



West Kimberley Regional Prison Philosophy

Aboriginal people represent only about 3 per cent of Western Australia's population yet consistently comprise close to 40 per cent of the adult prison population.

In 2005, the Kimberley Aboriginal Reference Group was established to engage with local people and give recommendations on how to address this level of disadvantage among Aboriginal offenders from the Kimberley.

The Group's final reports emphasised the importance of the recognition of Aboriginal culture and values and the involvement of Aboriginal people in the delivery of corrective services across the Kimberley.

The West Kimberley Regional Prison's design and operating philosophy draw from the following philosophical statements published in *The Kimberley Custodial Plan – An Aboriginal Perspective – Stage 1 Report: Custodial Facilities*:

Cultural responsibilities – there is recognition of and respect afforded to traditional law and cultural obligations, and support provided to Aboriginal prisoners maintaining and fulfilling their cultural obligations and responsibilities.

Spiritual relationship to land, sea and waterways – there is recognition and acceptance of the cultural and spiritual connection to their country, and recognition that they have custodial rights and interests.

Kinship and family responsibilities – there is recognition and acceptance that familial responsibilities are central to the fabric of Aboriginal society and critical to the well-being of the community and the individual, and that there is recognition and acceptance of customary protocols that link kinship ties with reciprocal obligations.

Community responsibilities – there is recognition and acceptance by the Aboriginal community of its responsibility to address issues identified by Aboriginal people. Issues such as substance abuse and other anti-social behaviour and the development of skills to assist prisoners after release are necessary to promote the social and economic well-being and independence of Aboriginal people in the Kimberley.