanding results. After release he was employed as a boiler-maker (metal fabricator). At the interview for his position this offender was not asked to produce his welding certificates but asked technical questions and given a welding test. To overcome the lack of an employment history this offender told the employer that he had just spent two years working as a welder for his brother. He was placed on a three week trial, and after being employed for approximately three months he was promoted to the position of foreman with the responsibility for the hiring and firing of some employees. The gaol work reports for this offender held at Parklea Prison suggest that in gaol he was a highly motivated worker who encouraged others. The offender claims his success in employment was due to his determination to take advantage of opportunities provided in Corrective Services

Industries at Parklea Prison, the excellent range of equipment in the Metalshop there, his own capabilities and a shortage of highly skilled metal workers in the Sydney area. This offender believed he would have still been able to obtain work in the metal industry if he had only relied on the experience gained from production work in the Metalshop and not completed TAFE courses in welding. However he suggested that if he had not done the welding courses he would be unlikely to have his present job. He also suggested that TAFE provided a much needed break from the repetition of the Metalshop work, giving him more variety of experience than was available from production alone.

After working in Corrective Services Industries most offenders when released returned to relatively unskilled work similar to that in which they were engaged before prison. Nevertheless, some considered that they still benefited in a small way by learning new skills from their time working in gaol. An offender who was a builder's labourer before prison and has since returned to this, claimed he learnt how to use power tools and do calculations while working in a Timbershop and has used these in his work since release. Another offender who was also a builder's labourer before prison and returned to this type of work (but now building luxury town houses) stated that by working in a Timbershop he was able to practise using hand tools and to learn the correct saws to use on different types of wood.

An offender who had had a heroin habit and had not worked for at least two years before going to gaol, but was now working as a tyre-fitter suggested:

"Would have got my job if I didn't work in Metal Tech, but I can do a few extra things now."

This offender claimed he could help the mechanic rebuild ball joints because of what he had learnt in gaol.

Another offender was able to use what he had learnt while working in the Metalshop in gaol, in a rather unexpected location. Obtaining a temporary job with the National Parks and Wildlife Department, he found a lathe that originally had been purchased to repair tractors, but which, as

none of the employees there knew how to operate it, had never been used. This offender earned the gratitude of his work colleagues by showing them how to operate the lathe.

Three offenders out of the 24 interviewed had trade qualifications when they entered gaol. One was a qualified carpenter while the other two were qualified boiler-makers. Two of these with qualifications, a boilermaker and a carpenter, were not working in their trade at the time of their arrest (see Appendix 1). Both of these felt that by working in their trade in Corrective Services Industries they gained valuable practice in their respective skills. After their release they were able to return to working in their trade. One of these, a qualified carpenter who was working as a station assistant before gaol, suggested that by working in Corrective Services Industries he was not only able to practice some of his carpentry skills, but that he learnt a new skill i.e. spray painting. This offender is now working as a shop fitter, which uses his newly acquired spray painting skill.

A qualified boilermaker, who was working at his trade at the time of his arrest, worked in a Metalshop in gaol for three years. However, this offender did not feel his work in gaol helped keep him in practice as he already "knew everything". When interviewed this offender was in a structural steel business with his father. Of the offenders interviewed, this offender had the highest reported annual income, \$40,000.

An offender who was an apprentice boilermaker when sent to gaol believed that working in the Metalshop allowed him to practise his welding. He completed his apprenticeship after release and is now working as a qualified boilermaker rebuilding ships.

### ***3.2.7 Using Skills in Recreation Time***

As well as assisting in employment, skills can also be utilised in a person's spare time to improve their living standard and provide a means whereby leisure time can be used constructively and pleasurably.

The twenty-four offenders in the Corrective Services Industries interview sample were

asked, "Did working in gaol teach you skills that you could use in your spare time?"

Fourteen of the sample answered "yes" to this question. The offenders who said "yes" were then asked if they had used any of these skills yet. Seven offenders had used the skills they had learnt in Corrective Services Industries to make things in their recreational time. Some offenders cited lack of tools as a reason for not making things they felt capable of making and would like to make. Offenders who had worked in Timbershops stated that since release they had used their new skills to maintain a house, make toys, build a waterbed and a make a bedside table. One offender had transformed an old garage into a very comfortable flat with skills he claimed to have learnt in the Timbershop at the Training Centre:

"I built a garden flat, painted it all. Me and my father had a good time".

Other offenders who had worked in Timbershops and intended to use their skills in their spare time at a later date, suggested that they would make tables, chairs, shelves and picnic tables. One offender who had learnt how to use a spray gun in a Timbershop claimed he could spray paint a car now. An offender who had worked in Upholstery in gaol said he intended to upholster a chair at a later date.

Offenders who had worked in Metalshops had used the skills they had learnt in gaol in their spare time since release to repair cars and trailers, weld handles back on to trowels, build sheds and make locks. One offender who knocked down his neighbour's galvanised steel pipe fence with his car was able to repair it using welding skills acquired in gaol. An offender whose father does volunteer work for the disabled was able to assist by repairing wheel chairs and modifying toilet chairs. Although this offender was a qualified boilermaker before going to gaol, during his apprenticeship he had only worked with heavy gauge steel. He claimed that his work with mild steel in gaol enabled him to perform the tasks that assisted the disabled.

### **3.2.8 Legitimate versus Illegitimate Work**

Some property offences and robbery offences are a means chosen to generate an income. For some offenders crime becomes an alternative to legitimate employment. Offenders in the Industries interview sample who had committed property and robbery offences were asked, "Why do you think that in the past you chose illegal means to make money rather than working in a straight job?". Eight of the ten offenders who were asked this question cited the need for drugs as the reason for choosing crime over "straight" work. This was mainly because of the high cost of drugs.

Working in legitimate employment did not allow drug users to generate the huge amounts of money that they needed to maintain a drug habit. Examples of their responses include:

"Your head gets very mucked up when you're using drugs and you don't care who you hurt. I robbed post offices to buy heroin. I was living with a girl and I was keeping her habit going as well as mine and I was spending \$600 to \$1,000 a day. I tried to get on a methadone program, but there was too much red tape to go through, it takes too long. I needed a shot every day or I was hanging out. Peer pressure got me into it, all my friends were using it. It relaxes your whole body, it's the best stone.";

"Physical and mental craving to get drug. I never got into trouble until I got on drugs. Deep down that's not me, I'm not a common thief. I couldn't afford to buy heroin every day so I broke into chemist shops.";

"Because I wasn't myself. I was on smack suicidal, depressed."

As well as the need for large amounts of money influencing drug users to resort to crime but offenders also found that once having developed a habit they needed time to "score". Working in a job with regular hours interfered with this time. "Scoring could take four hours." A couple of offenders also suggested they could no longer do the physical work they once did since they became drug users, for example, "I tired much quicker once on heroin."

Not all offenders turned to property crime because of drugs. One offender stated:

"As my mum calls it, 'night shift'. I chose to do it. It was easier. I could earn a week's wage in two hours. For the thrill of it. Then I had my car stolen once and realised what it felt like. I knew it was wrong but some ask for their cars to be stolen."



#### 4. DISCUSSION

This study was concerned with gaining an understanding of how Corrective Services Industries was meeting its stated objectives in the areas of prison management and prisoner rehabilitation. This study suggests that Corrective Services Industries has some positive influence in both these areas.

In the results of Stage 1 of this study Corrective Services Industries has been shown to have positive benefits towards the orderly running of the gaol in providing relief from boredom and its consequent problems. Additionally, inmates can gain some gratification from their involvement in production and their relationships with their work colleagues and Industrial Officers.

Keeping inmates occupied not only contributes to the welfare of those inmates working in Corrective Services Industries, but the orderly running of the gaol benefits all inmates and lessens the demands on custodial staff.

Working in Corrective Services Industries is a positive way for some, possibly most, inmates to spend their time in gaol; however this is unlikely to be the case for all inmates. When the interviews for this study were undertaken Assistant Superintendents of Industry allowed inmates some freedom of movement between work locations. If an inmate did not like his work he could apply for alternative work. Some inmates chose to apply for work elsewhere after spending only a short time in workshops, others were sacked. If these inmates had been interviewed concerning their attitudes toward work in the workshops they may have provided information that differs from the results in this study.

Results in Stage 1 of the study suggest that inmates working in Corrective Services Industries are exposed to positive work experiences and a work routine that is similar to work in private enterprise. Industrial Officers appear to be operating as good role models for inmates. All inmates gain experience in following instructions, co-operating with other workers and solving problems. Developing these abilities can assist offenders, particularly those who have never worked or had little experience of work, no matter what area of work they go into

after release. As well, by working in the workshops offenders gain experience in the operation of a workshop, can learn to measure, do simple calculations, gain an appreciation for how tools can be used to modify material and safety procedures. This experience would appear to assist offenders to be more readily assimilated into many areas of work in private enterprise.

In Stage 2 of the study comparisons were made between offenders who had worked in Corrective Services Industries with offenders who had worked in the Services section to gain an understanding of the contribution Corrective Services Industries was making to offenders' post-release employment. When all offenders in the sample were included, there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups. However, when only those offenders who had worked for longer than six months were compared, those in the Industries group were significantly more likely to have worked since release and commenced that work sooner after release than those in the Services group. Yet the Industries group were no more likely to be employed than the Services group at the time of the data collection.

These results suggest that working in Corrective Services Industries for longer than six months may increase an offender's chances of finding work and shorten the period of unemployment after release. However, the results also suggest that work in Corrective Services Industries may not assist offenders to retain work once they find it. This result is similar to the finding of Abt Associates (cited by Braithwaite, 1980) that trainees are more likely to be employed in the short-term but no more likely after six months.

When all 208 offenders in the original sample were compared on recidivism within six months of release, there was no difference between the two groups. As offenders had only recently been released from gaol, recidivism over a longer term could not be tested.

After release most offenders do not find work in private enterprise in the same industry at which they worked in Corrective Services In-

dustries. Offenders generally appear to return to the unskilled or semi-skilled work they did before gaol. This is possibly where they feel confident and where their friends and contacts are. Nevertheless, some offenders seem to have gained advantages by working in Corrective Services Industries. Some offenders interviewed found that specific skills they had learnt in Corrective Services Industries were useful in their employment after release. This increase in abilities may have a positive influence on the self esteem of offenders and the interest they have in their work as well as increasing their chances of employment.

Corrective Services Industries also provides the opportunity for offenders experienced in the metal trades or timber industry to practise skills and gain further experience. There is the potential for highly motivated offenders serving long sentences who complete TAFE courses to re-enter the workforce in a more highly skilled occupation than they were in before gaol. Some offenders have been able to make or repair objects to benefit themselves and others during their recreational time as a consequence of what they had learnt in Corrective Services Industries.

The results of this study need to be interpreted with care. The Industries group may have had more success in locating work as a consequence of differences that were in existence prior to the offender's gaol employment. Offenders who worked in Corrective Services Industries longer than six months may have possessed different motivations and attitudes towards work or greater abilities and skills, than those who worked in the Services section before allocation to their prison work.

Also the subjects included in the results of this study may not be representative of offenders in general. To be included in the sample for this study offenders needed to be reporting to the Probation and Parole Service. This would exclude those with head sentences shorter than six months. In Stage 2 of the study an analysis of recidivism was performed on the entire sample but other analyses took place on a truncated sample. Attrition of subjects took place from the original sample because offenders had

completed parole, had returned to gaol or their whereabouts were unknown. Additionally it cannot be ruled out that some offenders in the Services group, unbeknown to the researcher, worked at some stage in Corrective Services Industries. The data also relied on the self reports of offenders. Some offenders may not have been honest about their employment status or not have been able to accurately recall these events.

Forty-one per cent of the offenders in this study were unemployed at the time of the data collection. There are very powerful influences contributing to the difficulty offenders have obtaining and retaining work. The Australian unemployment rate is running at very high levels. For May 1990 the seasonally adjusted estimate of unemployment was 6.5% of the workforce (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1990). Competition for many jobs is very intense. Discrimination by employers towards offenders further decreases offenders' chances of gaining employment. Offenders who are semi-skilled as a consequence of working in Corrective Services Industries may find that discrimination towards them by employers reduces their chances of working in the area they have been trained for. The meagre financial resources of many ex-offenders causes problems with transport, ability to present themselves as well as they would like and problems paying for tools and union tickets.

Discrimination towards ex-offenders appears to impinge on the potential of Corrective Services Industries to positively influence the post-release employment of offenders. The post-release employment of offenders would be facilitated if offenders had more support with locating post-release employment.

There is some employment assistance currently available to ex-offenders: the CES has Special Placement Officers to deal with the long-term unemployed, and Workplace, which is funded by the Department of Industrial Relations, provides assistance specifically to ex-offenders in the form of counselling and advice. Nevertheless, considering the level of discrimination towards offenders in finding employment in the community, some offenders

may benefit from the establishment of a register of employers willing to provide work to ex-offenders. Such a register already operates in Victoria. Victoria's Second Chance Business Register has the objective of providing a data base of employers prepared to offer employment to ex-offenders (Henson, 1990). The register is reputed to increase the awareness of employers to the needs of ex-offenders and enlist their support in rehabilitation. Employers hire ex-offenders and allocate a good role model from the staff to help the new employee settle into the workplace.

For offenders who wish to continue employment in the same industry in which they worked in Corrective Services Industries, such a register would provide an opportunity to take up work in private enterprise at a skill level they were at in prison. The Federal Government has schemes whereby the wages of ex-offenders (and others who have experienced long-term unemployment) are subsidised, thus providing an added inducement to employers to hire such workers.

The marketing policy of Corrective Services Industries favours high volume long-term contracts, and although inmates gain production experience from this work it also places limitations on what they can learn. At present the training of offenders is dictated by production schedules. In some workshops this production-based training is supplemented by accredited TAFE courses. It appears that if an aim of Corrective Services Industries is to develop vocational/life skills complementary to training programs some training should take place which takes into account the type of post-release employment offenders are likely to acquire. This may enhance the employment prospects of offenders after release.

Workshops should be directed to set aside some part of the working week for the enrichment of inmates' work experience. One-fifth of the working week is provided to apprentices in private enterprise to engage solely in trade training and this seems an appropriate amount of time to be set aside for the formal training of inmates. At institutions such as Parklea one-fifth of the working week is already set aside for

TAFE training. Conducting this training during working hours means that training does not have to compete with other activities that take place after working hours. Such a period of training could be seen as a reward for offenders who work in Corrective Services Industries.

Corrective Services Industries operate at a large financial cost. This cost needs to be alayed by the productive capacity of the inmates in the workshops. However, by allowing some time to be set aside solely for training purposes there may be some compensative increase in the productivity of inmates and the quality of their work as a result of heightened interest and ability. The introduction of afternoon shifts to workshops (which has been mooted), would allow production to continue at higher levels despite periods set aside for training.

Some offenders, as a consequence of working in Corrective Services Industries and undertaking TAFE apprenticeship courses, have been well on the way to tradesman status on their release. The most desired outcome in regards to offender employment would be for all unskilled offenders entering the gaol to undertake apprenticeship training in conjunction with their production work and be almost qualified tradesmen at the time of release (after completion of a trade course offenders still need to spend a year in private enterprise after release to qualify for a tradesman's certificate). However, most offenders are only serving short sentences. There are short and modularised TAFE courses available and there may be advantages for some inmates to participate in these courses even if they are unlikely to complete the course before release.

Formal training programmes, whether TAFE or otherwise, may best assist the offender in employment after release if they are attuned to the likely work the offender will be doing. A possible procedure would be for the Vocational Training Manager of Corrective Service Industries to oversee the development of short courses which would train inmates in specific skills they are likely to use after release. Each Corrective Services workshop could have a number of training groups with perhaps one group receiving TAFE training and maybe

another group receiving training in specific skills from Industrial Officers or from skilled offenders. Also, although this enrichment period should place the needs of offenders first, their needs may also coincide with the productive interest of Corrective Services Industries. For example, this time could be spent teaching some offenders more complex tasks so that the range of items that could be produced by Corrective Services Industries broadens.

No matter what assistance the Department provides to offenders with their employment prospects it is to no avail unless offenders are motivated to learn and put what they have learnt to good use. Factors which appear to operate against the motivation of inmates are their low self esteem and the values of their peers. A culture exists in the workshops where those with skills are highly regarded. It would encourage more offenders to seek work in the workshops and increase the motivation of those already there if such a culture also existed in the rest of the prison. This could be encouraged by posters and pamphlets which, as well as providing information, depict an image of an inmate working in Corrective Services Industries found highly desirable by other offenders.

The availability of relevant activities outside working hours could foster offenders' interest and their skill in their area of work. For example Cessnock Corrective Centre has a well equipped wood working area in their activities block. Inmates engage in hobby work under the supervision of an officer skilled in this type of work. Inmates who had been to Cessnock spoke of the interest this inspired in their work and their regret that this activity was not available at other gaols. Security may prevent making available activities such as these in metal, but activities could be made available in timber and upholstery, particularly in gaols where these workshops function. These activities could be available to inmates during their spare time after working hours and on weekends. Scraps from workshops could be made available for inmates to use. Industrial Officers presently have to deal with the problems of some inmates attempting to use workshop machinery to make items for the

inmate's own use. The provision of such equipment in activities blocks would help to alleviate this problem.

Essential to the inmates' willingness to work is the regard in which they hold Industrial Officers. Through their work with inmates, Industrial officers generally have been able to develop an understanding of inmates and methods to manage them. However, at present there is little contact between Industrial Officers from different gaols. Industrial Officers may consider it worthwhile if they have the opportunity to meet (perhaps annually) so that insights and methods of prisoner management, training and motivation can be shared among them. Having the responsibility for both the training of inmates and meeting production schedules places stress on officers. By coming together officers may also be able to develop methods of operating workshops that reduces the conflict they have between their two roles.

During the last few years the rewards received by inmates working in Corrective Services Industries have been steadily eroded. Inmates are no longer entitled to remissions off their sentences, the value of wages has declined and in some gaols they no longer have extra visiting hours.

The low wages received by offenders in Corrective Services Industries appear to be operating as a disincentive to their work performance. An increase in wages in workshops could offer a number of advantages in regards to inmate motivation, self esteem and the opportunity to be in a better financial position on release. A review of inmates' wages needs to take place to determine if an increase in wages is justified and the capacity of the Department to meet such an increase, also establishing at what intervals and on what basis future wage determinations should take place.

This study shows that Corrective Services Industries does provide a basis on which the rehabilitation of offenders can be sought. However the introduction of additional measures would assist Corrective Services Industries in meeting its potential to increase the employment opportunities of offenders.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has brought to light several areas in which the introduction of additional measures would assist Corrective Services Industries in maximising the employment opportunities of offenders. These recommendations have been described more fully in the discussion section.

1. In conjunction with the assistance in job placement now provided by Workplace (funded by the Department of Industrial Relations), a register of employers willing to provide work to ex-offenders (similar to the "Second Chance Business Register" in Victoria) should be established.
  2. Part of each working week (perhaps one-fifth) should be set aside for training. This should include TAFE courses, short courses in specific skills likely to be of use to the inmate after release, and the teaching of more complex tasks to broaden the range of items able to be produced by Corrective Services Industries.
  3. Factors which appear to operate against the motivation of inmates to learn and put what they have learnt to good use are their low self esteem and the values of their peers. A culture exists in the workshops where those with skills are highly regarded.
- An attempt should be made to spread this culture to the rest of the gaol by the use of informative posters and pamphlets which also depict an image of work in Corrective Services Industries being found highly desirable by inmates.
4. In order to foster inmates' interest and skill in their area of work, workshop equipment and scrap materials should be made available outside working hours in the amenities blocks for hobby work under the supervision of an officer skilled in the area.
  5. The low wages received by offenders seem to be operating as a disincentive. Inmates' wages should be reviewed to determine if an increase is justified, and at what intervals and on what basis future wage determinations should take place.
  6. At present there appears to be little contact between Industrial Officers from different gaols. Opportunities should be given for Industrial Officers to meet regularly (perhaps annually) and discuss their experiences and any problems they may have in operating workshops to meet both production schedules and training objectives.

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## APPENDIX 1

<b>Work Before Goal, During Gaol and After Gaol Industries Interview Group</b>				
Work Before Gaol	Goal	Prison work Location	Days in work location	Predominant Work Since Release
builder's labourer (qualified boilermaker)	Training	Metal	132	boilermaker
apprentice boilermaker	Training	Metal	109	boilermaker
labourer	Training	Timber	156	no work
no work	Training	Timber	117	labourer
station asistant (qualified carpenter joiner)	Training	Timber	370	carpenter
carpenter's labourer	Training	Timber	98	cleaner
builder's labourer	Training	Timber	107	builder's labourer
no work	Bathurst	Metal	252	tyre fitter
labourer	Bathurst	Metal	210	no work
labouring	Bathurst	Metal	223	cleaner
car detailing	Bathurst	Met Tech	365	carpenter's labourer
builder's labourer	Bathurst	Tim Tech	345	builder's labourer
labourer	Cessnock	Timber	455	brickie's labourer
driver	Cessnock	Timber	110	driver
student	Cessnock	Upholstery	129	student
labourer	Cessnock	Timber	166	labourer
boilermaker	Parklea	Metal	338	boilermaker
labourer	Parklea	Metal	134	cleaner
builder's labourer	Parklea	Metal	782	boilermaker
security	Parklea	Timber	275	storeman
labourer	Parklea	Timber	413	forklift
carpenter's labourer	Parklea	Timber	310	builder's labourer
labourer	Parklea	Timber	170	no work
roof tiler	Parklea	Metal	673	roof tiler

**Work During Gaol and After Gaol  
Data from Probation and Parole Files**

Gaol	Work location in Prison	Days in Work Location	Predominant Work Since Release
<b>Industries Group</b>			
Training	Timber	151	wharf labourer
Training	Timber	264	sales representative
Training	Timber	243	book-keeper
Training	Timber	192	roof tiler
Training	Timber	172	carpenter
Training	Timber	208	sign writer
Training	Timber	248	painter & decorator
Bathurst	Met Tech	167	roof tiler
Bathurst	Met Tech	253	Seasonal-harvesting
Bathurst	Met Tech	183	forklift driver
Bathurst	Timber	162	No work
Bathurst	Timber	103	labourer
Bathurst	Tim Tech	183	builder's labourer
Bathurst	External upholstery	162	roof tiler
Cessnock	Metal	194	pest control
Cessnock	Metal	138	no work
Cessnock	Metal	121	labourer
Cessnock	Metal	159	painting & decorating
Cessnock	Metal	159	no work
Cessnock	Timber	315	labourer
Cessnock	Timber	168	civil engineer
Cessnock	Timber	164	no work
Cessnock	Timber	200	builder's labourer
Cessnock	Timber	296	no work
Cessnock	Timber	149	builder
Cessnock	Timber	92	glass blowing
Cessnock	Timber	103	no work
Cessnock	Timber	278	seasonal worker
Cessnock	Timber	173	no work
Cessnock	Timber	90	no work
Cessnock	Timber	216	brickie's labourer
Cessnock	Timber	323	kitchen hand
Cessnock	Timber	117	seasonal worker
Cessnock	Upholstery	342	builder's labourer
Parklea	Metal	92	welder
Parklea	Metal	368	boilermaker
Parklea	Timber	333	no work
Parklea	Timber	277	erecting fences
Parklea	Timber	450	labourer
Parklea	Timber	968	sales representative
Parklea	Timber	114	sandwich shop



**Work During Gaol and After Gaol  
Data from Probation and Parole Files**

Gaol	Work location in Prison	Days in Work Location	Predominant Work Since Release
<b>Services Group</b>			
Training	Sweeping	133	builder's labourer
Training	Sweeping	365	storeman
Training	Sweeper	209	no work
Training	Maintenance	271	no work
Training	Maintenance	104	storeman
Training	Maintenance	207	no work
Training	Maintenance	313	cleaner
Training	Maintenance	93	cleaner
Training	Maintenance	163	painting & decorating
Training	Maintenance	176	labourer
Training	Maintenance	106	no work
Training	Maintenance	203	labourer
Training	Maintenance	276	builder
Training	Maintenance	178	no work
Training	Maintenance	107	builder
Bathurst	Kitchen	117	no work
Bathurst	Sweeping	102	no work
Bathurst	Sweeping	133	no work
Bathurst	Sweeping	104	builder's labourer
Bathurst	Sweeping	240	no work
Bathurst	Sweeping	163	labourer
Bathurst	Sweeping	94	no work
Bathurst	Maintenance	143	concretor
Cessnock	Kitchen	129	labourer
Cessnock	Kitchen	238	painting & decorating
Cessnock	Sweeping	155	driver
Cessnock	Sweeping	190	labourer
Cessnock	Sweeping	162	no work
Cessnock	Sweeping	115	concretor
Cessnock	Maintenance	121	labourer
Cessnock	Maintenance	155	labourer
Cessnock	Maintenance	110	no work
Parklea	Kitchen	365	no work
Parklea	Kitchen	379	labourer
Parklea	Kitchen	185	no work
Parklea	Kitchen	*	labourer
Parklea	Sweeping	129	no work
Parklea	Sweeping	333	labourer
Parklea	Sweeping	880	no work
Parklea	Sweeping	338	labourer
Parklea	Maintenance	111	builder's labourer
Parklea	Maintenance	820	baker
Parklea	Maintenance	127	labourer
Parklea	Maintenance	*	trade assistant

\* Exact number of days not available.