

The Commissioner
Queensland Productivity Commission
Post Office Box 12112
George St, Brisbane
Q 4003

Dear Commissioner,

I have had the opportunity to read your draft report and wish to make the following recommendations for your consideration.

Recommendation 1 - Shorter & effective higher productivity sentences.

It is more productive for an inmates rehabilitation to complete educational and rehabilitation programs in a short period of time rather than over a long period of time. This will allow inmates to have fresh knowledge and be able to utilise what they have learnt.

Recommendation 2 - Consistent Court Ordered Parole (Sentences under 10 years)

Any sentence under 10 years should have court ordered parole. This will allow Queensland Corrective Services and the inmate to have more certainty in regards to their sentence and be able to plan their release more effectively.

Inmates will benefit greatly if they have a guaranteed release date so that they can organise their employment, education, family & accommodation needs.

This will also remove the inconsistencies between a court ordered and board ordered sentence for the inmate.

Often a board ordered inmate is forced into completing rehabilitation programs or participating in other programs against their will.

Recommendation 3 - Remove the term 'Violent' from the Serious & Violent Offences Definition for Non Violent Drug Offences.

Non Violent Drug Offenders (Drug Traffickers / Importers) should be classed as 'Serious Offenders' and only serve 60% of their head sentence rather than 80% of a 'Serious Violent Offender'

Recommendation 4 - Reinstate the Release to Work Program

Allow Work Release for inmates that have served at least 50% of their non parole period. This is only on the basis that the inmate has no breaches, positive UT results or serious case notes. This allows the inmates to have a gradual, supervised reintegration. It allows inmates to be self sufficient and non reliant on crime or tax payer dollars to support their lives.

Recommendation 5 - Weekend Home Detention / Leave for good behaviour at Low Custody centres.

If an inmate can display a high standard of behaviour for a minimum of 6 months, the inmate should be allowed weekend release for reintegration purposes.

This will ease the burden for both QCS and the inmates families.

Recommendation 6 - Clarify & modify Leave of Absence Legislation

Inmates should have equal rights to applications for Leave of Absence re regards to Weekend Release, Medical, Work, Educational & Compassionate Leave from low custody centres.

Currently inmates are routinely threatened & intimidated into signing Community Service Leave Applications yet other forms of leave are discretionary & almost non existent.

Recommendation 7 - Remissions Incentive for good behaviour & rehabilitation program completion

Inmates should receive 33% off their total sentence if they can maintain consistent good behaviour.

This is a major incentive for all inmates to maintain good prison conduct & will set a good example.

It will reduce violence against other inmates & officers and will boost QCS staff morale.

Inmates should have their remaining parole time reduced if they have served at least 30% of their parole period without any incidents, positive UT results & have maintained good conduct.

Recommendation 8 - Parole reports to be compiled in order of importance

Recommendations should be made by an inmates case officer, work supervisor, followed by sentence management. The general manager should have no input & sentence management lesser input as they have minimal interaction or rapport with inmates.

Recommendation 9 - No immediate low custody sentences

Inmates must progress from a high, medium to low classification. Low custody centres are a reward and if inmates are allowed to bypass high & medium classifications, they will not appreciate their sentence or punishment.

Recommendation 10 - QCS should have a cut off period of when they can recommend that an inmate participate in rehabilitation programs.

This will stop inmates being recommended courses at their parole dates & being hindered from progressing.

Recommendation 11 - More educational rights & priority

Inmates should be allowed & encouraged to purchase any educational / arts material at their own expense for learning. Inmates should be allowed & encouraged to study any external vocational courses at their own expense to help with their rehabilitation.

These proposed changes will give all inmates a major incentive to improve themselves & not return to prison.

It will allow inmates to focus on their rehabilitation & complete rehabilitation programs.

These proposed changes will also streamline & simplify the sentence process, provide more clarity for inmates & their families, create a safer work environment for QCS officers & ultimately keep the community safer.

As a long serving officer, I have personally witnessed the gradual decline of the Police & Corrective Services System.

It has been tampered with by multiple governments and often with disastrous results.

These proposed changes must be implemented as soon as possible & once they are implemented, they should never be abolished but only modified for improvement.

I sincerely hope that the Commissioner can make the right changes & make the community a safer place than it currently is.