



Greg Smith SC MP

Attorney General
Minister for Justice

MEDIA RELEASE

11 December 2013

NEW DRUG TREATMENT GRADUATES TURN LIVES AROUND

Inmates committed to overcoming their addictions and gaining new life skills graduated yesterday from an innovative NSW prison program aimed at cutting reoffending risk.

Five participants graduated from the Intensive Drug and Alcohol Treatment Program, while another 47 were presented with trade qualifications they have gained in custody while undertaking the program.

Attorney General Greg Smith SC and Corrective Services NSW Commissioner Peter Severin praised the participants of the program, which was launched early last year at John Morony Correctional Centre near Windsor.

“The five graduates have made a major leap in tackling their drug and alcohol problems. Upon their release from custody, they will be better prepared to make good life choices – that includes avoiding crime,” said Mr Smith.

“I also congratulate those 47 participants who have completed traineeships in engineering and clerical work and qualifications in horticulture and agriculture. They will be better equipped to gain and keep jobs upon their release and after completing the treatment component of the program.”

Mr Smith said the program is a major NSW Government initiative that offers a full-time, custody-based therapeutic centre to treat inmates with drug and alcohol addictions, to reduce the risk of them reoffending.

“This is a unique partnership between Corrective Services NSW and the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network to address primary health and the mental health needs of offenders,” he said.

Mr Severin said offenders eligible for the program are sentenced inmates with a documented history of problematic drug and/or alcohol use, with at least 12 months to go before their possible release from custody.

“Participants undertake a range of programs – excellent therapeutic treatment and very strong education, vocation and employment programs on site,” he said.

“Inmates receive extra visits and activities for positive achievements throughout the program so that those who perform and show commitment are rewarded.”

“Pre-release and post-release support of offenders is essential to the program’s success – we engage with a range of community and government agencies to enhance reintegration opportunities.”

Mr Smith said the program is being implemented over several stages in the NSW correctional system. Since February last year, 124 beds have opened at John Morony Correctional Centre.

“Another two units will be opened next year at the centre, resulting in a total of 248 beds before the final stage is implemented in 2014,” he said.

“This will provide an extra 50 female beds within Dillwynia Correctional Centre, bringing the total number of participants to 298 when the program is fully implemented.”