

## Junee expansion opens



Junee Correctional Centre general manager Scott Brideoake (left) is congratulated by The Geo Group Australia managing director Pieter Bezuidenhout on the opening of the new prison wing as Cootamundra MP Steph Cooke and Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections Anthony Roberts look on.

The New South Wales Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections Anthony Roberts officially opened the new 480-bed maximum-security prison wing at Junee Correctional Centre in December.

Part of the NSW Government's \$3.8 billion investment in safer communities, the expansion includes accommodation areas as well as activities and services infrastructure, a purpose-built administration building and new prison gatehouse.

Minister Roberts was joined by Cootamundra member of parliament Steph Cooke and Corrective Services NSW assistant commissioner Carlo Scasserra at a ceremonial prison-keys handover with centre general manager Scott Brideoake.

"Junee prison is one of the biggest employers in the Riverina and its expansion has led to an additional 130 ongoing jobs in the area and a continuing investment in the region," Mr Roberts said.

"The new modern prison wing will enhance

the centre's strong reputation in reducing reoffending through improved inmate access to education, programs and training."

The new jobs created include positions for 116 correctional officers and supervisors as well as 14 medical and cultural support staff.

Steph Cooke said the construction project had already made a positive contribution to the Wagga Wagga and Junee economies.

"At the peak of construction there were between 250 to 300 tradies working on site to ensure the new prison wing was delivered on time and on budget. During that time, they were shopping, eating and staying locally," she said.

Carlo Scasserra said the new wing would strengthen the prison's focus on inmate rehabilitation.

"A dedicated new industries building with bakery, laundry and other operations will ensure inmates are readily employed and learning skills to prepare them for life on the outside," he said.

The expansion also includes a new K9 unit and two ovals.

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Scott Brideoake said the project included many benefits for staff and inmates.

"We welcome the refurbishment and expansion of our gatehouse, health centre, inmate reception and administration building to make a better workplace," he said.

Work will continue into next year, with the refurbishment of support areas within the existing centre and construction of a new 10-bed female unit.

The new wing takes Junee Correctional Centre's capacity to about 1300.

The expansion mirrors the existing design and adds four accommodation units including one for remand inmates. It significantly increases Junee's operational flexibility by offering a 'surge capacity' from 480 to 720 inmates.

The centre currently employs nearly 360 staff with about half of those living in the local area. It also invests heavily in the local community, contributing over \$10 million annually through local purchasing, donations, scholarships, sponsorships and charity work.

"We are very proud of being a major employer in the region and being recognised by the local community as a good neighbour," said Scott Brideoake.

"Junee Correctional Centre is dedicated to reducing reoffending through education and vocational training and to supporting successful reintegration back into the community.

"We are confident that this expansion and the recruitment of additional staff in clinician, rehabilitation, reintegration, health and other support roles will enhance our capacity to deliver on this commitment."

The GEO Group Australia has successfully managed Junee Correctional Centre on behalf of the NSW government for over 26 years.

## MD'S MESSAGE

Welcome to this edition of *GEO Insights*. We start with the exciting news that Junee Correctional Centre's 480-bed expansion has been formally opened. The expansion takes Junee's capacity to around 1300 with the new wing comprising four 120-bed units rated to

maximum security and associated ancillary buildings.

Significantly, Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) has included large programs, education/training and work facilities in the design. These will allow Junee to continue its exceptional record of delivering rehabilitation and reintegration opportunities to the inmates in its care.

The expansion provides CSNSW with a high quality and highly flexible strategic resource to help it meet both its population management needs and its long-term goal of reduced reoffending.

The expansion was opened by the New South Wales Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections, Anthony Roberts. During the visit the Junee team were honoured to have the minister draw the raffle winner for the centre's latest community project — a 1987 VL Holden Commodore restored by inmates to raise funds for local cancer charity Country Hope.

At Fulham Correctional Centre, the team has welcomed their new general manager Natalie Greenfield. Natalie has built an impressive career with CSNSW, culminating in responsibility for daily operational management of the Super Max Correctional Centre in Goulburn NSW. I am extremely pleased to welcome Natalie to the GEO family.

A presentation on Ravenhall Correctional Centre's unique approach to reducing reoffending through

integrated pre and post-release services, delivered by national director rehabilitation and reintegration Sarah Gray, was one of the highlights of The GEO Group's Continuum of Care conference in Florida. Great interest was shown in how Ravenhall's reintegration facility, The Bridge Centre, is engaging with ex-inmates and the support and interventions provided.

At Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre, our team is working closely with Queensland Corrective Services and other partners to progress our transition out of the contract in June 2020. I wish to personally thank every member of the Arthur Gorrie team for your continuing hard work and professionalism. You remain a credit to GEO and you can be assured of the company's support through this period.

Finally, a happy festive season to you and your families.

*Pieter Bezuidenhout*  
Managing Director



Country Hope general manager Ellie Webb with Junee Correctional Centre general manager Scott Brideoake and the restored 1987 VL Holden Commodore.

## Commodore winner revealed

**2** Fiona Dawson is the proud owner of a beautifully restored 1987 VL Holden Commodore after her name was drawn out of the barrel by New South Wales Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections Anthony Roberts at the opening of Junee Correctional Centre's new maximum security wing.

The car has been restored from scratch over a 12-month period by a group of 10 inmates — with the youngest 19 years of age and the oldest 56 — to raise money for local charity Country Hope.

Following strong promotional support from staff at Junee Correctional Centre the raffle raised in excess of \$63,000.

It is the third time in five years that prisoners at Junee Correctional Centre enrolled in automotive courses through TAFE NSW have restored a car for charity.

Manager of rehabilitation and reintegration at the prison, Trevor Coles, said the program was about building practical skills and personal development.

"Projects of this nature provide inmates with a wonderful opportunity to apply the technical skills they are learning," he said.

"On this project those skills included spray painting, automotive restoration, panel beating and mechanical engineering.

"The prisoners get invaluable hands-on experience and develop a strong sense of teamwork that promotes personal development.

"They are really proud of both their work and the contribution they are making to members of the community that need support."

Founded in 2003, Country Hope supports local families who have a child diagnosed with cancer or a chronic life-threatening illness.

## New Fulham manager

**3** The GEO Group Australia is pleased to welcome Natalie Greenfield to the role of general manager at Fulham Correctional Centre.

Natalie commenced work at the centre in October following almost 28 years with Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW).

In her most recent position she was responsible for daily operational management of the Super Max Correctional Centre in Goulburn NSW.

Natalie's broad experience includes a variety of operational and non-operational roles within several correctional centres, custodial training, investigations, intelligence, governance and compliance, hostage response and K9 operations.

She is very familiar with GEO through roles she held with CSNSW that required extensive engagement with GEO's senior management team and staff at Parklea and Junee correctional centres.

"Natalie's appointment will allow the Fulham team to further flourish under new and dynamic leadership," said The GEO Group Australia's managing director Pieter Bezuidenhout.



Natalie Greenfield.



Ravenhall Correctional Centre's reintegration facility, The Bridge Centre, has been experiencing increasing levels of post-release engagement by former prisoners.

## A continuum of care

**4** A delegation of executives from The GEO Group Australia has attended the biennial GEO Continuum of Care conference in Florida.

The two-day conference explored how different elements of the Continuum of Care model are performing across facilities and examined GEO's progressive approach to prisoner rehabilitation and reintegration.

The GEO Group Australia's national director rehabilitation and reintegration Sarah Gray presented at the conference, outlining efforts to address recidivism at Ravenhall Correctional Centre and the increasing levels of post-release engagement at the prison's reintegration facility, The Bridge Centre.

Ravenhall's general manager Col Caskie and the prison's director rehabilitation and reintegration

Fiona Murphy also attended the conference. "There are 20 GEO prisons in the United States that offer the Continuum of Care program, so the opportunity to learn from their experiences and consider what could be applied in Australia was invaluable," Sarah said.

"A highlight was a presentation by a group of ex-prisoners who spoke about their positive experiences in the Continuum of Care program at GEO prisons.

"They outlined their experience in state run prisons and the difference encountered in GEO prisons with access to case managers, peer mentors, education and vocational training, and life-skills programs.

"They also reflected on the importance of the post-release support they received."

## Helping businesses grow

**5** Fulham Correctional Centre has hosted a networking event with GROW Gippsland to help build partnerships between local organisations and the prison.

GROW (Growing Regional Opportunities for Work) Gippsland facilitates a collaborative approach to economic development and jobs growth in the region.

The organisation encourages local procurement and seeks to increase employment opportunities by maximising expenditure in the region. It is particularly focussed on creating job opportunities for young people, transitioning workers, Indigenous people and the long-term unemployed.

The GEO Group Australia is a member of GROW Gippsland. Fulham hosted 25 guests at the event from sectors as diverse as education, mining, construction, government, employment, telecommunications, community and professional development, social enterprise, water and waste management.

An overview of Fulham's operating philosophy was presented as well as the opportunities

for prisoners to undertake vocational training in areas such as horticulture, construction, automotive, hospitality, engineering and textiles.

"We partner with a number of organisations to create better outcomes for ex-offenders and seek to ensure that each prisoner is better prepared when he leaves the centre in terms of education, employment opportunities and life skills," said Fulham's operations manager Phil Munnings.

"There has been a steady flow of enquiries since the GROW Gippsland event, with attendees presenting a diverse range of opportunities for Fulham to consider."



Prisoners undertake vocational training to increase post-release employment opportunities.

## Violence prevention strategy launched

**6** The GEO Group Australia has launched a Violence Prevention Strategy with the aim of preventing violence against women.

Through various initiatives GEO aims to support women experiencing violence and hold perpetrators to account.

It will also encourage employees to challenge inappropriate behaviour and strengthen gender equality, both in the workplace and in the community.

The GEO Group Australia's managing director Pieter Bezuidenhout launched the strategy at each GEO centre with support from senior executives and Australian rock legend Angry Anderson.



From left: Fulham Correctional Centre general manager Natalie Greenfield, Angry Anderson and The GEO Group Australia's national director rehabilitation and reintegration Sarah Gray, at the launch of GEO's Violence Prevention Strategy.

Well known as the frontman for rock band Rose Tattoo, Angry has worked tirelessly for charity and is an active spokesperson for men's health as well as various hospitals and children's charities.

Angry spoke to staff and prisoners about his experience of physical and emotional violence in the family and the ongoing impact it has had on his life.

He also highlighted why it is so important that we work together to address violence in our community.

As part of its Violence Prevention Strategy GEO will:

- implement a family and domestic violence policy that supports employees
- train staff on how to respond when they are a bystander to inappropriate behaviours or attitudes that demonstrate gender inequality and/or violence
- initiate violence prevention training with prisoners
- increase awareness about domestic violence through information provided to both employees and prisoners at all centres.



From left: Local member of parliament Steph Cooke, Fulham's rehabilitation and reintegration manager Trevor Coles and contract and performance manager Ainslie Wood joined Junee mayor Neil Smith to unveil the mural.

### Stunning mural lifts old hall

A group of talented inmates at Junee Correctional Centre have painted a stunning mural that captures the essence of the township.

The project — which took 15 months to complete — followed a request from the Old Junee Hall Committee to enhance its community space.

Rich in colour, the artwork serves as a stage backdrop and features golden canola fields, silos, old town buildings, a train and an Australian cattle dog set against a brilliant blue skyline.

Inmates used photos of the local area as inspiration and a group of four worked on site at the hall to complete the mural.

### The fruits of partnerships

Ravenhall Correctional Centre alliance partner Melbourne City Mission works with many organisations and hosts regular employment expos to create employment opportunities for prisoners upon release.

One company, Fruit2Work, is particularly active in creating a chance for people impacted by the justice system to reengage with society. Fruit2Work delivers high quality fruit and milk to offices and commercial sites in Melbourne.

Recently, former inmates 'Sam' and 'Aaron' contacted Fruit2Work operations manager Simon Fenech, who they had met at an employment expo, to seek work.

While Simon didn't have any vacancies at the time, knowing that Sam and Aaron had come



'Sam' and 'Aaron' at Fruit2Work.

from Ravenhall and the rehabilitation and reintegration pathway they had been on, he created positions for them.

Bradley Lowdell from Melbourne City Mission, who works at the prison in a business development and employment role, said Fruit2Work couldn't be happier with the work ethic of Sam and Aaron.

(Note: Names have been changed.)

### Inmates donate prayer mat

Islamic inmates at Junee Correctional Centre have donated a prayer mat to the local community to mark the end of Ramadan and the celebration of Eid al-Fitr, one of Islam's major festivals.

Muslim delegates asked all Islamic inmates to donate money for the purchase of a prayer mat that could be gifted to the community.

Prison staff contacted Darussalam Islamic Book Store in Sydney to purchase the mat and were delighted when the store donated one in recognition of the goodwill of the prisoners. The prayer mat has been given to the Junee Library.

"People of Islamic faith who are at the library at prayer time will be able to use this mat and feel comfortable in practicing their faith," said centre chaplain Jericho Nyatoro.



From left: Junee Correctional Centre's learning resource centre coordinator Rodney Garrett and chaplain Jericho Nyatoro with Junee Shire Council's general manager James Davis and director community and business Grant Johnson.

### GEO addresses 'ice' enquiry

The GEO Group Australia has contributed to the NSW Special Commission into the drug 'ice'.

National director rehabilitation and reintegration Sarah Gray gave evidence to the commission on the delivery of drug and alcohol programs at GEO centres — particularly programs that address methamphetamine use.

The commission was particularly interested in how GEO conceptualises the delivery of drug and alcohol programs. Sarah reinforced that it is a health issue requiring a health response.

GEO's two-tiered response recognises that prisoners need access to programs and interventions that encourage them to develop an understanding of the impacts of drugs on their body, their relationships and their community engagement.

After completing a health stream program, prisoners whose drug use has contributed to their offending behaviour undertake further treatment in a criminogenic alcohol and other drugs program.

# A focus on accountability

By Kim Blinkhorn,

Director Governance and Continuous Improvement

'Accountability' is one of GEO's five corporate values. One of the benefits most frequently cited for correctional services being privatised is accountability.

When a jurisdiction contracts a correctional provider such as GEO it does so through a legally enforceable contract. These contracts spell out — in increasing detail and complexity — what services are to be provided and to what standard (both qualitative and quantitative).

When a jurisdiction seeks to achieve a specific outcome it often incentivises the provider accordingly. It will also include penalties for any failures to ensure a continuing focus on preventing unwanted events.

Recent contracts have incentivised the achievement of rehabilitation outcomes. The natural consequence of this has been that GEO has embraced community-based reintegration centres and support services and is looking to expand these.

An emphasis on accountability also drives continuous improvement. We do, and will, make mistakes — but accountability ensures that an open, honest, robust and rapid analysis of what went wrong follows, with plans put in place to mitigate any risks and avoid the chance of a reoccurrence.

As such, accountability is central to ensuring our centres remain safe, secure and healthy environments that deliver high quality offender services and programs that aim to reduce reoffending.

It is important to recognise that the contract is not just the concern of the centre general manager or compliance team. Rather, it is the means by which the jurisdiction speaks directly to staff and articulates what it values and wants to achieve. All centre staff need to understand the elements of their centre's contract and it is vital that key managers accept responsibility for their specific area of operations.

Since joining GEO, I have been impressed by the level of staff awareness of contractual obligations. We are an infinitely stronger company for this and I urge our staff to continue to take full advantage of the contractual information communicated to them and use this knowledge to provide even higher quality services.