KNOWING AND MANAGING YOUR RISKS: CONSISTENT, ACCURATE AND TRANSPARENT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION
BACKGROUND

- WA Corrective Services developed and adopted classification tools (2000)
- Tools became essential elements of an integrated assessment process
- The tools were enhanced in-house through feedback and examination of impacts
- Mahoney Report and Office of Inspector of Custodial Services reports sought validation of tools (2005-06)
REVIEW AND VALIDATION

- 2007/08 Joint initiative between OICS and DCS – Review of Assessment and Classification
- Three Components
  - Security Assessment & Classification
  - Assessment tool and processes for clinical interventions
  - What about those offenders who don’t do programs
SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- In practice is the achievement of security measures to prisoners sufficient to the minimum necessary to maintain their secure custody.

- Reasons for this approach;
  - Staff more aware of those prisoners who require a high level of security if their numbers are restricted
  - The lower the level of security the more humane the treatment is likely to be
  - Security is expensive by nature, it is economically valid not to have prisoners in a higher security category than is necessary
Assessment & Classification is the centre around which prison management rotates

- The effective allocation of scarce resources
- Better forecasting and manipulation of bedspace and intervention needs
- Minimisation of the potential for escape and in-prison violence
- Promotion of accountability and transparency for the offender and the custodial service
Classification History

- First generation tools based on clinical or professional judgement
- Second generation tools – actuarial risk tools
- Third generation tools – actuarial risk factors combined with truly dynamic factors that can be altered by specific events or interventions
The Review Focus

- Clarify what risks the allocation of security classification is attempting to assist in managing
- Ensure the assessment outcome accurately classifies the prisoner
- Determine if separate tools were required for Aboriginal and for Female prisoners
Current Tools and Process

- All offenders classified within 5 days of reception via Management & Placement Checklist (MAP)
- Two versions of MAP (Remand & Sentenced) – both include an Initial Rating Scoring Checklist as a subset (ISR)
- Regular reviews are undertaken at 6 monthly or 12 monthly intervals depending on the length of the sentence using a Classification Review Checklist (CRS)
Scoring Outcomes

- ISR (within MAP-R, MAP-S) and CRS are all calibrated to deliver a single score.
- The scoring outcome guides decision makers with cut-off points deemed for three classifications
  - Minimum: score of 6 or below
  - Medium: score of 7-13
  - Maximum: score of 14 or greater
- An Override (Professional judgement) capacity is allowed for
What did the Review Find (1)

- The Department was attempting to manage three forms of risk
  - Escape risk
  - Control risk
  - Dangerousness risk
- The current process including a mix of actuarial tool and professional judgement reflects good practice and compares strongly with other jurisdictions
The single score approach for security classification had many strengths:
- Transparency
- Ease of understanding
- Ability to predict
- Plan for transition through classifications

Have a strong basis in managing escape risk & also loosely consider the management of harm and control risks.
Review Findings (3)

- The focus on objective, transparent and accountable tools and processes has had a significant impact on escape rates.
- A number of externally introduced policy directions have impacted on the tools use with no positive impact.
- Improvements can be made that increase the number of prisoners to be held at lower security levels and not increase the risks.
Review Findings (4)

- The analysis did not support the development of an indigenous specific tool.
- There was a significant error rate in assessors’ administration of the ISR:
  - Symptom of a lack of training support and focus resulting in inconsistent interpretation of the tool.
- The predictive ability of the ISR declines over time, confirming the need for a Classification review process (CRS).
Review Recommendations

- The classification tool should provide a single scoring outcome that contains elements of the risk of escape, harm and control.
- The modified assessment tools (ISR and CRS) resulting from the Review should be adopted.
Recommendations

- The ISR – 10 of 15 existing items to be retained and additional 2 added
- The CRS – 13 of 14 existing items to be retained and additional 2 added
ISR Items

- Age
- Prior Section 70 Charge history (Serious Prison Offence)
- History of Escapes
- Length of Effective Sentence
- Substance Use related to current offending
- Further Prison Charges pending
- Disciplinary Charges current period
- Previous Detention or Imprisonment
- Further Court pending
ISR Items

- Seriousness of Offending history
- Seriousness of current offending
- Offences committed at large (upon escape)
- History of Institutional Violence
- Institutional Violence within last 12 months
- Employed or attending Education six months
- Full time primary care giver
- Lived at same address for 12 months prior to imprisonment
CRS Items

- Age
- Seriousness of current offending
- History of Escapes
- Offences committed at large (upon escape)
- History of Institutional Violence
- Institutional violence within the last 12 months
- Seriousness of offending history
- Length of Effective Sentence left to serve
CRS Items

- Further Court pending
- Further prison charges pending
- Disciplinary charges current period
- Most severe disciplinary conviction
- Program Performance
- Industrial/Education report
- Family/Community relations
Implementation Outcomes

- Modified tools will increase number of prisoners rated as minimum security earlier in their sentences without increasing the risks.
- An increase of 6-8% in the total number of prisoners that can be held at minimum security.