



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Corrective Services**

**Karnet Prison Farm  
Community Liaison Group**

**Information for Applicants  
and  
Terms of Reference**

March 2009

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# **Karnet Prison Farm**

## **Community Liaison Group**

### **Introduction**

#### **Why form a Community Liaison Group?**

Karnet Prison Farm is establishing a Community Liaison Group (CLG) to further develop and strengthen the prison's relationship with the community and to enhance community life and prison outcomes.

Formation of the CLG reflects the prison's holistic approach to prison management, and has been included as part of the continuing developments and improvements at Karnet Prison Farm.

The group aims to:

- provide a forum for dialogue between the community and prison management
- ensure local people are informed about developments at the prison
- ensure community feedback and concerns are expressed to the prison
- increase community awareness of prison activity
- increase community work projects
- develop further employment opportunities for prisoners.

#### **Prison philosophy**

Karnet Prison Farm manages prisoners using a 'through-care' approach (see below for definition), based on the principle of shared responsibility between the prison and the community. The Department of Corrective Services (DCS) values its relationship with the community and encourages local people to participate in developing the prison's role in the community.

This approach helps DCS achieve its goals:

- to reduce the rate of prisoners re-offending and
- to enable prisoners' successful transition back into society.

Encouraging integration back into society is a priority for the prison in its management of prisoners. Integration programs establish links between the prisoner and their family, the community and with government organisations that offer local community members a chance to participate in prison activities.

#### **Through-care model**

This is a system of planning each prisoner's individual requirements for education, employment and other interventions, prison security and placement and their eventual release back into the community. The goal is that the prisoner will be well-equipped when returning to life in the wider community. Considerable community interaction while in custody is an important part of this approach.

## **Community links**

CLG members will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the way the prison integrates into the community. Karnet is already involved in the local community in many projects, including providing:

- work groups to complete community projects
- employment traineeships at local industries.

## **Benefits of a strong prison-community partnership**

Prisoner community work and projects enable Karnet prisoners to:

- make reparation for their crimes while also addressing their offending behaviour
- be exposed to positive role models that can lift their morale, inspire motivation and develop healthy work habits
- learn new skills
- reduce the cost of custody
- contribute to a better society.

The local community benefits from these projects through:

- improvements to local facilities at low or no cost
- availability of skilled labour that may not have otherwise been available
- prisoners who are better prepared for society, leading to lower rates of re-offending
- some level of reparation to the community for crimes committed
- an opportunity to contribute to prison planning.

## **Who are prospective CLG members?**

Karnet Prison Farm is seeking local individuals to represent the diverse range of views and groups in the Karnet community, to act as a conduit for information flow between the prison and the individual's special interest group. It is anticipated that the CLG will include members representing business, social, educational, agricultural, cultural, voluntary, local government, sporting, Aboriginal and other community organisations.

## **How you can contribute?**

The local community is encouraged to become an integral part of the prison's life, to consolidate strong social and business networks. The CLG has the potential to strengthen these networks and enable the prison to contribute positively to the local community. Through the CLG, the prison's neighbours have an ongoing, long-term opportunity to provide input into the prison's place in the community.

Members will be required to:

- be promoted as local CLG members in local newspaper advertising, news reports and on the Corrective Services website
- be accessible to the community by phone to receive community input regarding the prison
- table feedback from their interest group at CLG meetings
- disseminate news of the CLG and prison activities to their interest groups and the local community.

### **Your responsibility**

Feedback from community members will be considered by the Department and prison management in the process of making informed decisions about prison projects. However, CLG members should not expect community feedback or opinion to necessarily be adopted into prison policy or planning.

## **Terms of Reference**

CLG members are obliged to adhere to the CLG Terms of Reference. These may be subject to refinement and review throughout the life of the CLG.

### **1. Roles and responsibilities**

- 1.1 Provide advice and community perspective to the Department of Corrective Services on matters relating to the operations of Karnet Prison Farm and its prisoners. The Department or Minister for Corrective Services is under no obligation to act on this information.
- 1.2 Recommend and, where applicable, help establish avenues for interaction between prisoners and the community.
- 1.3 Identify employment and training opportunities for prisoners.
- 1.4 Facilitate opportunities for suitable reparation projects in the community.
- 1.5 Provide a link between the Department and community organisations which have an interest in operations at Karnet Prison Farm.
- 1.6 Provide an opportunity for exchange of information between community groups and the Department.
- 1.7 Act as a voluntary liaison group for the prison's 'through-care' approach for prisoners.
- 1.8 CLG representatives may be from neighbouring organisations, local residents, business proprietors, the local shire(s), local schools and the Aboriginal community.
- 1.9 CLG members are volunteers and will not receive a fee for group membership.

### **2. Operation**

- 2.1 To meet four times a year, with additional meetings, when required.
- 2.2 The CLG may decide from time-to-time to establish sub-committees or working groups to pursue objectives.
- 2.3 An Employee of Karnet Prison Farm will act as CLG coordinator and will ensure the minutes of the CLG meetings are recorded and distributed to CLG members.
- 2.4 CLG members are expected to remain in the group for a minimum period of one year.
- 2.5 The CLG coordinator will be selected by the Karnet Prison Farm Superintendent and will hold the position for a minimum period of one year.
- 2.6 CLG members will be required to submit applications for consideration by the DCS.
- 2.7 Details of CLG applicants who are not selected for the initial CLG will be retained on a wait-list and will be notified if a suitable vacancy becomes available.

- 2.8 There is no guarantee that all applicants will be appointed to the CLG.
- 2.9 After 12 months' membership, CLG members must notify the CLG and DCS of their intention to either renominate or stand down as a member. If renominating, DCS will consider the member's nomination in confidence.
- 2.10 The CLG should not exceed six (6) members.
- 2.11 CLG members are bound by a code of conduct.

### **3. Code of Conduct**

#### **3.1 Dispute Mechanism**

The DCS will nominate an arbitrator to resolve issues unable to be resolved in the group.

#### **3.2 Confidentiality**

If a matter being discussed by the group is regarded as confidential, it will be identified and defined as such with relevant restrictions, at the start of discussions. It is expected that restrictions will only occur from time-to-time.

#### **3.3 Responsibility of the coordinator**

The coordinator will be responsible for maintaining an open dialogue with the DCS.

#### **3.4 Media liaison**

The coordinator is the only member of the Community Liaison Group permitted to make comment about the groups' activities to the media on behalf of the group.

All activities should be coordinated in liaison with the Department of Corrective Services Media Coordinator.

Group members are not permitted to speak on behalf of the group – without consent of the chair – however they can make comment to the media as representatives of their own organisations.

### **4. Timeframe**

- 4.1 Department of Corrective Services will work with Karnet Prison Farm to advertise for members in April 2009 and will hold the first CLG meeting in May 2009.
- 4.2 DCS Public Affairs will provide media and communications support for the CLG. Administration support will be provided by the prison.