

Connecting Offenders Education, Training and Employment
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Vocational education and training for adult prisoners and offenders in Australia

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Overview

- Introduction
- What the research says
- National objectives
- VET in Australian prisons
- Conclusion

Correctional services, 2006

- 25 800 adult prisoners, most sentenced for <12 months (22% unsentenced) and 52 200 adult offenders (community orders)
- 42% increase in prison population 1996-2006
- 57% of prisoners previously in an adult prison
- 77% of eligible prisoners employed (45% in prison services and 33% in prison industries)

VET for adult prisoners and offenders in Australia: Research readings, NCVER 2007

- What the research says
- Improving VET for adult prisoners and offenders

National strategy for VET for adult prisoners and offenders in Australia (ANTA 2001; CSAC 2006)

- ▶ Access
- ▶ Participation and attainment
- ▶ Employment and lifelong learning
- ▶ (Promoting quality and) Accountability

What the research says 1

1. VET for inmates makes a significant difference towards successful post-release employment outcomes.
 - expect better work
 - employment assistance
 - willing employers
 - reduced re-offending



What the research says 2

2. Factors affecting re-offending (recidivism) include education level, employment history, substance abuse, social support, physical and mental health, and accommodation.
 - literacy and numeracy skills
 - employability skills
 - school education
 - social and life skills
 - employment

What the research says 3

3. The integration of education, training and support is required for successful transition from prison to community.
 - ▶ health, housing and social support
 - ▶ Indigenous culture, knowledge and values
 - ▶ community-ownership and involvement

Objective 1: Improve Access to VET

- integral component of sentence management
- assess educational needs
- address LLN and employability skills
- address special needs of individual offenders.
- address interest of prisoners and career counselling
- adequate resources – workshops and qualified staff
- flexibility in delivery (short courses or units of national training packages)
- establish training pathways
- integrate VET with prison work

Objective 2: Support successful participation and attainment across a range of fields of study and levels of VET

- instruction relevant to prison work and/or post-release employment (training pathways)
- individualised career counselling
- gratuity paid for participating in VET
- customised individual learning
- adaptation of learning materials
- continued tutorial support
- training workshops

Objective 3: Contributing to employment and lifelong learning

- contribute to national VET qualifications
- involve Indigenous communities
- provide transition programs and Release Plan
- provide social and life skills education and training
- assist with employment and initial post-release support
- link to ongoing support in the community
- address skills shortages through 'target marketing' to industry and community partnerships

Objective 4: Promoting quality and accountability

- improved data collection – Integrated Offender Management System
- national definitions for data collected and key performance indicators
- central database for education and training participation and outcomes
- standardised reports for monitoring participation and outcomes for target groups and course types
- National Literacy Assessment Tool
- External audits

VET provision in prisons

State/Territory	CS RTO	Other RTOs
NSW	AEVTI	TAFE NSW & others
VIC		Local TAFE in prison
QLD		CS partnership with DETA
SA	OES unit (VTECSA)	other RTOs for Pre-release & private prison
WA	EVTU (ASETS)	TAFE & other community partnerships
TAS	PEaT unit (CS PEaT)	TAFE & other community partnerships
NT	NTCS	Community partnerships

Funding for VET in prisons

NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT
CS	OTTE	DETA & CS	CS	CS & DET	CS & OPCET	CS	CS

Availability of traineeships for prisoners

State	No. in 2005/6	Options
NSW	65	General Construction, Horticulture, Transport and Distribution, Hospitality, Food Processing, Engineering Production and Furniture
WA	246	One year of 30 hours per week at Cert. II & III (but not trades)
TAS	52	Cert II & III in forestry & furniture Cert II in laundry operations

Prison Services, Corrective Services Industries, Prison farms and Work Outreach Camps

- 77% of eligible prisoners employed (45% in prison services and 33% in prison industries)
- Only 1% of prisoners on work release in the community
(although 25% of prisoners are held in 'open' or low security prisons where day release for work is possible)

Corrective Services Industries

- NSW food services, printing, engineering (metal fabrication), technology, furniture, textiles, agriculture, other services (cut wood, launder, refurbish, assemble, test, package)
- VIC furnishing, commercial sewing, building, horticulture
- QLD laundry, timber products, bakery, metal products, textile products, assembly and packing, painting, powder coating, dairy, beef and crop production
- SA timber and metal products, sheep, cattle, vegetable, milk and fruit production and bakery
- TAS commercial laundry, bake house and kitchen, woodwork, upholstery, dairy, fruit and vegetables

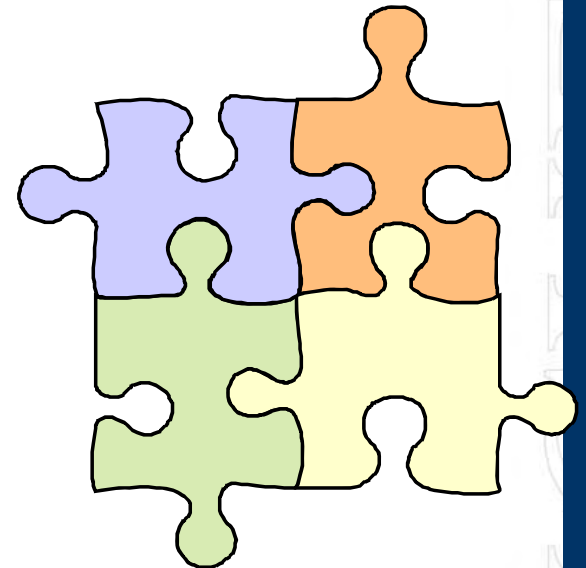
Corrective Services Industries in WA

metal fabrication, cabinet making, concrete products, footwear manufacture, printing, spray painting, timber production, vehicle mechanics, plumbing, textiles, furniture upholstery, commercial laundry, food processing, baking, horticulture and farming—cattle, poultry, vegetable, milk and fruit production and abattoir.

Conclusion

VET alone is not enough: integrate work experience and community involvement, and personal support and assistance

- cognitive-behavioural programs
- literacy and numeracy programs
- education and vocational training
- social and life skills education
- career counselling
- training pathways
- work experience
- transition programs
- ongoing support



‘VET for adult prisoners and offenders in Australia: Research readings’ is available from NCVET’s website

www.ncver.edu.au

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