

April 2019

I am a prisoner at Borallon Training and Correctional Centre. I have been a prisoner for many years in both private and public prisons and at high and low classifications. I was asked by another inmate to provide a submission to the Queensland Productivity Commission enquiry but I am worried as I hope to be released in the next few years and am concerned about QCS staff. For this reason I am making this submission anonymously. Please don't put my name in this submission. I hope that this does not discount what I have to say. I will try and keep each point I make short.

- The last 15 years has seen a big shift towards punishment in QCS prisons. The private prisons managed by Serco and MTC were good but they are gone. The long term focus on punishment means that those who have risen to power in QCS only understand cruelty
- Borallon will fail as a rehabilitation prison because the conditions of secure are the worst of any Queensland prison, The training that is offered is only short courses that don't result in qualifications and they don't let inmates study at uni. The "earn or learn" model that we were told would exist didn't fit QCS idea of punishment so it never happened. Education can turn lives around. I have seen inmates who were sent to BTCC from SQCC fight a losing battle with management to keep studying and it's wrong.
- Any amount of time in a high security prison is bad. Queensland prisons do not have a medium security therefore most inmates spend their whole sentences in high security. These men are getting out damaged. There needs to be a medium and there needs to be a lot more beds in low security. Punishment might work to deter people if it is short and sharp but when it is for long periods it does more harm than good.
- Guards treat inmates so bad it makes us really angry then when something goes wrong there is a heaps bigger chance of a blow-up. It is the same with the boredom and the bad conditions. If things were better with the conditions there would be less tension and fights and stuff.
- Because there is no work-release program inmates get out with half a Centrelink payment. This couple of hundred dollars buys them some clothes, a feed and then they're broke. If inmates are going to get out and not commit crime we need to get out with money. Because there are no qualifications you can get in prison work release would give inmates the chance of not just earning money, but learning some skills we could use when we get out.
- Boredom is one of the biggest problems in prison. Most of the jobs that are available are no to low skilled job where you do the same thing over and over again. On top of that, there aren't enough jobs for everyone and those who work still have to spend at least 13 hours a day in a cell with nothing to do. There used to be computer games and stuff to do to occupy your time in your cells but now there is nothing but drugs.
- Group punishments cause violence and shouldn't be used. If someone does something wrong then they are the only person who should be punished.
- The pay in prison is not enough. Some jobs only pay enough for three or four 10-minute phone calls. If the prisons paid inmates fairly we wouldn't have to break rules to earn extra money.
- Phone calls shouldn't cost \$7-\$8 for ten minutes and there needs to be more phones. Some units have to share one phone with 50 other inmates. Some guys work all week just to afford

to call their Missus or kids on the weekend and then can't afford to buy coffee or milk. This causes a lot of drama.

- The whole world uses computers and internet and smart phones and long term inmates don't know how to use this stuff. There should be an internet where you can send emails and go to websites for education and stuff. Long termers are so left behind with technology and we don't know how to live in the world today. I have never used a mobile phone yet if I get out and miss a call from parole, they will send me back to prison and that scares me.
- There is heaps more to say about the Queensland prisons. I think the biggest thing I can say is that taking the prisons away from Serco was a big mistake. It wasn't a great prison but they treated inmates a lot better than the public prisons and at least they let inmates study and do proper courses. One of the good things Serco did was listen to the Prisoner Advisory Committee (PAC). It made the conditions heaps better and stopped drama from getting out of hand. QCS does not listen to PAC and the GMs don't even bother going.
- Even if QCS tries to change and be more like Serco it seems like it would be impossible with the people who work in QCS prisons. A lot of them are so angry and hostile all the time that you can't even get the basic stuff like a request form.