

**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

## Review Findings (2)

- 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