



## Work Camps...

# Turning Traditional Incarceration on it's Head

ACEA - REINTEGRATION PUZZLE CONFERENCE 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009



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## Process-outcome evaluation

- ◆ Suitability of work camp facilities
- ◆ Suitability of work and reparative activities
- ◆ Prisoner selection process
- ◆ Resources
- ◆ Skills development opportunities
- ◆ Community perceptions
- ◆ Appropriateness for Aboriginal offenders



# Methodology



**A mixed methods approach was used in the collation of data**

The evaluation design was strengthened through triangulation of data sources, investigators and methods

- ◆ Theoretical concepts underpinning work camps
- ◆ Issues for Aboriginal prisoners



# Interviews

**Consultations and visits to all the work camps and host communities was major component of the evaluation.**

**Interviews with key stakeholders including;**

- ◆ Sample – stakeholders interviewed across seven work camps consisted of 97 community members, 26 Departmental staff, and 57 prisoners.





# Quantitative data

Concurrently with the consultations, data was obtained from the Department on:

- ◆ Age
- ◆ Ethnicity
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Employment
- ◆ Offence history of participants
- ◆ Escapes
- ◆ Average time spent at work camp
- ◆ Number of prisoners
- ◆ Recidivism rates



# Normalisation

## On balance of evidence available well designed community based interventions are more effective

- ◆ Produce much better outcomes than those delivered in prisons
- ◆ Howell & Day (1999)
- ◆ McGuire (2000)
- ◆ Maruna (2007)
- ◆ Burnett & Maruna (2006)
- ◆ Laird, Chavez, Zan (2007)



## “Strengths based” prelude to re-entry and re-integration

- ◆ Prison Reform Trust (2002)
- ◆ Uggen (2002)
- ◆ Uggen, Manza and Thompson (2006)
- ◆ Uggen and Manza (2006)
- ◆ Uggen, Manza and Behrens (2003)



# Addressing deficits

## Education and Employment

Work Camps are well placed to address deficits in this area

- ◆ Holzer (2003)
- ◆ Payne (2007)
- ◆ Walker (2006)
- ◆ vein Miller (2007)
- ◆ Freeman (2003)
- ◆ Home office (2003)
- ◆ Laird, Chavez, Zan (2007)



# Addressing deficits

## Community Functioning

*Gates et al* found moderate to strong empirical support that access to accommodation on release, managing personal finances, support and access to leisure pursuits are all areas of offender needs related to recidivism

- ◆ Gates, Dowden  
and Brown (1998)





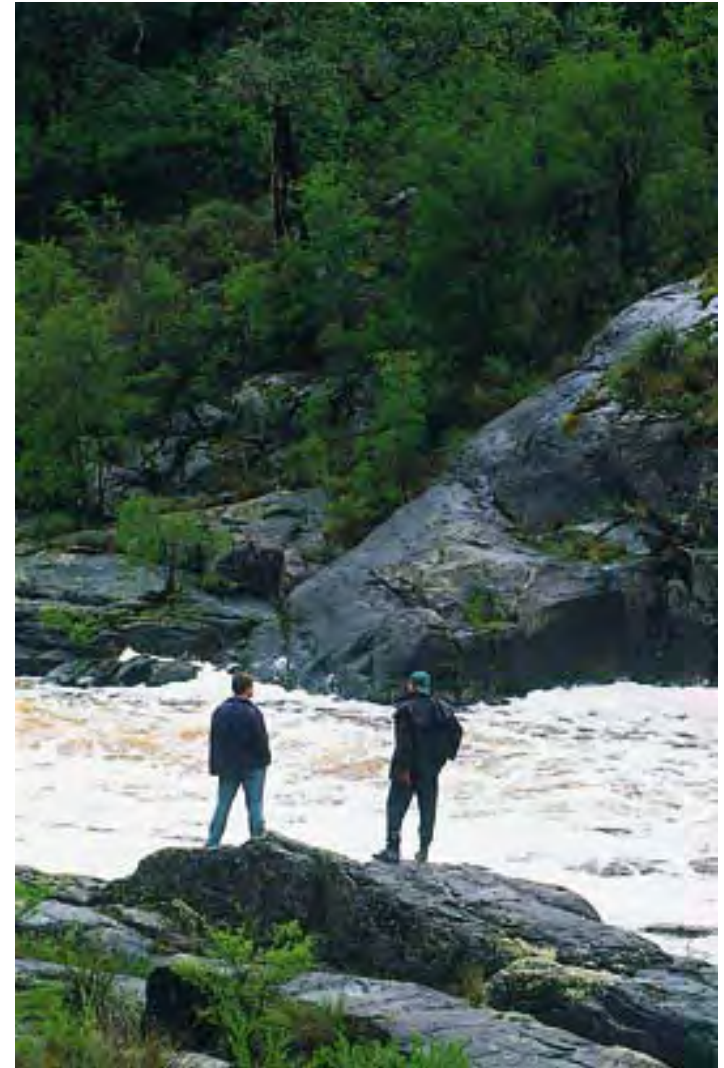
# Prisoners' perspectives

- ◆ Improved emotional state
- ◆ Inner peace
- ◆ Healthier interpersonal relationships
- ◆ A sense of achievement
- ◆ A sense of being trusted
- ◆ Greater freedom and privileges
- ◆ Improved work related skills and jobs prospects
- ◆ Learning new skills'
- ◆ Learning basic life skills



# A positive experience

Less institutionalised and more positive environment that encourages positive interaction between inmates and between inmates and staff



# Outcomes for Aboriginal prisoners



Department of Corrective Services  
Government of Western Australia

- ◆ They are more culturally appropriate
- ◆ opportunity to work on traditional lands
- ◆ develop closer links with the elders
- ◆ be involved in reparation for their own communities
- ◆ remain closer to family and country





# Outcomes for communities

The evaluation has identified that a work camp in a community can:

- mitigate against economic decline
- Ageing and declining pool of volunteers
- Ageing infrastructure & spiralling costs of repairs
- Labour and skills shortages

Economic benefits

Environmental benefits



# Conclusions

**Work camps are potentially powerful therapeutic, personal and social learning vehicles.**

However to maximise their full potential need to be properly resourced.

This includes recruiting and training the right staff for the job.



# Prisoner Work Camps

A successful community based program for minimum security prisoners who meet the criteria.

