



Research Publication

The Young Offenders Project

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The specific research contributions are outlined below:

- project supervision by Simon Eyland;

- research design by Rosemary Elliot, Geoff Gordon, Angela Gorta, Julianne Minkov, Don Porritt and Kristin Young;
- interviewing by Rosemary Elliot, Grace Johnson-Fitzpatrick, Sian Owen, Martin Palin and Kristin Young,;
- computing by Simon Eyland and Joanne Knight;
- coding by Louise Daly, Rosemary Elliot and Kristin Young;
- the data were analysed and the report written by Andrew Gilchrist;
- proofreading by Simon Eyland, Andrew Gilchrist and Angela Gorta.

ABSTRACT

The management of young offenders (less than 21 years of age) in prison is a problem, as vexing today as it was last century. Three areas which have aroused concern are:

- i. the corruption and hardening of young prisoners as a result of their association with older inmates;
- ii. the greater risk of assault, for young prisoners, implied by overcrowding and the increasing use of protection facilities; and
- iii. difficulties in delivering programmes and support services to younger inmates imprisoned in protection units, or over crowded conditions.

It has been suggested that a "young inmates only" prison would resolve these problems. This paper seeks to assess the viability of such institutions by establishing the nature and extent of problems faced by young prisoners. This was done by:

- i. obtaining inmate and staff opinions of a system based on "young inmates only" goals; and

- ii. comparing the experiences of prisoners aged less than 21 years and 21 years or more in the three areas outlined above.

It was found that both inmates and staff thought older inmates had a negative influence on young inmates, and that most inmates who were assaulted were young or new to prison. However, inmate experience revealed:

- i. that older inmates most often advised young prisoners to go straight;
- ii. young inmates were as likely as older inmates to assault other prisoners;
- iii. use of protection perpetuated the "at risk" status of inmates using it;
- iv. older inmates made more use of support services than young inmates.

It was concluded that a "young inmates only" prison or other segregation based proposals would not resolve the problems of assault experienced by young inmates in a mixed age system. An innovative system of prisoner management and service delivery such as Unit Management was suggested as a practical solution to problems of violence in the prisoner community.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Major findings did not support a system of prisoner management using "young inmates only" prisons. Areas examined included corruption of younger inmates by older prisoners, violence in gaols, and inmate use of support services. Early findings seemed to suggest that separate prisons were needed. These included;

1. Staff believed older inmates corrupt and confirm the criminality of young prisoners and favoured a system of separate prisons for either younger, or "benign" prisoners with separate education and support programmes for young inmates.
 2. Inmates and staff regarded older prisoners as the main assailant group in assaults, sexual assaults, and standovers.
 3. Inmates who had been assaulted said that at the time of the assault they were less than 21 years of age (90%), or had been in gaol less than six months (79%).
 4. Young offenders more often than older inmates had post-school training interrupted by imprisonment.
 5. Younger inmates had lower levels of literacy and educational achievement than older inmates.
- Other findings suggested strongly that "young

inmates only" prisons or other segregation based strategies would not reduce the violence to which young prisoners are subject, or improve their participation in courses, or use of support services.

6. Young inmates said advice to go straight was given most often by older prisoners, rather than other inmates, or staff.
7. Prisoners of all age groups believed corruption and violence among inmates would be a major problem in either mixed age, or "young inmates only" prisons.
8. Young prisoners were as likely to assault other inmates as older prisoners.
9. The current segregation based solution to handling young offenders "protection" was found to perpetuate the "at risk" status of prisoners who used it. The majority of inmates on protection did not wish to return to normal discipline because of the stigma attached to them as a result of their use of this facility, and the consequent risk of assault.
10. No support was obtained for the hypothesis that, a greater proportion of older than younger prisoners discouraged young inmates from participation in courses.
11. Older inmates undertook courses at the same rate or more often than younger inmates.

MINOR FINDINGS

Other data clarified the extent of problems such as violence. Staff and inmates often attributed assaults to characteristics of the target inmate. Solutions to the problem based on this understanding of the problem lead to punishment of the victim, usually by segregation. Research indicated this model was too simple. Assaults (sexual and violent) are a means of control within a laissez faire, hierarchical social structure. Factors which influenced inmates' participation in courses or use of support services were also made clearer.

12. Only five per cent (5%) of inmates thought single cell accommodation in mixed age gaols would solve the problems of young prisoners.
13. Approximately one third of inmates said that at entry to prison they would have liked more information about gaol life.
14. Inmates of all age groups considered older prisoners were good cellmates. Young inmates less often than other age groups reported problems with cellmates.
15. The results on assaults were weighted for age and gender. This suggested approximately 20 per cent of all prisoners in gaol had been assaulted.
16. Young males (26%) and young females (23%) reported being assaulted at similar rates. Older males (33%) reported they had been assaulted at nearly twice the rate at which older females (17%) did.
17. Sexual assault was the most frequent (47%) type of assault reported.
18. Sexual assault was the most frequent (11%) type of assault by gangs.
19. Assaults were stopped or prevented only by the intervention of a group of friends or being within line of sight with a prison officer.
20. Inmates sharing cells reported a lower incidence of violence and sexual assault than was the case for the sample as a whole.
21. Entry to protection units was unconditional. Prisoners wishing to re-enter normal discipline were stigmatised and encountered hostility from mainstream prisoners. Rapid entry to and slow egress from protection units has resulted in the rapid growth in the number of prisoners "on protection".
22. Prisoners said they wanted programmes to help them get and keep jobs, and to give them skills to help them cope with re-entry to outside society.
23. The type of courses prisoners said would help them when leaving prison and those they did while in prison were similar.
24. Inmates who had been incarcerated in Y.A.C.S. institutions most often had low educational achievement.
25. Inmates said uncertainty about their legal status and location caused by impending court appearances and sentencing procedures was the reason they had not done courses.
26. Older prisoners used services more and were more often satisfied with those services. This was probably because they more often required support in coping with more complex legal, family and financial problems.
27. Nearly one third of inmates said that the prison system could do nothing, would do nothing to help them, or that they did not want anything to do with the prison system, when released from gaol.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. No "young inmates only" gaol be built.
2. A prisoner information handbook and audio cassette (for low literacy inmates) be available to inmates entering gaol. The handbook should contain information on conventions of prison life, prison rules, daily routine, facilities and programmes, seeing support staff, release and remission procedures, classification, and avoiding assault.
3. "Blind" areas within prison buildings where assaults might occur should be eliminated.
4. Adopt Unit Management to weaken the power hierarchy among inmates by establishing competing peer structures based on the unit.
5. Develop and encourage inmates to take programmes designed to teach non-violent forms of conflict resolution. This can be done by providing incentives based on factors usually affected by living skills such as access to visitors, other prisoners, wages, and buyup, rather than remissions.
6. Revise the management of Protection so that entry to it is conditional upon disclosure of the source of risk to the inmate who wishes to go "on protection".
7. Inmates wishing to enter Protective Custody be counselled to make them aware of the stigma attached to their use of protection by mainstream prisoners.
8. Modify prison officer Primary Training to include a course on the nature of relationships and behaviour among prisoners of different age groups, violence among inmates, and factors conditioning inmate participation in courses.
9. First Class Prison Officers receive training in counselling and behaviour management techniques useful in dealing with violence. Modular Course 2 be modified and taught jointly by officers experienced in the application of counselling techniques in gaols (such as the Interview Liaison Officer - I.L.O.) and Psychologists.
10. Undertake research among inmates to clarify the extent of violence among inmates.
11. Undertake research to test the proposition that inmates who share cells are less often assaulted, participate in courses, or use support services less. Establish the causes behind these observations.

1. INTRODUCTION

Young offenders, usually taken to mean inmates less than 21 years of age, are a readily identifiable subgroup of the prison population. Historically interest in this group has been maintained by the assumption that they have special needs. The different requirements of this group have been attributed to their criminal activity being underpinned by behaviour problems differing from those of adults (Howard League: 1979), or youth and inexperience rendering them vulnerable to corruption, exploitation, and violence from older criminals during their confinement.

Some evidence to support this perspective comes from research conducted by Gender and Player (1986). Their study of a mixed age women's prison in Britain revealed older inmates were less stable and often had more problems than the younger inmates. Mixed accommodation proved to be a disadvantage to younger inmates who learnt criminal techniques, such as credit fraud, from the older group.

The failure of prison managers to resolve these types of problems has led to an examination of alternatives to current systems of prisoner management. The system most commonly nominated is that of separate prisons for younger and older inmates.

However the "young inmates only" type of institution sits uneasily with the preferred policy of the N.S.W. Department of Corrective Services, stated in a submission to the Interdepartmental Committee on Young Offenders (I.D.C.:1986). This said that prisoners should not be classified on the basis of age alone. The variables suggested as relevant in classification included vulnerability, offence, sentencing history, and the offender's preference. The Department's

submission recommended that to avoid duplication of the violence present in mixed age institutions, accommodation for young offenders should contain a mix of prisoners of varying ages and offence types, selected by trained staff.

Concern about the influence of older inmates on younger prisoners has been maintained by a number of factors. These include, concomitant rises in gaol overcrowding and increasing use of protection, the report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Young Offenders which suggested a relatively high proportion of young prisoners were confined in the adult gaols of N.S.W. and a number of violent incidents involving young offenders.

Overcrowding has become one of the central issues in corrections literature of the last decade. Traditionally it has been associated with increased levels of physiological and behaviour problems among prisoners. Biles (1987) has suggested that in N.S.W. prisons overcrowding has reached crisis level.

The weekly statistics on the size of the N.S.W. prison population show that overcrowding is not uniform throughout the prisons of N.S.W. It is most serious in medium and maximum security gaols in or near metropolitan areas, and is becoming more widespread (See Figure 1, also Appendix 1).

Since mid-1986 occupancy rates have increased in all but four of the twenty-four prisons of N.S.W. On June 30, 1986, 288 of 441 inmates under 21 years of age, were held in gaols with occupancy rates exceeding 100 per cent. A majority (232) of this group were housed in maximum security institutions (See Figure 1, also Appendix 1).

In addition to incarceration in often overcrowded conditions, research has indicated a relatively high proportion of young prisoners

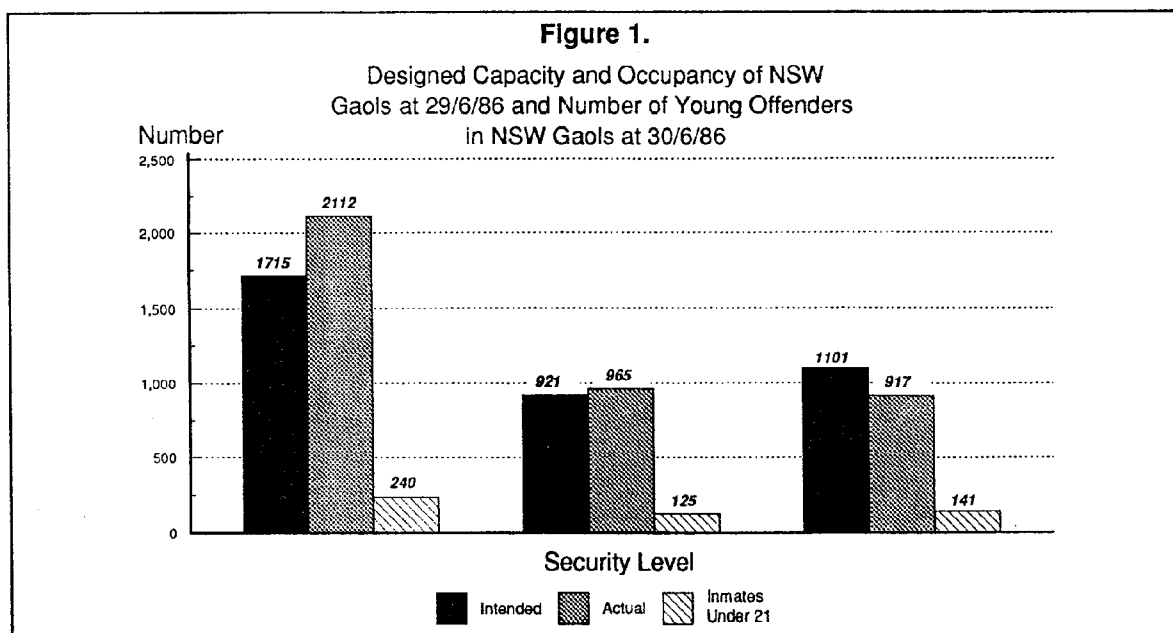
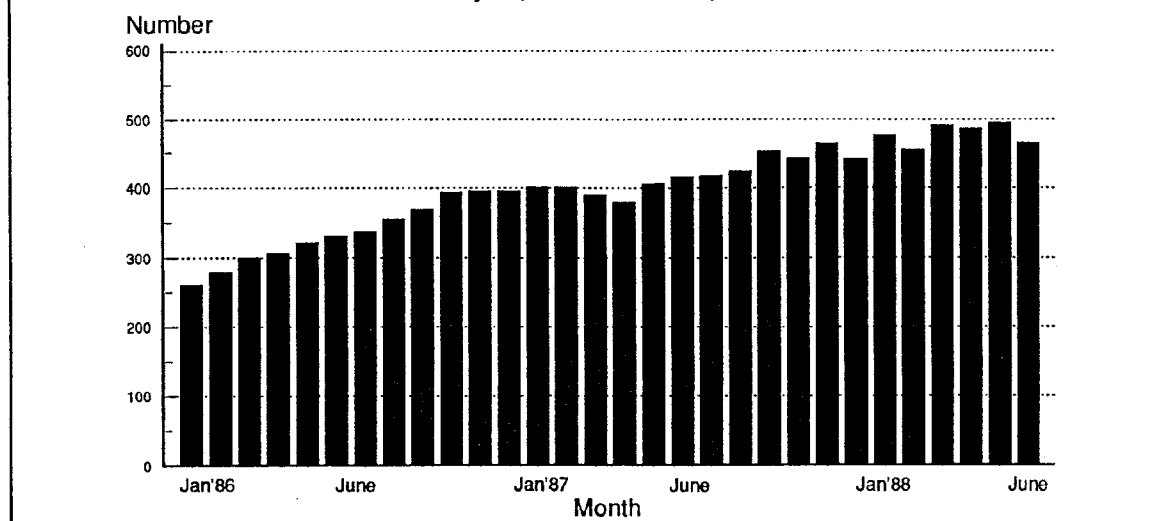


Figure 2.

Protection Prisoners in NSW Gaols,
January 26, 1986 to June 26, 1988



were confined in adult N.S.W. gaols (Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Young Offenders: 1986). This crowding of young prisoners into the adult system has been explained by reference to the inability of the courts of the adult and juvenile criminal justice systems to sentence offenders to incarceration in the other's jurisdiction. The administrative arrangements, defined in the Child Welfare Act, which regulate the manner in which inmates may be transferred between adult and juvenile institution have also been described as inflexible.

The result of these arrangements can be put into perspective by comparing the proportions of young inmates gaoled in the adult systems of N.S.W. and Victoria. At June 30, 1986, five hundred and forty-three offenders less than 21 years of age were incarcerated in N.S.W. The Department of Corrective Services held 441 or 81 per cent of them. At the same time The Department of Youth and Community Services (Y.A.C.S.) held 102 or 19 per cent of offenders aged less than 21 years (Welstats; Children Under Detention Collection; Y.A.C.S. Juvenile Justice Office; unpublished, N.S.W. Prison Census, 1986). In Victoria the Office of Corrections takes 60-70% of 17-20 year olds and the Department of Community Services the remainder.

That is, at 30/6/86 for gaols in N.S.W. to have held the same proportion of all prisoners aged less than 21 years as was held in Victorian gaols would have required the transfer of 60-114 inmates aged less than 21 years to juvenile institutions.

In order to establish what problems overcrowding presents for young inmates it will be necessary to examine the association between overcrowding and young inmates' experience of

violence while imprisoned. Despite concern about the relationship between overcrowding and violence, the consequences of the former and therefore the threat posed to young inmates remain unclear.

Examination of overcrowding in Canadian penitentiaries over the period 1984-86 indicates a simple relationship between overcrowding and disturbances does not exist (Gendreau, Tellier, Wormith: 1986). This is consistent with observations of recent outbreaks of violence in N.S.W. prisons. During 1987 disturbances took place in gaols which were not overcrowded (Parklea on 13/12/87, where occupancy was 95 per cent of intended capacity), as well as those in which occupancy levels were very high (Long Bay mid-November 1987 where occupancy was 152-165 per cent of intended capacity). In both cases the initial disturbances were related to alcohol abuse by inmates.

In order to come to grips with the problem of violence experienced by young inmates, a clearer picture of the motivation and characteristics of the assailants and those they assault must be established. Research conducted by Robertson (1979) indicated that violence among prisoners was a means of establishing and maintaining the power hierarchy which characterises relations in the prisoner community. Peer groups, formed on the basis of shared characteristics, provided one source of respite from assault.

In N.S.W. gaols the official sanction used to enable inmates to avoid the risk of assaults is Protective Custody. Segregation is used to confine inmates posing a risk to others. Figures available since January 1986 show a rapid increase in use of protection facilities (See Figure 2). In the six months to June 1986 the proportion of prisoners "on protection" rose from 6.9% to

8.4%, by January 1988 this proportion had increased to 11.4%.

Similar rapid increases in the use of protective custody have been observed overseas. Gendreau et al. (1986) report that between 1978 and 1982 the proportion of prisoners in the Federal American system on Protective Custody (PC) rose from 2.3%, to 6.3%, of all inmates. Similarly, in Canada, between 1972 and 1979, inmates in PC rose from 2.5%, to 9% of the prisoner population.

Explanations for rapid growth in PC fell into 4 categories:

- i. the psychiatric profile of the inmate population (Gendreau et al: 1986). The traditional view is that inmates who are there are often not in real danger, but because they are weak or easily intimidated. Other suggestions include the presence of greater numbers of sex offenders or inmates with psychiatric disorders in prisons;
- ii. changes in the organisation of the prisoner community, (Gendreau et al:1986) such as the growth of gangs, or of debt leading to violence, or greater numbers of informants; or
- iii. the management of Protective Custody. Welch (1987) reports administrators are made culpable, and therefore obliged to provide PC, when inmates are able to claim to be under threat without disclosing the source of that threat.
- iv. prisoners moving from protection to the mainstream prison face a hostile, often violent reception (Gendreau et al: 1986). These inmates are strongly stigmatised by their use of Protective Custody. This develops because other prisoners are unwilling to discriminate between prisoners using this facility to avoid assault and informants and the like who also use it. These observations suggest the "at risk" status of inmates who use protection is perpetuated merely by their use of that facility. This may result in inmates on protection deferring the decision to come off it, beyond the existence of the original threat.

The two main strategies used to reduce or prevent increases in the numbers of inmates on protection are, firstly, the provision of information to create behavioural change among prisoners. This includes assertiveness training, counselling, and provision of thorough orientation and reception programmes and secondly, surveillance. This includes monitoring vulnerable prisoners, or aggressive prisoners, warning inmates not to mix with the latter group and instituting sanctions against aggressors such as transfer away from family (Gendreau et al:1986,

Welsh:1987). Sorting of prisoners according to personality types has also been tried in some institutions and proved useful in reducing violence among inmates (Bohn: 1979).

The rapid and continued growth in the use of protection facilities suggests: a) prison administrators do not exercise effective control over the inmates in their care; and b) prisoners, now more often than in the past, perceive themselves to be at risk. On the basis of research showing younger inmates were more likely to be targeted by assailants (Robertson: 1979), it seems reasonable to suggest that growth in the use of protection facilities indicates a serious problem of increasing 'risk', particularly for younger inmates.

Given the dependence of prisoners on protection as a method of dealing with the risk situation, the effectiveness of it in allowing them to do so should be assessed.

In the context of overcrowding and high levels of risk, the importance of rehabilitation programmes and support services is emphasised by not only increased prisoner demand for them, but also the increasingly adverse conditions under which they are delivered. (The provision of programmes within protection units is notoriously hard to implement.)

Several barriers to the use of prison services, by young prisoners, have been mentioned in the literature. These include:

- i. the lack of policies dealing with the provision of services for 18-21 year olds, in those areas in which they are assumed to encounter most problems (Department of Corrective Services:1985c);
- ii. very low levels of literacy and educational achievement (Garfunkel: 1986, Holloway and Mohes: 1986, Linden, Parry, Ayers, and Partlett: 1984) thought to indicate negative experiences of schooling, leading to unwillingness to enter prison programmes;
- iii. environmental barriers such as the compulsion of the current prison regime, uncertainty about length of stay in a given institution, or brevity of sentence (Semmens: 1986, Nagle: 1973); and
- iv. the cynicism of older prisoners about courses deters young inmates from programme participation.

An exception to the ad hoc organisation of programmes and support services, in N.S.W., is the Young Offenders Programme which forms the basis of the Berrima Gaol Management Plan. The programme is for offenders aged 17-25. It is voluntary, though conditional upon participation in literacy, numeracy, and communication courses. Acceptance criteria include: at least twelve months to serve; a security rating of B or less;

willingness to complete the programme; and an established need for education, counselling, Drug and Alcohol, or life skills programmes. Evaluation involves periodic reports from staff, interviews with the inmate's family, a quarterly programme review, and young offenders programme reviews. Programmes which pursue excellence are to be commended. However, the Berrima programme is limited in that it caters to long term and better motivated prisoners, whereas, most inmates are short term, lack motivation, have poor self image, and require education of a basic nature (Semmens: 1986, Jøngeleski: 1984, Dodd: 1981). It is unlikely that programmes such as Berrima will be able to address the needs of the majority of young inmates.

Little research exists on the programme and service needs of young inmates in N.S.W. gaols. In order to develop appropriate responses to these needs it will be necessary to establish the factors relevant to participation by young inmates in programmes and services.

The remainder of this paper deals with: firstly, the prison population and sample used in analysis; secondly, aspects of social relationships among inmates; thirdly, the problem of violence among inmates; and fourthly, the use of programmes and support services by inmates. The behaviour of members of the "less than 21 years" and "21 years or more" age groups are compared in each of these areas.

2. METHOD

Two surveys were conducted—one targeting custodial and prison service officers, the other including inmates. A different research tactic was used for each of the groups surveyed. Prison staff were given self-administered standardised questionnaires while inmates were surveyed using structured interviews conducted by research personnel.

1. Design and Instruments

Respondents were drawn from 13 gaols representative of security levels in the N.S.W. system, and close to Sydney. In the sample there are five maximum security gaols (three in the metropolitan area), four medium security prisons (one in the metropolitan area) and four minimum security institutions (one in the metropolitan area).

A stratified random sample of inmates was sought. This sample was stratified in terms of age, sex, and gaol security level. Extra Aboriginal and protection prisoners, who looked young or were less than 21 years, were included. This approach had the benefit of providing reliable data on groups in the prison population which were small, and/or of special interest.

All service and custodial staff in the prisons visited were asked to participate. A self-selected sample of 78 staff was obtained.

Staff were asked to identify differences in the reactions of young and old prisoners to imprisonment, at risk status, and use of support services. Inmates provided similar information about entry to, settling in, risks encountered, and use of support services in prison. Data obtained were processed using the statistical package SPSS PC+.

2. The Prison Population

The study was conducted in mid-1986, a period which included the date (30/6/86) of the 1986 Prison Census. At this census, there were 4228 prisoners (Figure 3a, Appendix 2a), managed by 2100 industrial and custodial prison officers. In addition to custodial staff 1112 non-custodial staff including 618 service staff, and 494 clerical staff worked in the gaols, regional offices or central administrative offices (Figure 3f, Appendix 2e).

Two thirds of prisoners were aged 25 or over, about one in five 21-24, and one in eight less than 21 years (Figure 3b, Appendix 2a). The ages of the minority female group (5%) were similarly distributed (Appendix 2a). Just under half the prisoners were held in maximum security, with 22 per cent in medium, and 30 per cent in minimum security gaols (Figure 3d, Appendix 2b). About 8 per cent were known to be Aboriginal, while the descent of 3 per cent was not recorded (Figure 3d, Appendix 2c). About 8 per cent were "on protection" (Figure 3e, Appendix 2d).

3. The Sample

Samples of 208 inmates, 33 prison officers and 45 civilian service staff were obtained (See Figures 3a and 3f, and Appendix 2a and 2e).

In the sample there were 144 (69%) inmates of less than 21 years, 32 (15%) of 21-24 years and 32 (15%) of 25 years and over (Figure 3b, Appendix 2a).

Of the inmates surveyed 91 (44%) were housed in maximum security, 69 (33%) in medium security and 48 (23%) in minimum security establishments (Figure 3c, Appendix 2b).

Inmates who were less than 21 years of age, female, Aboriginal, or accommodated in institutions of medium security were over represented in the sample. The young and Aboriginal groups because they were of special interest and women in order to get workable levels of data. Medium security inmates were over-represented because most female prisoners were accommodated at that level.

While inmates aged 21 years or more were under-sampled the number surveyed was sufficient to allow reliable comparisons with the younger group to be made.

Figure 3. Summary of Characteristics; Prison Population and Sample

Figure 3a.
Gender of Prison Population and Sample

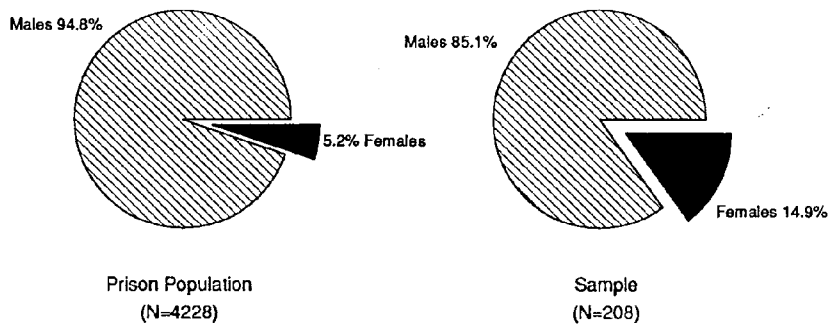


Figure 3b.
Age Distribution of Prison Population and Sample

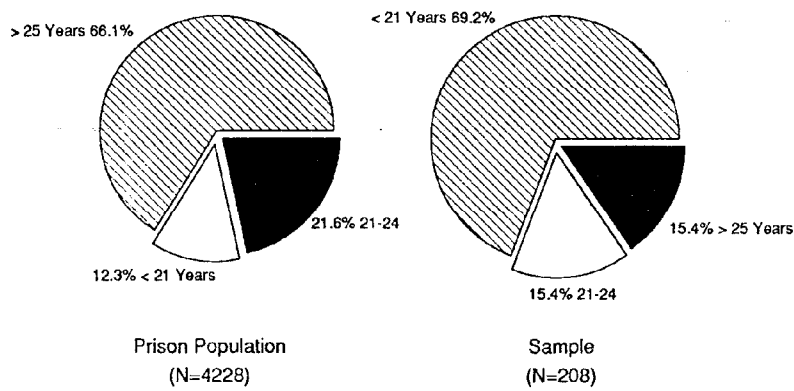


Figure 3c.
Security Level of Accommodation of the Prison Population and Sample

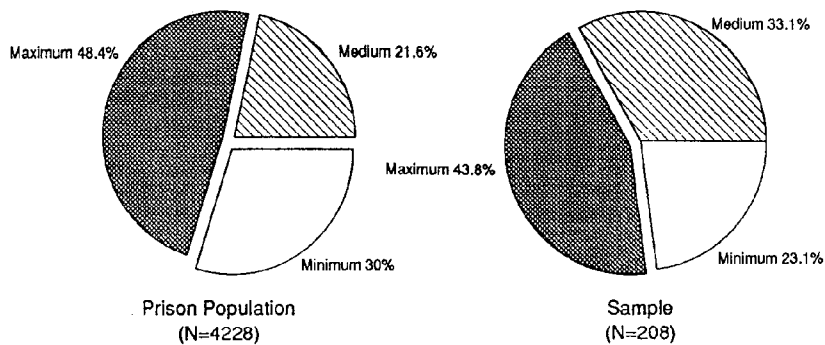


Figure 3d.

Descent of Prison Population and Sample

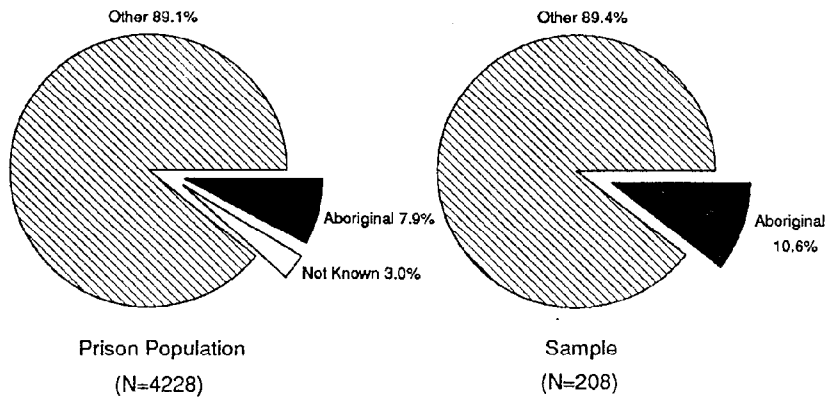


Figure 3e.

Inmates on Protection and Segregation in Prison Population and Sample

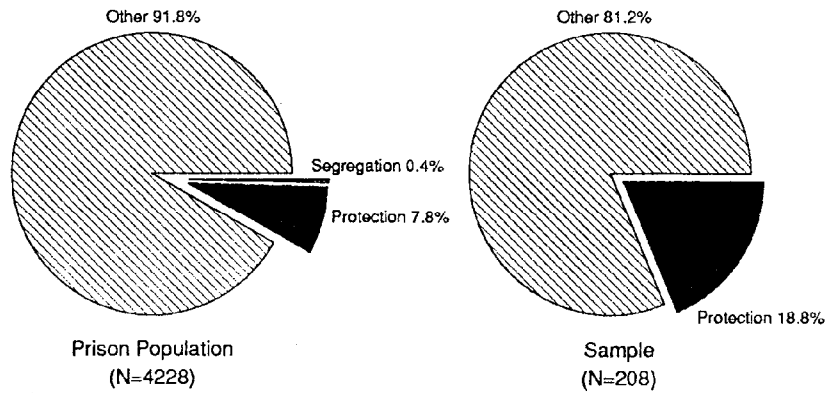
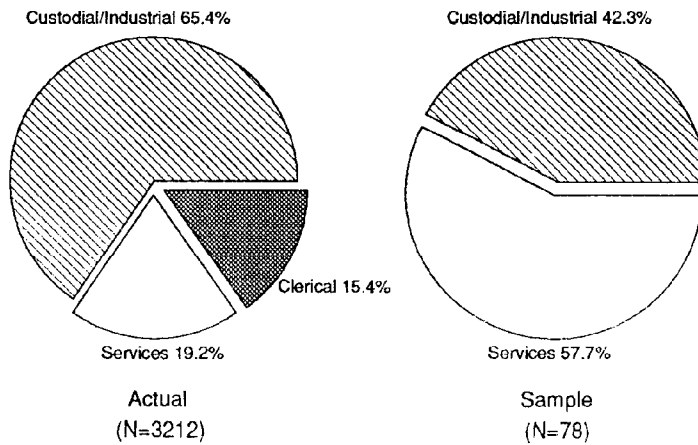


Figure 3f.

Staff Numbers, Actual and Sample



The majority of prisoners were non-Aboriginal (89%) and in normal discipline (81%) (Figures 3d and 3e, Appendices 2c and 2d). Thus, samples representative of younger and older prisoner groups, and most groups of special interest were obtained. A separate analysis comparing the experience of young Aboriginal (all of whom were male) and young non-Aboriginal inmates of gaol is included in Appendix 3.

In the sample of staff, prison officers (2% of total) were under represented relative to civilian professionals (9% of total).

3. SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN YOUNG AND OLD INMATES

1. Support and Corruption

Staff and inmates were asked their opinions of the influence of older inmates upon younger prisoners. Reported inmate experience has been used to assess propositions arising from these opinions. Sources of information, help, encouragement to 'go straight', and relationships with cellmates were examined.

The distribution of staff and inmate opinions cannot be compared directly as staff responded to multiple choice questions while inmates answered open-ended questions.

(a) Staff Opinions

Many staff believed older inmates have a negative influence upon young prisoners. Staff often favoured change from the current system of mixed age prisons.

Custodial and non-custodial staff believed it "very true" that young inmates learn criminal techniques and contacts (56%); derive a sense of graduation to full criminal status (50%); have their criminal activities reinforced (44%); and are encouraged to participate in illicit activities (23%); by mixing with older inmates.

Most staff were unwilling to concede that older prisoners exert any good influence upon young inmates. Only a few agreed it was 'very true' that older prisoners advised younger ones to do their time easy (11%), offered practical help and advice about gaol life (8%), advised younger ones to go straight (7%), or offered protection (3%).

Prison officers (42%) significantly more often than non-custodial staff (3%) said it was not true that older prisoners offer young ones protection (Chi Square=12.346, d.f.=2, $p<.05$). Prison officers (24%) at a level approaching significance more often than non-custodial staff (7%) said it was not true that older prisoners give the young prisoners help (Chi Square=4.731, d.f.=2, $p<.0939$).

When asked if it was "a good idea to mix young and older prisoners in prison" most staff (63%) said it was not. Asked to select from seven

alternatives "the most suitable prison system for young prisoners", the selections of prison officers differed from that of non-custodial staff. Officers more often favoured segregation of older and younger inmates (39%) and separation of non-hardened offenders (16%). Non-custodial staff most often preferred separate institutions for "benign" prisoners (16%), and total segregation from the mainstream prison population of younger inmates (13%) and non-hardened offenders (11%). However, both staff groups (40%) frequently nominated "other" (not defined) prison systems in preference to those offered.

Asked to select which changes should be instituted only for young prisoners age 18-20, a majority of staff (62%) nominated single cell accommodation. Nearly all (96%) opposed the proposition that "nothing at all" should be done.

(b) Inmate Opinions

Prisoner opinions of "young inmates only" prisons were mixed. Inmates made similar criticisms of that type of institution and the current mixed age system.

When asked what they thought of the idea of separate prisons for young and old prisoners, 56 per cent of young prisoners and 36 per cent of the 21 and over group made positive comments. These ranged from enthusiastic (such as "brilliant, the most needed thing in the system") to qualified approval (such as "It's a good idea, but it would still have its problems"). Inmate responses (65%) often implied age segregation would cause problems. Difficulties cited included young prisoners big noting themselves forming their own hierarchies and exerting pressure on others (19%), fighting and arguing (18%), making trouble and planning crime (10%), acting stupidly or immaturely (7%) or learning nothing due to the lack of the positive influence of older inmates (4%). A small group (5%) mentioned the removal of the corrupting influence of older inmates as an advantage of segregation.

The current system of prisons holding prisoners of different age groups, was criticised by 62 per cent of inmates. The most common criticisms were that young inmates are corrupted and confirmed as criminals (20%), are subject to sexual and violent attacks and harassment (18%), and are stood over and dominated (9%), by older prisoners.

In contrast to these results a similar proportion (68%) thought there were positive things about mixing age groups. Older prisoners were said to be sources of advice and help (23%); provide information on living in gaol (19%); to try to turn young inmates from crime and gaol (13%); and to be good company (7%). Some felt young prisoners behave in a more mature manner when mixed with older prisoners (6%).

Table 1: Inmate's Sources of Information at Entry to Gaol

A. By Age					
Source of Information					
Age of Recipient	No One	Prisoners	Prison Officers	Rulebook	Other/ Other Staff
21 or More (n=63)	40%	16%	19%	8%	17%
Less than 21 (n=142)	27%	28%	20%	7%	18%

B. By Experience of Imprisonment					
Source of Information					
Experience of Imprisonment	No One	Prisoners	Prison Officers	Rulebook	Other/ Other Staff
Gaol+Y.A.C.S. (n=87)	37%	17%	21%	12%	13%
Y.A.C.S. only (n=50)	18%	39%	16%	8%	18%
Gaol only (n=30)	35%	24%	28%	-	14%
Neither (n=41)	30%	20%	15%	3%	33%

Table 2: Proportion of Inmates Who Wanted More Information at Entry to Gaol

A. By Age		B. By Experience of Imprisonment	
Age	Want More Information	Experience Group*	Want More Information
21 or more (n=64)	42%	Gaol+Y.A.C.S. (n=87)	29%
Less Than 21 (n=144)	31%	Y.A.C.S. only (n=50)	60%
		Gaol only (n=30)	31%
		Neither (n=40)	69%

* 1 unknown

Table 3: Sources of Help at Time of Entry to Gaol

A. By Age					
Source of Help					
Age	No One	Myself	Prisoners	Prison Officers	Other/ Other Staff
21 or More (n=64)	33%	16%	33%	5%	13%
Less Than 21(n=144)	13%	16%	57%	5%	9%

B. By Experience of Imprisonment					
Source of Help					
Experience of Imprisonment	No One	Myself	Prisoners	Prison Officers	Other/ Other Staff
Gaol+Y.A.C.S. (n=87)	24%	20%	47%	2%	7%
Y.A.C.S. only (n=50)	12%	16%	56%	8%	8%
Gaol only (n=30)	23%	20%	40%	-	17%
Neither (n=41)	10%	5%	55%	10%	20%

Table 4: Sources of Help at Time of Interview

A. By Age					
Source of Help					
Age	No One	Myself	Prisoners	Prison Officer	Other/ Other Staff
21 or More (n=64)	27%	23%	20%	6%	24%
Less Than 21 (n=138)	16%	25%	37%	1%	21%

B. By Experience of Imprisonment					
Source of Help					
Experience of Imprisonment	No One	Myself	Prisoners	Prison Officers	Other/ Other Staff
Gaol+Y.A.C.S. 17% (n=87)	21%	23%	23%	37%	2%
Y.A.C.S. only (n=50)	10%	33%	31%	2%	24%
Gaol only (n=30)	27%	10%	30%	7%	26%
Neither (n=40)	23%	28%	23%	3%	23%

Table 5: Sources of Advice to Inmates to Go Straight

Source of Advice				
Age of Prisoner	Prisoners	Officers	Other Staff	Other/ Combination
21 or More (n=63)	54%	7%	2%	37%
Less Than 21 (n=103)	67%	1%	5%	27%

Table 6: The Age of Prisoners Who Gave Advice to Go Straight

Age of Advisors			
Age of Prisoner	21 and over	Less than 21 Years	All Ages
21 or More (n=43)	71%	0%	29%
Less than 21 (n=102)	61%	7%	32%

Table 7: Percentage of Inmates Sharing Cells Who Found Their Cellmate Helpful

A. At Entry			
Cellmate Age			
Inmate Age	25 and Over (n=76)	21-24 (n=17)	18-20 (n=21)
21 or more (n=27)	72%	88%	-
Less than 21 (n=63)	78%	53%	78%

B. At Time of Interview			
Cellmate Age			
Inmate Age	25 and Over (n=23)	21-24 (n=26)	18-20 (n=12)
21 or more (n=11)	67%	100%	-
Less than 21 (n=44)	93%	87%	83%

Only 5 per cent nominated single cell accommodation as a solution to the problems inmates felt young prisoners encounter in gaol.

(c) Sources of Help and Information Available to Inmates

Young inmates (28%) and those with experience of the institutions of Youth and Community Services (39%) or gaol only (24%) most often reported that other prisoners were their primary source of information about gaol life after their entry to prison (Table 1). Older (42%) and novice (69%) prisoners most often said they had wanted additional information about gaol at the time of their entry to it (Table 2). The type of information most often sought concerned, general prison life (25%), prison rules (22%), daily routine (22%), facilities and programmes (18%), seeing support service staff (12%), release, remission, and classification (10%), and unspecified matters (20%).

Young inmates (57%), or those with experience of Y.A.C.S. Institutions (56%), or neither (55%) most often reported that immediately after entry to prison other prisoners were their main source of help (Table 3).

All inmate groups reported other prisoners were their main source of information and help, more often than they did so for staff.

The results presented in Tables 3 and 4 indicate that with the passage of time inmates become less reliant on other prisoners for help.

In short behaviour different across age and experience groups related to information gathering, became more alike with experience of the prison environment. It seems reasonable to suggest that other initially dissimilar experience based behaviours become more alike after exposure to the similar gaol environments.

2. Encouragement to Reform: Inmate Reports

Similar proportions of all inmate age and experience groups (70%) said that they had been advised to "go straight" while incarcerated. The sources of this advice were most often other prisoners or persons aged 21 and over. Staff and young inmates were not important sources of this advice (Tables 5 and 6).

3. Inmate Relationships with Cellmates

A majority (61%) of inmates surveyed shared a cell immediately after entering prison. No inmate aged 25 or more had shared with inmates aged 18-20. Young inmates who shared (90) most often had cellmates aged 21 and over (53%). They said cellmates 25 and over (78%) and less than 21 years (75%) were most helpful. Inmates of all age groups said cellmates 25 and over were helpful.

Over time cellmates tended to become more helpful. This may be a result of prison staff sorting troublesome cellmates out of shared accommodation. Older cellmates remained a relatively helpful group (see Table 7).

Younger inmates had fewest problems with cellmates. However, where younger inmates reported problems with cellmates they were usually with older prisoners.

Conflict between cellmates decreased over time. Of the 127 prisoners who shared cells since arriving in gaol, 28 (22%) reported problems with their cellmates. These included personal incompatibility (47%), tension or arguments (36%), bashing and sexual violence (7%) and unspecified problems (11%). Young inmates who shared at entry (19%) reported problems less often than those 21 and over (32%). At the time of interview only 6 per cent of inmates sharing cells reported problems with cellmates. The range of problems had decreased too. Only personal incompatibility was reported to be a problem.

4. Summary: Age and Inmate Relationships

Staff held a negative view of the influence of older inmates. Inmate experience was mixed. They reported older inmates were supportive and informative, encouraged young inmates to go straight, and were good cellmates. However, they also said older prisoners were sources of corruption and threat to younger inmates.

That older prisoners were a majority (88%) of the prisoner population and are therefore likely to be the subject of nearly 90 per cent of reports of trouble may explain the negative opinion staff held of that group.

4 . THE AT RISK PROBLEM AMONG YOUNG INMATES

1. Staff and Inmate Observations of Assault

In this section the nature and extent of the risk encountered by young prisoners is examined. Methods of dealing with this problem are also assessed.

a) Staff Opinions

Staff were asked about sexual assault, assault, and standover. Most staff (85%) believed young prisoners were more likely than older ones to be attacked. They also agreed it was very or partly true that young inmates were "bartered" by members of the older group (78%). Prisoners most at risk were identified by reference to their offence, naivety and gullibility, physical strength, attractiveness, intellectual development, sexuality, experience of gaol and age (see Table 8). Civilian service staff (80%) more often than prison officers (53%) believed the assertiveness

Table 8: Staff Ranking of Characteristics Considered to Make an Inmate More Vulnerable to Assault

Characteristic	Prison Officer (n=33) %	Civilian Professionals (n=45) %	All Prison Officers and Civilian Profs (weighted) %
Nature of Offence	93.9	88.9	93.6
Naive, Gullible	81.8	88.9	82.3
Physically Weak	78.8	71.1	78.3
Attractive Appearance	75.8	91.1	77.0
Developmentally Delayed	69.7	82.2	70.6
Known Homosexual	67.7	71.1	70.0
First Timer	69.7	60.0	69.0
Less Than 21 Years	60.6	53.3	60.1
Non-Assertive*	7.6	80.0	59.2
Transsexual	57.6	64.4	58.4
No Friends Inside	57.6	57.8	57.6
Drug User	57.6	44.4	56.6
Physically Small	51.5	6.7	52.6
New in Prison	39.4	35.6	39.1
Light Sentence	12.1	6.7	11.7
Short Sentence	6.1	8.9	6.4

* denotes differences in staff group response significant at $p=.05$; Chi Square Test, 1d.f.

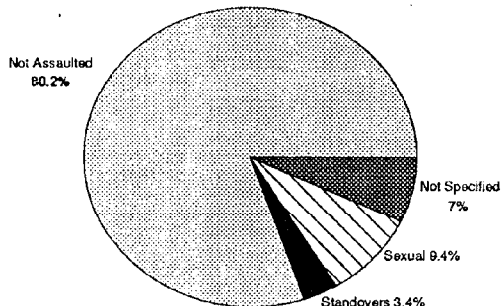
of individual behaviour was an important determinant of who assailants targeted (Chi Square=3.589, d.f.=1, $p<.06$).

Staff were asked what it was possible to do, under the then system, to protect at risk prisoners. Classification procedures and protected or single cell accommodation were the most frequent responses.

Staff were also asked what they would like to be able to do to protect at risk prisoners, 83 responded. The most frequent suggestions were that monitoring and support provided by the prison services be improved (30), or that more information about risks and formal and informal goal conventions be provided at reception (18). Some suggested integrated approaches to accommodation (10) such as unit management or placement with safe prisoners while others advocated segregated accommodation (7) such as protection. A significant minority of staff (14) had no ideas, or felt their responsibilities did not extend past the letter of their statement of duties.

Asked what the prison system should do to protect at risk inmates staff made 136 comments. Most (82) referred to accommodation stressing segregation (52) or unit management style proposals (30), improvements in the level and scope of support services (29) and improved prison officer selection and training (9). Other suggestions referred to more informative reception procedures, sentencing options in the courts, and improved protection facilities.

Figure 4.
Estimates of the Types of Assaults which Prisoners are Subject



b) Prisoner Opinions

Inmates were asked about sexual assault and standover. Sceptics might assume inmates would downplay violence between prisoners. However, an overwhelming majority of inmates (91%) acknowledged that sexual assaults and standovers have taken place. Most respondents (61%) knew someone who had been assaulted with younger inmates (66%) reporting this slightly more often than older ones (55%). That is, prisoners seemed willing to acknowledge the problem and a minority had direct or secondhand experience of it.

When asked "are young prisoners different or do they have problems differing from older prisoners?", inmates said the problems of young

inmates were: no different to those of older ones (38%); derived from their lack of familiarity with gaol (18%); due to their being less mature in their behaviour (15%); due to other problems including drugs (11%); a result of having less power in the gaol hierarchy (10%); or having different family problems (18%).

Young inmates (40%) had significantly more often than older prisoners (19%) received advice about avoiding sexual assault and standover (Chi Square=7.81, d.f.=1, p<.05). Inmates without experience of gaol (47%) had received this advice significantly more often than those with gaol experience (30%); (Chi Square=14.42, d.f.=4, p<.05). This advice was received most often from other prisoners (74%).

One third (32%) of inmates who had received advice about avoiding sexual assault said it was helpful or appreciated, and over a quarter said it was necessary. Inmates with prior experience of gaol less often (17%) said they needed such advice.

2. Inmate Reports of Assaults

a) Assaults Upon Other Inmates

Inmates were asked about assaults they knew had taken place, and the characteristics of those involved. Sexual assaults (50%) were the most often reported, followed by standovers (25%), bashing and knifings (22%) and unspecified assaults (4%).

b) The Characteristics of Inmates Targeted by Assailants

The reported characteristics of inmates known to have been assaulted have been grouped under four headings. The characteristics referred to were:

- i. Physical Attributes (136 replies) - 61 per cent were described as "young" or "less than 21";
- ii. Behavioural Attributes (59 replies) - these nearly always (95%) made reference to the

inability or unwillingness of the inmate concerned to be physically or verbally assertive. Social isolation within the gaol community was also a liability;

iii. Experience of Imprisonment (57 replies) ninety three per cent of attacked prisoners were novice inmates, had served less than 6 months (45%), had only recently arrived in prison (21%), or were first timers (19%)

iv. Economic Characteristics (22 replies) having valuable possessions such as clothes or buy up (36%), and being in debt (7%) were also reported as reasons that inmates had been assaulted.

c) Assaults Upon Respondent Inmates

Inmates were asked whether they had been assaulted while in gaol. Nearly a quarter (23%) of inmates said they had been. Young prisoners (26%) reported this significantly more often than older prisoners (17%) (Chi Square=6.15, d.f.=2, p<.05). While similar proportions of young males (26%) and young females (25%) reported they had been assaulted, nearly twice as many older males (20%) as older females (11%) reported they had been assaulted. Using weightings, for age and gender, derived from the 1986 Prison Census these figures suggest that at that date approximately 20 per cent of the prison population had been assaulted.

The vast majority of inmates who had been assaulted said that at the time of the assault they were less than 21 years (90%), or had been in gaol less than six months (79%).

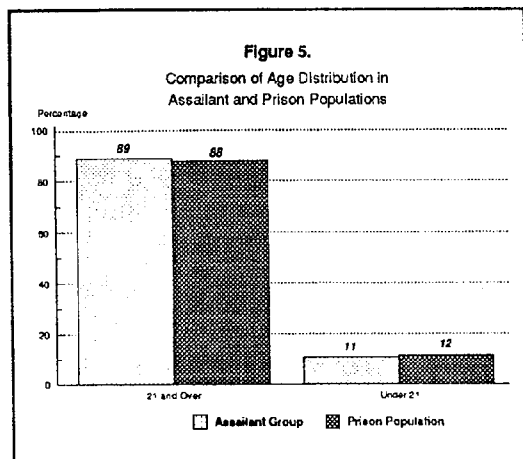
The types of assault most often reported were sexual (47%), violent/unspecified (35%), and standovers (17%).

Pack rape by gangs of 29 persons accounted for 38 per cent of all sexual assaults. Assaults by gangs accounted for 22 per cent of violent/unspecified assaults, and 7 per cent of standovers.

Using the weightings derived from the 1986 Prison Census these results suggested 9.4 per cent of inmates had been sexually assaulted, 7 per cent had suffered violent/unspecified assaults, and 3.4 per cent had been stoodover (intimidated). It was also possible to suggest that 2.2 per cent of inmates had been subjected to pack rape (Figure 4).

Anecdotal reports by inmates who had been assaulted indicated that sexual and violent assaults acted as sanctions to maintain discipline and behaviour norms within the prisoner community, and were interchangeable.

A few factors were reported to deter assailants. These were the intervention of friends, or peer group affiliates of the target inmate, or being within line-of-sight of a prison officer.



3. The Assailants

a) The Characteristics of Prisoners Who Assaulted Other Inmates

Unprompted responses (n=23), given by prisoners, discussing assaults they knew of indicate the assailants were typically 'lifers', 'old boys', or 'longtimers' (83%) or part of a racial or sexuality subgroup (17%).

Most of the respondents who had been assaulted (46/48) gave the age of their attackers. Assailants were from both the 21 years and over (88%) and less than 21 years (11%) groups. These proportions are extremely interesting as they are very similar to the proportion of each age group in the prison population at the time the survey was undertaken. They indicated prisoners of all age groups were equally likely to participate in assaults on other prisoners (see Figure 5).

b) Characteristics of Self Reported Assailants

Only two of the respondents reported they had assaulted other inmates. They indicated that the persons they targeted to attack occupied less powerful gaol social roles, or were easily objectified to conform to subordinate role models. They also linked sex, violence, and maintenance of discipline in the prisoner community. Inmates who were targeted were described as:

"physically and mentally weak, vulnerable"

or

"boys, young and pretty ones, with a slug"

or

"smartasses and cheeky ones."

Both the respondents who said they had assaulted other inmates were 25 years or more and serving 5 year plus sentences.

4. Protective Segregation

In the prisons of N.S.W., protection facilities enable prisoners to be confined outside mainstream gaol areas, and are assumed to provide some relief from "risk". Placement in these facilities is usually voluntary, however, for inmates less than 18 years it is compulsory. Recent Departmental policy has been to set aside separate wings or to provide facilities on a regional basis for vulnerable prisoners, wherein single cell accommodation and access to mainstream prison programmes is possible.

a) Protection Prisoners: Reasons for Using Protection Facilities

Thirty-nine (19%) of the inmates surveyed were on protection. Nearly all (92%) the members of this group were less than 21 years of age.

Reasons for using protection included: trouble with other inmates (32%), threat or fear of trouble with other inmates (30%); and age related issues (30%).

Older and younger inmates had different feelings about protection. Most older inmates (67%) did not want to be on protection and said it made doing time worse (67%). On the other hand more than three-quarters (78%) of young inmates wanted to be on protection and 58 per cent thought it made doing time easier. Nearly one-fifth (19%) said it made no difference and the remainder (22%) could not decide what difference it made.

Inmates were asked what was good about protection. The majority (62%) said it was safer, easier or quieter. Nearly a quarter (24%) said relationships in the units particularly with Prison Officers were better. Asked what was bad about protection inmates referred to the stigma (39%) attached to being on protection and the poor physical conditions (22%). Other comments made it clear that for some inmates protection was not a safe place. Equal numbers (8%) complained of reduced access to facilities, standover among protection prisoners, and sharing with "dogs" and "rockspiders".

The significance of the benefits of protection became questionable when inmates were asked about returning to gaol. It became clear that the stigma and hence risk attached to being on protection was great. Of those inmates on protection 81 per cent said they were scared to return to the gaol. These sentiments were typified by comments such as:

"If I went out, I'd get bashed or raped ...they'd think I was a dog".

Another made the depth of his concern clear when he said:

"If I was sent out (to normal discipline) now I would charge the P.O.'s and the superintendent with attempted murder".

b) The Opinion of Prisoners on Protection Held by Other Inmates

Some of the opinions expressed by other inmates about prisoners on protection were consistent with the concerns voiced by prisoners using protection. Most inmates (84%) felt other prisoners viewed those on protection negatively. However, only 30 per cent of prisoners interviewed said they did so. A further 22 per cent said their opinion of protection prisoners depended upon the reason for use of the facility, 16 per cent didn't care, and 19 per cent said they viewed protection prisoners positively. Over all 52 per cent felt sympathy or approved of young inmates using this facility to avoid assaults, sexual assaults and standovers, 23 per cent disagreed with them doing so. A small group of

inmates (8.2%) suggested there should be special accommodation for young inmates.

5. Summary and Discussion

Both staff and inmates implied assaults were a consequence of the personal characteristics of individual prisoners. Staff suggested inmates who were young, inexperienced, verbally or physically unassertive, socially isolated, or sex offenders were more likely to be assaulted.

The changes staff suggested to protect inmates from assault included provision of more supportive services and better information to prisoners at reception, and changes to accommodation. Custodial staff most often favoured segregated accommodation for young prisoners. However, as a majority of staff preferred alternatives to the current system, this alone seemed to indicate discontent with the results produced by it and the need for a comprehensive re-evaluation of segregated accommodation as a means of dealing with problems faced by young inmates.

The focus on better information was consistent with inmate needs identified in the Reception Procedures Study (Koenig and Cheron da Costa:1986) and Section Three of this report. It indicated a need for an extension of prisoner information services, such as a prisoner's information handbook and the Interview Liaison Officer, to all reception prisons.

A majority of the inmates interviewed knew about assaults. Young and inexperienced inmates appeared most aware of the problem and had more often received advice about it, mostly from older prisoners.

One quarter of the inmates interviewed had been assaulted. At the time of the attack most were less than 21 years of age or had been in gaol less than six months. Rape was the most common form of assault by individuals and gangs. Many of those assaulted and the two assailants interviewed linked sexual and other violence to the maintenance of discipline, or power in the prisoner hierarchy. Peer groups were important as devices which protected inmates from assault. Being within line-of-sight of an officer also prevented assaults.

It seems reasonable to suggest that young and inexperienced prisoners were more liable to be assaulted because they have least power in the prisoner hierarchy, being new to prison or were less often part of a peer group.

Staff and inmates both said older inmates are the group who most assault young inmates. This observation does not make clear whether a greater proportion of the older inmate group are assailants or whether there were more older assailants because there were more older prisoners. Given that no difference was found in the age distribution of assailants and that of the prison population the former proposition is

contradicted and the latter stands. Two important conclusions may be drawn on the basis of this observation. Firstly, age group behaviours are similar and the perception that older inmates present more risk probably derives from their numerical dominance of the prisoner population. Secondly, prisons for 'young inmates only' would be likely to duplicate problems of violence experienced in the present gaol system.

The conventional view of protection units is that they provide a safe area for inmates at risk. Our research suggests this is a misleading understanding of the role and reality of this facility. The traditional view of inmate use of protection is that it is based on perceived rather than real danger. Nearly one third (30%) of inmates who were surveyed while on protection were using it because of the threat of violence. The traditional view was not contradicted by this evidence, however it fails to explain the growth in the number of inmates in N.S.W.'s prisons who perceive themselves to be at risk.

In addition to the traditional perspective, three mechanisms were put forward as possible causes of the rapid growth in the number of prisoners on protective custody. The first of these was the psychiatric profile of the inmate population. The number of "sex" and "violent" offenders in the prison population was examined using data collected for the 1985, 1986, and 1987 census. Over those three years the number of inmates on protection rose by 73 from 259 to 332 then by 83 to 415, the number of "sex" offenders increased from 239 to 299 then by 6 to 305. The number of "violent" offenders in gaol fell by 12 from 638 to 621, and then rose by 56 to 759. In short no consistent relationship between changes in the number of inmates on protection and the number of prisoners who had been sentenced for "sex" or "violent" offences was evident.

Change in the organisation of prisoner society, especially growth of gangs, was also identified as a likely cause of increasing risk and the consequent use of protection. Robertson (1979) found gangs played a major role in violence in gaols.

Inmates who had been assaulted often said assailants acted in gangs. However, none referred to changes in gang organisation in gaols. Robertson also found gangs were important for their role in preventing attacks. This finding was duplicated here. Indebtedness, being an informant or being regarded as an informant were other factors respondents said increased the chance that an individual would be assaulted. Given no indication of growth in gang organisation it seems unlikely that this has contributed to the rise in the use of protection in recent years.

The third factor suggested as important was the administration of protective custody. The inability of prison administrators to prevent violence in the prisoner community leaves them culpable in the event of a mishap (e.g. Partic) and

therefore obliged to provide protection to prisoners requesting it. Inmates who enter protective custody in N.S.W. are not required to disclose the source of risk to themselves. However, inmates said "at risk" status was perpetuated by their use of protective custody. Inmates on protection also said that this was the main reason they did not wish to return to the mainstream prison. These observations suggest that the growth in the number of inmates on protection is a result of the ease of entry to, and the resulting unwillingness of inmates on protection to return to normal discipline.

These observations imply that protective custody (and the growth in the use of it) is not merely a device to protect prisoners from violence. Open access to protection is an administrative device. It enables gaol managers to deal quickly with the problem of violence among inmates. The immediate aim being to avoid an assault upon an inmate, in a context where no other means of doing so exists. It has the further advantage of avoiding charges of negligence in the event of an inquiry into an assault upon an inmate who has declared him/herself "at risk".

The problem presented by the use of protection is that it does nothing to prevent violence between inmates. Overseas experience has shown that the growth in the use of protection can be reversed. This involves making entry to protection conditional upon disclosure of the source of threat, counselling and supervision of the parties involved, and counselling inmates about the stigma associated with their use of this facility.

That inmates favoured a segregation based protective custody probably reflected the lack of access to information/research into this practice, and, as a consequence, the domination of their thoughts by the status quo.

Inmates (5%) less often than custodial staff (73%) or service staff (53%) favoured "one-out" accommodation. Young inmates who shared cells (6%) were assaulted less than other members of the sample (25%). Caution should be exercised here as "problems with cellmates" referred only to the current sentence period of the inmates surveyed. The results on sexual assault in prison referred to all the periods of imprisonment of the inmates surveyed.

Anecdotal evidence suggested that areas where assaults occur were more likely to include the laundry, shower areas and cells of other prisoners. That is, many assaults did not occur when inmates were locked in. Rather they occurred during periods of free association when assailants were better able to locate and isolate the target inmate.

The lower rate of assaults upon those who shared cells could be due to several factors including, more rapid assimilation into a peer group (minimum of 2 members), that assaults occurring in cells did not take place in the cell of

the individual assaulted, or that many assaults occur outside cells. Also the low level of problems encountered by young inmates who shared cells may have contributed to the relative lack of enthusiasm for one out accommodation.

Custodial staff most often favoured one-out accommodation. Reference to Departmental policy on multiple occupancy of cells suggests this is due to the opportunities single cell accommodation provides for control over inmate behaviour (Department of Corrective Services:1987).

5. USE OF SUPPORT SERVICES

The Department's submission to the I.D.C. noted the lack of specific policy for 18-20 year old inmates in N.S.W. prisons. Most programmes which are available: i) are administered from individual gaols; ii) have been developed on a needs basis; and iii) are available to all volunteering inmates.

1. Inmate Programme Needs

Opinions about educational and vocational programmes were sought from staff and inmates. Questionnaires examined inmate literacy, educational achievement, interest and participation in courses, and use of other support services. Propositions about the effect of age, and older prisoners on programme participation put forward in the Departmental report were tested and found wanting.

(a) Staff Opinions

Staff were divided as to whether young inmates were no more likely than older prisoners to lack employment skills and education (51%) or to be poorly prepared for life after prison (54%). Despite the similar levels of perceived need among younger and older inmates in these areas a majority of staff thought there should be separate vocational (64%) and lifeskills programmes (55%) for young offenders.

(b) Inmate Opinions

Inmates were asked what the prison system could do to help them upon release. Most (60%) suggested programmes to help secure and stabilise income and accommodation. Specific requests were for job training, life skills, and support service programmes to help "cope with life outside", and obtain and maintain jobs. About 30 per cent could not, or would not, concede that the prison system could do anything to help them upon release.

(c) Inmate Visits to Service Officers

Prisoners were asked had they visited and how useful they found visits to the education, welfare, probation and parole, psychologists, chaplain or

drug and alcohol workers (See Figures 6 and 7 and also Appendix 4).

The responses of the inmate respondents have been weighted to reflect the distribution of age groups within the prisoner population and aggregated to provide a guide to service use by prisoners in N.S.W. gaols. The Education Officer (65%) and the Drug and Alcohol Worker (21%) were the service officers most, and least often visited, respectively. Inmates indicated that visits to the Chaplain (58%) and Psychologist (31%) had proved most and least useful respectively.

2. Education

At the time the research was conducted Education received more funding from the Department than any other service and was the service most visited by inmates. On that basis it is dealt with here prior to, and separately, from the other support services (Figure 6 and 7).

(a) Inmate Literacy and Educational Achievement

Examination of levels of literacy and educational achievement among inmates revealed both were low. One-fifth of inmates (20%) expressed negative feelings about their reading ability. Young inmates (45%) were positive about their reading ability significantly less often than were older prisoners (63%) (Chi Square=14.228, d.f.=4, p<.01). Inmates with experience of imprisonment (22%) tended to be more negative about their reading than novice prisoners (13%).

Educational achievement was very low. Three-quarters of inmates (73%) had no certificates from school, one fifth (21%) had School Certificates, and less than one in 20 (5%) had Higher School Certificates, or equivalent. Very high proportions of prisoners who had experience of Y.A.C.S. institutions (88%), or who were less than 21 years of age (78%) reported they had no certificates.

More than one third (36%) of prisoners had done some post-school study or training. Younger inmates (33%) had done this less often than inmates 21 years or more (44%). The data also

indicated more time spent in gaol was associated with not doing post-school study.

Of those prisoners who had done post-school studies prior to imprisonment, inmates who were younger (36%) or had experience of gaol (36%) had fewer trade qualifications than older prisoners (54%), and prison novices (55%). Young inmates (32%) were more than six times more likely than older prisoners (5%) to report that imprisonment had interrupted their training.

(b) Inmate Use of the Education Service

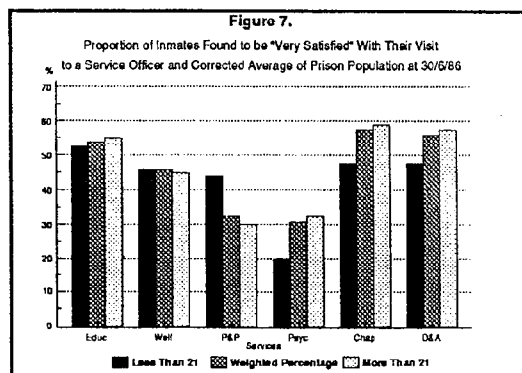
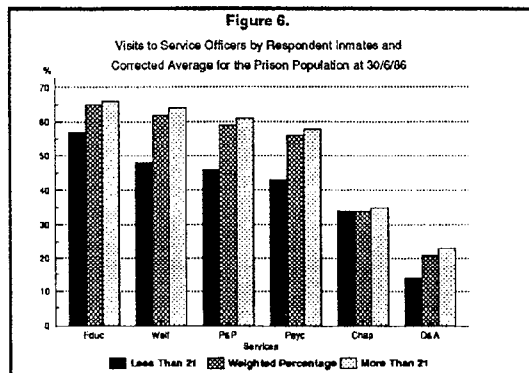
Education was the service visited by most inmates (64%) and was found very useful by more than half (53%) of those who attended it. Reading confidence and educational achievement were observed to be positively correlated with visits to this service.

The levels of use of this service were established using data on course participation reported by inmates (for other services "use" refers to visits to a service officer). Less than half (43%) of the prisoners surveyed had done courses. Among this group job oriented courses were the most popular (66%), followed by general interest/arts (43%) and basic education (28%). Course participation rates were similar across different groups, levels of education, reported age, reading ability, and differences in trade qualifications.

Inmates sharing cells did courses (31%) less often than those who did not share (51%).

Inmates on protection were found to have done courses at rates similar to those not on protection.

While age, reading ability, certification, and trade qualification did not appear to affect whether a course was undertaken, they appeared to be associated with the type of course chosen by inmates. A majority of all age and experience groups did vocational courses. Some groups such as the best and worst readers, the most certificated, and older inmates had done general interest/arts courses more often. Many inmates whose educational achievement suggests they would be able to be successful in more specific/technical areas had done non-specific/general interest courses. These results imply that for many inmates recreation is an important aspect of course participation.



No differences appeared across inmate age groups in member interest in doing courses while in prison. Relatively large groups of prisoners had not visited the education officer (40%), done courses (54%), or were not interested in doing courses (55%).

Non-participation was most commonly attributed to institutional barriers such as being on remand, awaiting classification, not being in long enough, going to court (31 inmates); the courses being too basic and of little help on the outside (6 inmates), drugs and personal reasons (5 inmates), or disinterest (13 inmates). In short, lack of interest in programme participation among respondents was more often due to institutional factors than lack of motivation.

3. Inmate Use of Other Support Services

The support services are dealt with here in descending frequency of visit. Significant differences in the rate at which younger and older inmates visited the welfare, psychologist, and probation and parole officers were found. Also older and younger prisoner groups differed significantly in the extent to which their members perceived visits to psychologists and welfare officers as useful (See Figures 6 and 7).

Welfare Officers had been visited by nearly two-thirds of inmates (62%). Young prisoners (48%) visited this officer significantly less often than older ones (64%) (Chi Square=3.826, d.f.=1, $p < .05$). Nearly half (46%) of the inmates who had visited welfare officers had found them very useful. However, older inmates (34%) significantly more often than younger prisoners (13%) found them 'not at all' useful. Older inmates had a more polarized opinion of the usefulness of this service.

A Probation and Parole Officer had been visited by 59 per cent of inmates. Younger ones (47%) were less likely than older inmates (61%) to have made a visit. This may be due to differences in the average sentence length in each age group. A greater proportion of young prisoners have short (less than 3.5 years) sentences than do older inmates. Younger inmates (44%) were more likely to have found visiting this officer useful than older inmates (31%).

Psychologists had been visited by an estimated 56 per cent of inmates. Older prisoners (58%) at levels nearing significance ($p < .056$), visited more often than younger ones (42%). Older inmates (32%) reported visits to this officer were very useful more often than younger prisoners (20%) ($p < .052$). Older inmates were more polarized in terms of their opinions of the usefulness of this service.

Chaplains had been visited by a approximately one third (34%) of inmates. Similar proportions of

young (48%) and old (59%) age groups found visits to this officer very useful.

Drug and Alcohol workers were the least visited (16%) service officer. More than half (52%) the inmates who had seen them said they were helpful. Inmates opinions of the usefulness of this service were polarised.

4. Summary and Conclusions: The Relevance of Age to Service Use

Assumptions about young offender participation in courses and the findings of this research are discussed below. Three propositions put forward in earlier departmental submissions are discussed first. Age was not a significant determinant of service use by inmates.

(a) The Report by the Department to the Committee on Young Offenders in Custody

In the introduction three obstacles to the participation by young inmates in programmes were outlined. These were: (1) young inmates' more frequent use of protection facilities, which negates their participation in mainstream courses; (2) the poorer educational achievement of young inmates and attendant feelings of failure, which act as disincentives to their participation in courses; (3) older prisoners discourage participation in courses by younger prisoners.

Taking the first proposition, examination of data revealed inmates on protection had similar rates of course participation to those not on protection. It seems reasonable to suggest that prisoners do not do courses continuously throughout their imprisonment. Given an intermittent pattern of participation in courses these results suggest prisoners 'on protection' maintain comparable levels of course participation by doing courses prior to or when off protection. This observation does not contradict the proposition that while on protection prisoners have less access to mainstream programmes.

The second proposition suggested young inmates were less likely to participate in courses due to feelings of failure derived from their negative experiences of schooling. The data did not support this proposition. Rates of course participation did not vary significantly across age, reading ability, or certification groups. The major influence of these variables was upon the type of course undertaken. The type of course done indicated inmates had a threefold interest in doing courses: i.) they wished to improve their job prospects; ii.) they wished to improve their level of educational achievement; and iii.) recreation.

That most inmates who did courses did vocational and educational courses was consistent with what they said they wanted the system to do to help them at release. Failure to do courses was most often attributed to institutional barriers, rather than lack of

motivation. In short poor levels of achievement at school were not a major barrier to participation by young inmates in courses.

The attitudes of older inmates were also suggested as an obstacle to young inmate participation in courses. However, the data showed that a larger proportion of older prisoners than younger prisoners were confident about their reading, and had school certificates. Also older inmates took courses at a rate similar to the young inmates. It is therefore unlikely that larger proportion of older than younger inmates have low regard for, or deride participation in courses. The poor reputation of the older group is probably a result of failure to link observations to population base rates. This would result in exaggeration of the behaviour of the more numerous older age group. These results indicate other things being equal programme delivery to young prisoners would not be improved in a "young inmates only" prison.

(b) Age and Use of Services

Prisoners who were young or had prior experience of Y.A.C.S. and/or gaol, exhibited less confidence in their reading ability, lower educational achievement, less post-school study, and fewer trade qualifications. Further, young prisoners, more often than older inmates, reported that imprisonment had interrupted post-school training. Inmates whose access to education had been interrupted by incarceration in the institutions of either of the departments concerned showed least achievement. Inmates with experience of Y.A.C.S. institutions reported least educational achievement. This was probably a consequence of Y.A.C.S. policy which allowed juveniles to withdraw from school while incarcerated. Such an action would radically disadvantage these juveniles in their basic education relative to their non-incarcerated contemporaries. Given these results, it seems reasonable to suggest that prior incarceration, particularly as a juvenile played a larger role than age alone in determining the educational achievement of prisoners.

The participation rate of older and younger inmates in courses indicated age did not affect propensity to undertake a course. However, it seems likely that decisions about course type were affected by age and experience related factors, such as poorer educational achievement. Inmates appeared to use courses to improve educational achievement and vocational opportunities or for recreation. More of the older, the better educated and a significant minority of the poor education/literacy groups had participated in recreational courses.

Given firstly, the consistency of the programmes prisoners said would help them at release, and the courses they undertook while in prison (majority said they wanted and reported

having done vocational courses), and secondly a pattern of course participation wherein those using the education service do so in a constructive manner (for education and recreation) then the major problem for this service appears to lie not with those who participated in courses, nor in the manner in which they do so, but rather the 52 per cent of prisoners who did no courses.

Respondents who had not done courses invariably cited institutional barriers to their participation and interest in doing so. This indicated further effort was required to provide: a) continuity for those who had courses of study or training interrupted by imprisonment, b) courses with transportability between gaols, c) short courses for short-term inmates, and d) involve inmates in the development of courses, in order to improve their motivation and reduce administrative costs.

The rates at which inmate groups visited the Welfare, Probation and Parole, Psychologists, Chaplains, and Drug and Alcohol workers were found to vary. Between one and three fifths of inmates who visited services found the officer "very useful". Young inmates tended to visit service officers less often and found them less useful than older inmates. An exception was the probation and parole service. Young prisoners more often than older inmates found a visit to this officer useful.

Differences in the rates at which younger and older prisoners had visited Psychologists, Probation and Parole, and Education officers, approached or reached statistical significance ($p = .05$).

The higher rate of visits to service officers by older inmates may have been related to the types of personal, financial, and sentencing arrangements in which members of this group were more likely to be involved. Older inmates could reasonably be assumed to have been more likely to have spouses, or dependents and/or involvement in more complex financial arrangements, and often more serious charges (and therefore longer sentences) than young prisoners. The maintenance of relationships such as these would have required more regular and extensive support, including that from service officers.

Satisfaction rates seem likely to have been a product of inmate expectation, staff resources, client demand, and inmate access to various facilities. These factors could be expected to vary in importance between services. The visit rates to Chaplains and Drug and Alcohol workers indicate both services have low levels of client demand. At the time of the survey Drug and Alcohol workers numbered sixteen and could be suggested as having about one-third the demand level of Psychology, which had twice as many workers (thirty) but three times the visits. However, the Drug and Alcohol service may be extremely useful as it aids a prisoner in divesting him/herself of a

economic liability associated with violence in gaols. The high perceived usefulness of the Chaplains may be a result of the low degree of behaviour change necessary to obtain service benefits such as telephones, counselling, and contacts with people outside gaol. It may also have been a result of the maintenance of prisoner confidences by the chaplains and consequent trust in these workers. The rank order of the perceived usefulness of other services followed that of visits to them.

Significant differences emerged across age groups in the perceived usefulness of only Psychologists and Welfare Officers. On these two services the profile of young inmate responses showed positive and negative skews respectively, whereas the opinions of older prisoners were polarised.

Probation and Parole was the only service in which younger inmates more often than older ones reported their visit to the officer was useful. This may have been a result of the lighter sentences profile for younger inmates which resulted in young inmates more often being released to probation which is seen as less restrictive than parole.

Inmates who shared cells participated in courses or visited services significantly less often than inmates in single cell accommodation.

Several factors may be relevant here including gaol specific effects, classification effects, or the influence of protection. It may have been that cellmates replaced service officers as sources of information or recreation sought when doing courses. This phenomenon warrants further investigation as action to reduce sharing is planned. This could result in increased demand for services if the latter explanation is correct.

Across all support services a substantial group of non-participant inmates were observed. This non-participant group rather than a particular age group seems to be the major problem area in service delivery.

The Berrima Young Offender project was cited as an example of a solution to the problem of providing programmes for young offenders. It was suggested it could not fulfil this role. This research indicates the major problems in the education area are the provision of services to inmates with short sentences (20 per cent had sentences of less than 12 months), and low motivation (30%). The 'Young Offender' style programme does not cater to these needs. It is therefore unlikely that this type of programme offers a solution to the major problems facing programme delivery to young offenders in N.S.W. gaols.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The results of this research indicate that older inmates were the major source of advice to young inmates to reform. As younger and older inmates are equally likely to be involved in assaults on other prisoners it is likely that "young inmates only" gaols would have a violence problem similar to that existing in the current gaol system. No evidence was found to suggest that the participation of young offenders in programmes would be improved over the current mixed age system in such gaols. Older prisoners appear to set an example of higher rates of service use. That is the results of this research strongly suggests that no "young inmates only" gaol should be built.

Prisoner responses made it clear that assaults were most often prevented by the intervention of peers/peer groups. These findings were consistent with past research which established the importance of groups in preventing assaults.

Peer groups were also found to carry out assaults. However, there is reason to think that their participation in such violence is part of a more general struggle for authority (based on force) within the laissez faire hierarchy characterising the prisoner community.

Regardless of their age at the time they were interviewed, most inmates who had been assaulted said this had happened while they were aged less than 21 years or during the first six months of their imprisonment. It is therefore important that during early imprisonment younger and less experienced inmates, or others who have problems melding into the prisoner community, be helped to integrate into social structures which offer support and protection from these unsavoury aspects of gaol life.

Ensuring inmates are integrated will require several innovative measures.

Inmates should be informed of the formal and informal rules of the institution in which they are incarcerated. Such programmes would orient prisoners to the circumstances which they are likely to confront in prison, demonstrate accepted behaviour norms within the prisoner community and emphasise effective means of avoiding assaults. The Interview Liaison Officers (I.L.O.) or seminars for new prisoners are agencies that might be used to implement this recommendation.

Incentives (not sentence related) should be provided to encourage inmates to undertake programmes of practice based behaviour modification, with the aim of developing non-violent means of resolving conflict. Prisoners with a history of violence in prison or violent crime should be identified. Prisoners who continue to use violence should be subject to close supervision and or transfer.

Inmates indicated that attacks which did occur in cells often took place in the cell of one of the assailants. Such attacks might be reduced by

limiting the number of prisoners allowed in cells at any one time.

Blind areas within prison buildings and yards were also nominated as places where assaults occur frequently. Such spots should be eliminated.

Short term measures to reduce violence will remain effective only if they are supplemented by intervention in the structures which encourage and maintain violent behaviour within the prisoner community.

Research suggests violence between prisoners is often a consequence of a hierarchy based on power (violence) among inmates. This model implies the reduction of violence among inmates will require prisoner management which supplants the power hierarchy yet maintains a cohesive social structure within the inmate population.

All prison officers know the problems associated with getting inmates to obey formal prison rules. If this conflict is to be overcome a "smart" solution must be adopted. A return to the authoritarian systems of days gone by will rekindle the problems of those systems. New systems must maintain security, the safety of the officers, and reduce violence among the inmates.

The experience in the mid-seventies of the New Mexico Gaol riots showed that merely fragmenting the hierarchy which exists in the inmate community is likely to lead to spontaneous and indiscriminate outbreaks of violence against gaol staff and authorities (Colvin:1982). Unit management seeks to replace the hierarchy among prisoners with a cohesive social structure. This is based on smaller accommodation units which form the basis of social groups within which peer group pressures maintain cohesion and conformity to group norms.

Many officers think unit management panders to inmates. It does not. It is a system designed to change inmate behaviour by not condoning aggression toward Prison Officers or other prisoners. From another perspective it is not realistic to expect officers who are unfamiliar with behaviour management principles to understand the strategy underlying Unit Management. Further, their ability to work comfortably in it will depend on Prison Officers receiving training adequate to the roles they will be required to fulfil. The introduction of Unit Management has often been endorsed. However, it has been made conditional upon the resolution of violence and drug problems within the current regime. This approach warrants consideration by administrators on two points. Firstly, the problems of drugs and violence arose within the current punitive type of system more of the same seems unlikely to resolve them. Secondly, Unit Management is a regime which has the runs on the board in terms of reducing the levels of tension in gaol perceived by officers and inmates (Simmons, McLennan: 1986).

The strategy involved in Unit Management is twofold. Firstly, the structure of prisoner accommodation is modified. Accommodation units are made smaller and more distinctive using a combination of building structure and staffing arrangements. This involves using barriers such as walls, landings, common eating areas, and shower and toilet facilities as the unit boundaries. The distinctiveness of each unit is reinforced by assigning permanent officers to it. This combination forms the hardware component of the strategy to break up the hierarchy in the inmate population.

The second aspect involves the manipulation of social structure and behaviour in the prisoner population, its success is largely dependent on officer training in behaviour management techniques. The smaller size and permanent placement of officers in the unit increases the consistency of officer-inmate contact. This places emphasis on the human relationship of the officer and inmate, relative to their traditional roles as gaoler and prisoner. In this context, officers trained in behaviour management are able to supplement the authority of formal gaol rules with that derived from the manipulation of informal rules, such as the hierarchy among prisoners.

This involves co-opting the unit group into setting and administering standards of behaviour consistent with those established in the formal rules. The officer administers a regime in which unit rules are arrived at by consensus among the inmates. Breaking them involves answering to both the other unit members and the officer. This deflects the onus on inmates to conform away from the rules of behaviour set only by the gaol and the officer, to ones which are similar but set by themselves. Thus conflict between the officer and the inmates is reduced. Violence among prisoners is also reduced by peer pressure to conform to their own rules and because membership of a unit/peer group discourages other inmates targeting unit members. Gaol efficiency is improved by the co-option of prisoners into the day to day running of the unit.

The officers are able to further consolidate their authority by using other simple behaviour management techniques. These include counselling, interviewing skills, superior knowledge of available support services and gaol regulations and the provision of support to inmates involved in prison programmes. Inmate reliance on the officer for advice, information and leadership is encouraged. The dependence of the prisoner on the officer helps eliminate the conflict which is strongly embedded in the narrow traditional roles of keeper and kept.

The examination of protection indicated the management of protective custody is in need of revision. A primary objective should be a change from the situation in which protection is available from the maelstrom of the mainstream prison to one in which prisoners in normal discipline are

protected from violence and assailants are segregated.

Inmates who go on protection were found to be strongly stigmatised and mistrusted by other prisoners. Prisoners who were interviewed while on protection most often said the stigma was the main reason they would not go back to normal discipline. Many were afraid of being subject to violent assault.

The explosive growth in use of protection and the consequent problems it has created in N.S.W. gaols replicates the experience in similar systems overseas. Research there suggests the number of inmates on protection can be controlled, without increased prison violence, by making entry to protection conditional upon disclosure of the source of risk to an inmate. The choice to avoid a possible risk in the mainstream prison or to bear the certain risk associated with having been on protection is one that should be shared with prison authorities. If these problems are to be resolved, administrative decisions must be based on accurate information. In addition, to ensure prisoner safety is maintained, disclosure must be accompanied by investigation of the source of risk and counselling, or separation, of the parties concerned. Sanctions against violence such as restrictions on visits, family contacts and other day to day activities have been found useful in reducing senseless acts of violence in the prison community.

Inmates who perceive themselves as vulnerable should be counselled before entering protection and made aware of the full implications of the use of this facility.

The major problem for services was the majority of inmates who had no desire to undertake courses. The reasons inmates gave for not doing courses suggested courses were needed which provided continuity for those whose training or education had been interrupted by imprisonment, which were transportable between institutions, or were short (literacy/scholastic and behaviour change) and so available to short term inmates.

The prison environment with its scarce resources and problems of communication between the services seems one in which a multi-disciplinary team approach to programme development is suited. This would help avoid duplication of effort and ensure consistency between services not only in service provision but also when applications for resources are made.

Some limits must be accepted while some services (such as some education courses) originate in other departments, which do not have a prison service. An example is provided by inmate entry to Technical and Further Education (T.A.F.E.) courses. In the past, enrolment was possible throughout the year, at present it is available only at the commencement of the year or semester.

These changes were made on the basis of the organisational needs of T.A.F.E. and appear to have resulted in a fall in the number of inmates enrolled in external studies with T.A.F.E. Improvements in prison and prisoner management will require the application of new techniques and greater expertise. Therefore improved officer training will determine the success of such change.

Unfortunately staff opinions about the relationships between young and old prisoners were characterised by their lack of concurrence with prisoner experience. It seems reasonable to suggest that if officers are expected to work with the prisoner community their training should familiarise them with the relationships which exist there. This could be achieved by expanding Primary Training to inform officers of the relationships which exist among prisoners.

Essential to the success of any prisoner management plan are staff who are thoroughly versed and practised at the techniques required before they are called on to apply them. At present, Training Module 2 (Psychology) teaches officers basic behaviour theory. However, this course has a fairly abstract content with little direct applicability to day-to-day prisoner management. If taught jointly by Interview Liaison Officers (I.L.O.) and psychologists it could become a course in which behaviour management (with which I.L.O.'s are familiar) is supplemented with exercises giving practice in relevant day-to-day prisoner and wing management. This course should provide interviewing, counselling, and negotiation skills. These would enable the officer to better control and resolve problems and conflicts among inmates. These skills would also support programmes designed to help inmates manage their affairs without resort to force.

None of these recommendations will be able to be implemented without adequate staffing and training. Current shortages will be resolved mainly by recruitment of new staff. The size of the current staff shortage and the rate of entry of new recruits offers the opportunity to ensure that within twelve months 20 per cent of staff are more comprehensively trained in the area of prisoner management than past officers.

This report has provided valuable insights into violence among prisoners. However, our knowledge of some aspects of this problem remains limited. Future research should seek to clarify:

- i.) the frequency of assaults upon older and female Aboriginal inmates;
- ii.) the duration of the period in which assaults are suffered by targeted inmates, and the number of assaults which targeted inmates are likely to suffer;
- iii.) the means by which inmates halt/prevent assaults;
- iv.) the reasons older female inmates and younger Aboriginal prisoners less often report having been assaulted.

Inmates who shared cells reported they were less often assaulted, participated in courses and used support services. These may have been sample effects. On the other hand they may not and moves to provide single cell accommodation for all inmates could increase demand from prisoners for services, and increase violence among inmates. It would be beneficial to prison managers if further research could establish the effect of cell sharing upon demand for services.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Designed Capacity, Percentage Occupancy and Number of Young Inmates in N.S.W. Prisons

Gaol	Designed Capacity (DC)	No. Held 29/6/86	% of DC	No. Held 28/6/87	% of DC	No. Held 28/6/88	% of DC	Inmates < 21 30/6/86
MAXIMUM SECURITY								
Goulburn	264	326	123.5	231	87.5	286	108.3	40
Maitland	125	141	112.8	180	144.0	169	135.2	15
CIP X	322	435	135.1	489	151.8	441	136.9	68
SCU +	26	23	88.5	19	73.1	19	73.1	2
MRP *	220	241	109.5	235	106.8	255	115.9	15
MRC #	220	312	141.8	365	165.9	309	140.5	27
Parklea	218	202	92.7	208	95.4	209	95.9	6
Parramatta**	320	341	106.6	385	120.3	-	-	67
Subtotal	1715	2021	117.8	2112	123.2##	1785	127.9	240
MEDIUM SECURITY								
Bathurst	209	206	98.6	221	105.7	228	109.1	30
Broken Hill	25	26	104.0	32	128.0	20	80.0	9
Cessnock	400	367	91.8	397	99.3	382	95.5	42
Cooma	112	100	89.3	102	91.1	108	96.4	14
Grafton	59	84	142.4	84	142.3	107	181.4	9
Mulawa	116	118	101.7	129	111.2	125	107.8	12
Parramatta**						426	133.1	
Subtotal	921	901	97.8	965	104.8	1396	112.5	116
MINIMUM SECURITY								
Berrima	57	48	84.2	57	100.0	55	96.5	4
EPTC XX	120	115	95.8	112	93.3	107	89.2	16
Norma Parker	43	35	81.4	36	102.9	38	88.4	1
Silverwater	245	244	99.6	255	104.5	242	99.6	7
Goulburn-X	89	47	52.8	62	69.7	82	92.1	8
Bathurst-X	90	32	35.5	36	40.0	58	64.4	4
MTC ++	211	239	113.3	237	112.3	234	110.9	26
Glen Innes	86	77	89.5	90	104.7	93	108.1	5
Mannus	80	59	73.8	65	81.3	57	71.3	3
Oberon	80	58	72.5	62	77.5	79	98.8	11
Kirkconnel	70	9	12.9	65	92.9	57	81.4	0
Subtotal	1171	964	82.3	107	92.0	1102	100.0	85
TOTAL	3807	3886	102.1	4154	109.1	4283	112.5	441

N.B. Periodic Detainees not included.

*X Central Industrial Prison, + Special Care Unit, * Metropolitan Remand Prison, # Metropolitan Reception Centre, XX Emu Plains Training Centre, ++ Malabar Training Centre, ## Figure includes Prince Henry Psychology Unit and Annexe, Prisoner Witness Protection Unit, and Malabar Assessment Unit and Prison Hospital, **In January 1988 Parramatta Gaol was reclassified from a maximum to medium security gaol. Source: Weekly States; Prison Census 1986.*

Appendix 2. Summary of Characteristics: Prison Population (30/6/86) and Sample

A. Age and Gender

Age*	Males		Females		All	
	Prison	Sample	Prison	Sample	Prison	Sample
25 and over	2642	23	152	9	2794	32
21-24	865	23	47	9	912	32
Less than 21	500	131	22	13	522	144
Total	4007	175	221	31	4228	208

* Includes Periodic Detainees

B. Accommodation, Security Level

Prison	Maximum		Medium		Minimum	
	Prison	Sample	Prison	Sample	Prison	Sample
2047	91	914	69	1267	48	

C. Descent

Prison	Aboriginal		Unknown		Non-Aboriginal	
	Prison	Sample	Prison	Sample	Prison	Sample
338	22	122	-	3769	186	

D. Protection and Segregation

Prison	Protection		Segregation	
	Prison	Sample	Prison	Sample
332	39	16	-	

E. Staff Division

Actual	Custodial and Industrial		Actual	Services*		Actual	Clerical	
	Actual	Sample		Sample	Sample		Sample	
2100	33	618	45	494	-			

*Includes Psychologist, Welfare, Probation and Parole, Education, Drug and Alcohol, and Chaplains.

Appendix 3. A Comparative Analysis of the Experience of N.S.W. Gaols by Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Inmates, Less Than 21 Years of Age

Young Aboriginal inmates are of great interest and concern as they make up a disproportionately large section of the prisoner population. In this report three aspects of their experience of gaol have been examined and compared with those of non-Aboriginal inmates. Firstly, relations with other prisoners, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. Secondly, the problem of assault, and thirdly, inmate use of support services.

At June 30, 1986 N.S.W. prisons held 522 prisoners aged less than 21 years of age, of whom 61 (11.7%) were of Aboriginal descent. The sample of 144 inmates aged less than 21 years,

21 (14.5%) of whom were Aboriginal inmates, was part of a larger group drawn for the Young Offenders Project.

In the sample a majority of Aboriginal prisoners (90%) and a minority of non-Aboriginal inmates (33%) had been received at non-metropolitan gaols. Over two-thirds of Aboriginal prisoners (69%) were received at just one prison, Bathurst Gaol, while a similar proportion of non-Aboriginal inmates (67%) were received at five metropolitan gaols.

At the time of the interview most Aboriginal respondents (91%) were confined at non-metropolitan gaols. One-third (33%) were held at just one prison, Oberon Afforestation Camp. In contrast most non-Aboriginal respondents (57%) were held in metropolitan gaols.

1. Social Relationships

Most Aboriginal (81%) and non-Aboriginal (64%) inmates reported that upon entry to prison they met someone they knew already and found it useful. Aboriginal inmates did so more often.

Aboriginal (45%) more often than non-Aboriginal (26%), inmates obtained information from other inmates. No Aboriginal inmates obtained it from the rule book. Aboriginal inmates less often said that when they entered prison they had wanted more information about gaol life (Table 1).

At the time of entry to prison Aboriginal inmates relied on others for help more often than non-Aboriginal prisoners. However, both groups reported similar ability to "help" themselves at the time of the interview. A contrast emerged between the falling proportion of Aboriginal (25% to 5%) and the rising proportion of non-Aboriginal (9% to

24%) inmates who said they received help from the other staff/others group (Table 2).

Aboriginal (86%) more often than non-Aboriginal (64%) inmates received advice to go straight from other prisoners. The major contrast between the groups was that Aboriginal inmates were given this advice less often by the "others" group, who were combinations of prison groups or outsiders (Table 3). All inmates were advised to go straight most often by the "all ages", and "25 and over" groups.

Over one-third (58%) of Aboriginal inmates reported that they had shared cells immediately after entry to prison. This was at about half the rate at which non-Aboriginal prisoners (66%) did so. Over time the proportion of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal prisoners sharing cells fell at a similar rates.

Table 1: Sources of Information at Entry to Prison Utilised by Prisoners

		None	Prisoner	Prison Officer	Rule Book	Other Staff	Want More
Aboriginal	<21	25%	45%	25%	-	5%	24%
Non-Aboriginal	<21	24%	26%	19%	8%	21%	33%

Table 2: Percentage of Prisoners Who Received Help From: At Entry (Interview)

		No-one	Myself	Prisoner	Prison Officer	Others/ Other staff
Aboriginal	<21	14(24)	--(24)	71(48)	-(-)	25(5)
Non-Aboriginal	<21	12(15)	19(25)	55(35)	6(2)	9(24)

Table 3: Who Suggested to Prisoners That They Go Straight

		A) By Designation			
		Prisoners	Officers	Other Staff	Others
Aboriginal,	<21	86%	-	7%	7%
Non-Aboriginal,	<21	64%	1%	5%	31%
		B) By Age			
		25 and over	21-24	18-20	All Ages
Aboriginal,	<21	43%	-	7%	50%
Non-Aboriginal,	<21	46%	6%	7%	42%

Table 4: Prisoners Sharing Cells

		At Entry	At Interview
Aboriginal,	<21	38%	14%
Non-Aboriginal,	<21	66%	39%

2. Assault

When asked about assaults in prisons Aboriginal inmates less often than non-Aboriginal inmates acknowledged assaults happen, had received advice about them, knew someone who had been assaulted while inside, or knew of an assault. They reported having been assaulted themselves at one-third the rate at which non-Aboriginal inmates did so (Table 5).

When asked about sources of advice about assault too few Aboriginal inmates gave replies to allow reliable conclusions to be drawn. However the data suggests the main sources of advice about assaults are probably similar to their main sources for information, help, and advice to go straight.

No Aboriginal inmates surveyed were on protection.

3. Use and Usefulness of Programmes and Services

The literacy and educational achievement of inmates were compared. When asked to assess their reading ability Aboriginal inmates (48%) were more often negative about their ability, than non-Aboriginal prisoners (26%) (Table 6). Educational achievement was slightly lower among Aboriginal inmates of whom only 14% had school certificates and 81% had no certificates at all, 5% did not know whether they had any certificates. School certificates were held by 22% of non-Aboriginal inmates, 77% had no certificates at all. About a third of both inmate

groups had done post-school studies. However, a lower proportion of Aboriginal, than non-Aboriginal prisoners held trade qualifications (3 of 22 Aboriginal inmates versus 34% of non-Aboriginal prisoners).

Inmates were asked whether they had visited and how useful they found their visit to the education, welfare, probation and parole, psychologist, chaplains, or drug and alcohol workers.

The most used service was education. A similar proportion of each inmate group reported having seen this officer. However, Aboriginal inmates (52%) did courses more often than non-Aboriginal prisoners (40%). The courses most often done by Aboriginal inmates were job related (7), general/arts (6), basic education (4), and School/Higher School Certificate (3).

Comparisons indicate Aboriginal inmates generally visit service officers less often than non-Aboriginal inmates. This difference was greatest for the drug and alcohol worker, chaplain and psychologist (Table 7).

Generally the most visited services were the most useful. Aboriginal inmates were markedly more satisfied with their visit to the psychologist and less satisfied with their visits to the chaplain (Table 7).

4. Summary

Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal inmates were concentrated in different locations. Aboriginal inmates were more often received and held at a country gaol. Non-Aboriginal inmates were more

Table 5: Prisoners Who:

		Said Assaults Happen Gaol	Were Advised About Assaults	Felt They Needed Advice re Assaults	Knew Assault Target	Had Been an Assault Target
Aboriginal	<21	66%	30%	22%	43%	10%
Non-Aboriginal	<21	94%	41%	29%	71%	29%

Table 6: Prisoner Reports of Their Reading Ability

		Can't Read	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Aboriginal	<21	5%	43%	24%	19%	11%
Non-Aboriginal	<21	1%	17%	34%	37%	11%

Table 7: Percentage of Prisoners Who Visited a Service Officer (Found the Visit Useful)

		Educ	P&P	Welf	Psych	Chap	D&A
Aboriginal	<21	55(58)	48(56)	42(56)	20(75)	14(33)	5(-)
Non-Aboriginal	<21	58(51)	46(42)	49(45)	46(16)	36(50)	15(47)

often received and held at gaols in Sydney. Upon entering prison, Aboriginal inmates more often met someone they knew who was helpful. This may have been a result of Aboriginal inmates in surveyed being concentrated in fewer gaols than non-Aboriginal respondents.

Fewer Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal prisoners shared cells at entry to prison. This was probably due to the concentration at reception and later of Aboriginal inmates in country gaols where occupancy rates were lower and single cells more often available.

Aboriginal inmates were found to be less knowledgeable about and less likely to suffer assaults. This observation implied a lower level of risk. This may have been a consequence of the absence of in the sample of Aboriginal inmates on protection. In turn this may have been because Aboriginal inmates were more often located in gaols without protection facilities, located in minimum security gaols, integrated into peer groups on the basis of shared Aboriginality, accommodated in gaols with higher rates of "oneout" accommodation, or had met someone known at entry to gaol.

Aboriginal inmates were more often negative about their reading ability. This implied they experienced more difficulty using printed information sources. It may explain why Aboriginal prisoners relied more on other inmates for information and help and none obtained it from the rule book. That they less often said they had

wanted more information about gaol, at entry to it, suggests other inmates were a good source of information.

A larger proportion of Aboriginal inmates had done courses. It is possible, though unlikely, that their higher participation rate may have been encouraged by the General Skills Course for Aboriginal inmates which was being established at Bathurst Gaol (where most Aboriginal inmates were received) at the time the interviews for this project were being conducted. The lower proportion of Aboriginal inmates who were trade qualified reaffirmed the need for this affirmative education policy.

Comparisons revealed Aboriginal less often than non-Aboriginal inmates visited service officers, particularly the drug and alcohol worker, psychologist, and chaplain. Possible explanations for these observations include: a) the drug problems of Aboriginal inmates are more often alcohol related, while the drug and alcohol service focuses on the problems of opiate use; b) the psychologist is a peculiarly western institution, and has no precedent in Aboriginal societies. The availability of effective solutions novel to Aboriginal inmates, who used this service, may explain the higher rate of satisfaction with it among that group; c) the low rate of visits to the chaplain may be indicative of the ethnocentricity of the Judeo Christian tradition, the availability of similar spiritual/religious institutions in Aboriginal society, or the same apathy characterising

Appendix 4. Visits to Service Officers (Percentage)

	Education	Welfare	P & P	Psychology	Chaplain Alcohol	Drug and Alcohol
21 Years or More (n=64)	57	48	47	42	33	14
Less Than 21 years (n=144)	66	64	61	58	34	22
All Ages (est.)	64	62	59	56	34	21

Appendix 5. Usefulness of Visits to Service Officers: Younger Inmates (Older Inmates)*

	Education (n=126)	Welfare (n=110)	P & P (n=103)	Psychology (n=98)	Chaplain (n=68)	Drug and Alcohol (n=33)
Very Useful	52(55)	46(46)	44(31)	20(32)	48(59)	47(57)
Neither	33(29)	41(20)	25(31)	38(14)	37(32)	21(14)
Not Useful	14(17)	13(34)	30(33)	41(54)	11(9)	32(29)

*Where figures add to less than 100 remainder fall into "don't know" category

attendance at most Australian churches. Alternatively, these services may not have been as accessible at Oberon where Aboriginal inmates were concentrated, as at gaols where non-Aboriginal inmates were held.

With the exception of the chaplain and drug and alcohol worker Aboriginal inmates found their visits to service officers useful more often than non-Aboriginal inmates did. This may be because Aboriginal prisoners whose interest in using these services was marginal were more likely to be discouraged from visiting the officer by their inaccessibility, ethno-specific character or

inappropriateness of the services provided to the problems of this client group. The elimination as a result of these factors of clients (Aboriginal) likely to derive only marginal satisfaction from the services might explain the relatively high satisfaction among the Aboriginal inmates who did use the services.

Differences, nearing or at significance, were evident across age groups in the rate of visits to psychologists, and welfare, and probation and parole officers, and the reported usefulness of psychologists and welfare officers.