

## 9. MANUAL OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### 9.1 Poor Communications

Sir David Longland in his report on the management of Brisbane Prison identified the problems arising from poorly defined roles. He noted "objectives have only rarely been translated into clear, concise and workable strategies appropriate for use by officers at the work face of modern corrections." It is all too easy to blame poor performance on a "communications problem", but the prison system still exhibits classic symptoms of an uninformed and disenchanted workforce alienated from the ideas and directions of senior management.

Although the Department has prepared a Goal Statement as recommended by Sir David in 1985, few officers are aware of its existence. Those I have spoken to who know of it have had little or no guidance from superior officers as to how they should go about implementing it. Others are opposed to the basic philosophy underpinning the Goal Statement.

Rules, regulations, practices and processes within each prison frequently are enforced inconsistently, mainly through uncertainty or ignorance on the part of the officers concerned. Inordinate delays occur in the resolution of both prisoners' and prison officers' grievances and in the granting or refusal of prisoners' requests.

The philosophies of the Department have changed in recent years. Staff have not been informed properly of these changes and are left in a dilemma because the Act has not changed. I can understand their frustrations at the ad hoc approach that has occurred in attempting rather unsuccessfully to implement changes in the system. It is just not good enough.

The submission from the Queensland State Service Union pinpoints the issues:

"The Prisons Service seems to exist on copious quantities of memoranda, either from the Comptroller-General or Superintendent, indicating the manner in which a Prison Officer should perform his duties. These memoranda do not appear in a simplified form and, consequently, there is a confusion by Officers, particularly new Officers, as to the manner in which an Officer should perform his duties".

(Q.S.S.U. submission)

### 9.2 Need for a Manual for Staff

The Queensland State Service Union recommended the appropriate solution to the problem of poor direction. Their recommendation was:

#### "RECOMMENDATION 1

That each Officer be provided with a Manual of Administrative Instructions pertaining to the performance of his duties, and that on each occasion that a new memorandum is issued or a replacement is made, then a copy of such memorandum be given to each individual Officer."

(Q.S.S.U. Submission)

I totally endorse this recommendation. I feel so strongly that staff need the protection and guidance such a document affords, that in advance of the presentation of this report I have written to the Minister advising of my concerns and that I would be supporting the Q.S.S.U. recommendation. I advised the Minister that the Comptroller-General should be directed to carry out the preparation of a Policy and

Procedures Manual as a matter of urgency and that he should be provided with the resources necessary for the task.

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

*It is recommended that as a matter of great urgency work commence on producing a manual of policy and procedures for the prison service.*

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#### **9.3 Preparing the Manual**

The manual will accommodate the changes to the service that will follow implementation of this report. It needs to tie in very closely with the Act that is being prepared. Therefore I have discussed with the Minister the benefit from developing a close working relationship between my Secretariat and the Prisons Department in the preparation of the Manual. I suggested that Mr Geoff Hardy, Deputy Superintendent of Brisbane Prison, who is a member of the Committee assisting the Commission of Review, be brought into the Secretariat on a permanent basis. I will be asking Mr Hardy to liaise closely with the Comptroller-General's office regarding its preparation.

By putting together a very broad brush overview of where the Department is heading and by seeking suitable assistance from staff actually managing prisons, I believe we will be in a position to present a comprehensive manual of policy and procedures to staff at the same time as the Queensland Corrective Services Commission takes over the operations of the system, hopefully 1/1/89.

The need for proper documentation of policy, administrative procedures and professional practice in the other arm of the corrective services, the Probation and Parole Service, is just as great. However, I was delighted to hear that Service's manual is due for completion by the end of July.