



Work Camps...

Turning Traditional Incarceration on it's Head

ANZSOC CONFERENCE – 27 November 2008



Kathy Csaba - Work Camps Manager

Process-outcome evaluation

- ◆ Suitability of work camp facilities
- ◆ Suitability of work and reparative activities
- ◆ Prisoner selection process
- ◆ Resources
- ◆ Skills development opportunities
- ◆ Community perceptions
- ◆ Appropriateness for Aboriginal offenders



Methodology



A mixed methods approach was used in the collation of data

The evaluation design was strengthened through triangulation of data sources, investigators and methods

- ◆ Theoretical concepts underpinning work camps
- ◆ Issues for Aboriginal prisoners



Interviews

Consultations and visits to all the work camps and host communities was major component of the evaluation.

Interviews with key stakeholders including;

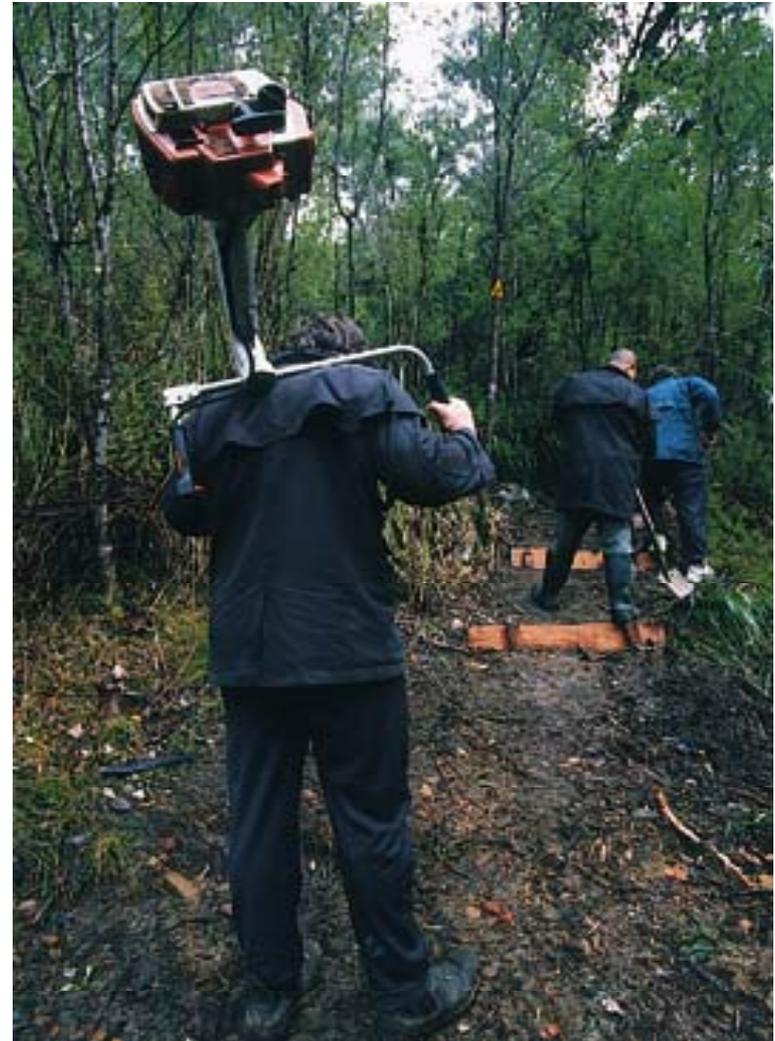
- ◆ Sample – stakeholders interviewed across seven work camps consisted of 97 community members, 26 Departmental staff, and 57 prisoners.



Quantitative data

Concurrently with the consultations, data was obtained from the Department on:

- ◆ Age
- ◆ Ethnicity
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Employment
- ◆ Offence history of participants
- ◆ Escapes
- ◆ Average time spent at work camp
- ◆ Number of prisoners
- ◆ Recidivism rates



Normalisation

On balance of evidence available well designed community based interventions are more effective

- ◆ Produce much better outcomes than those delivered in prisons
- ◆ Howell & Day (1999)
- ◆ McGuire (2000)
- ◆ Maruna (2007)
- ◆ Burnett & Maruna (2006)
- ◆ Laird, Chavez, Zan (2007)



Restorative Justice

“Strengths based” prelude to re-entry and re-integration

- ◆ Prison Reform Trust (2002)
- ◆ Uggen (2002)
- ◆ Uggen, Manza and Thompson (2006)
- ◆ Uggen and Manza (2006)
- ◆ Uggen, Manza and Behrens (2003)

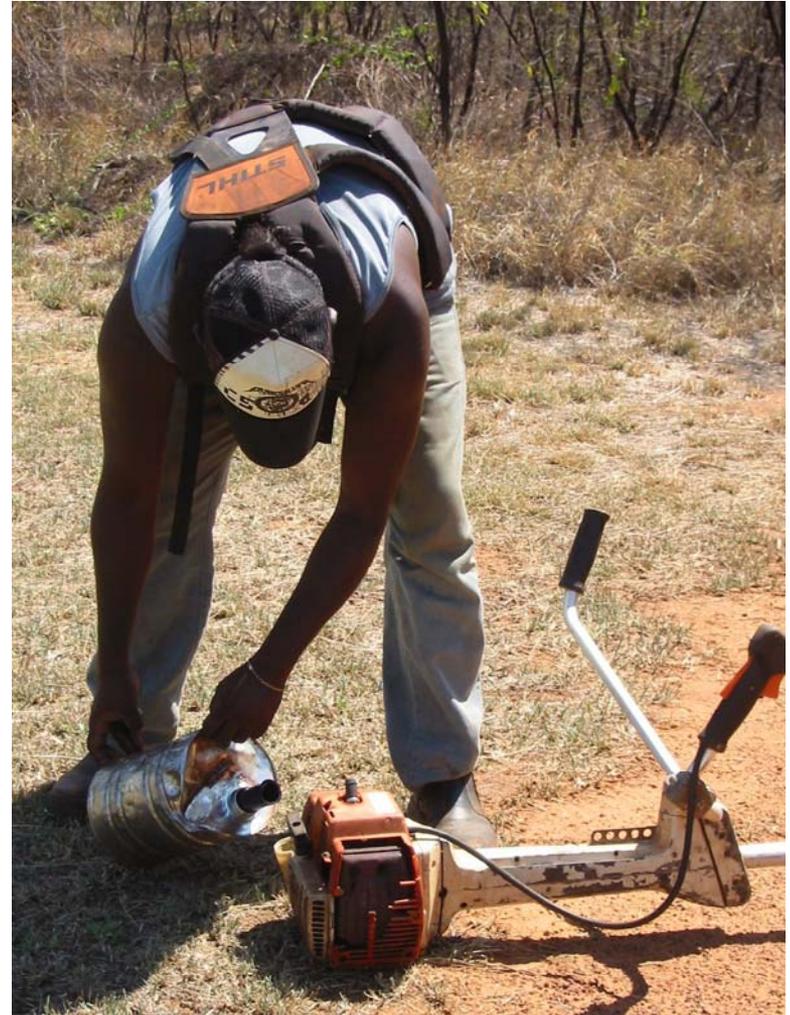


Addressing deficits

Education and Employment

Work Camps are well placed to address deficits in this area

- ◆ Holzer (2003)
- ◆ Payne (2007)
- ◆ Walker (2006)
- ◆ vein Miller (2007)
- ◆ Freeman (2003)
- ◆ Home office (2003)
- ◆ Laird, Chavez, Zan (2007)





Addressing deficits

Community Functioning

Gates et al found moderate to strong empirical support that access to accommodation on release, managing personal finances, support and access to leisure pursuits are all areas of offender needs related to recidivism

- ◆ Gates, Dowden
and Brown (1998)





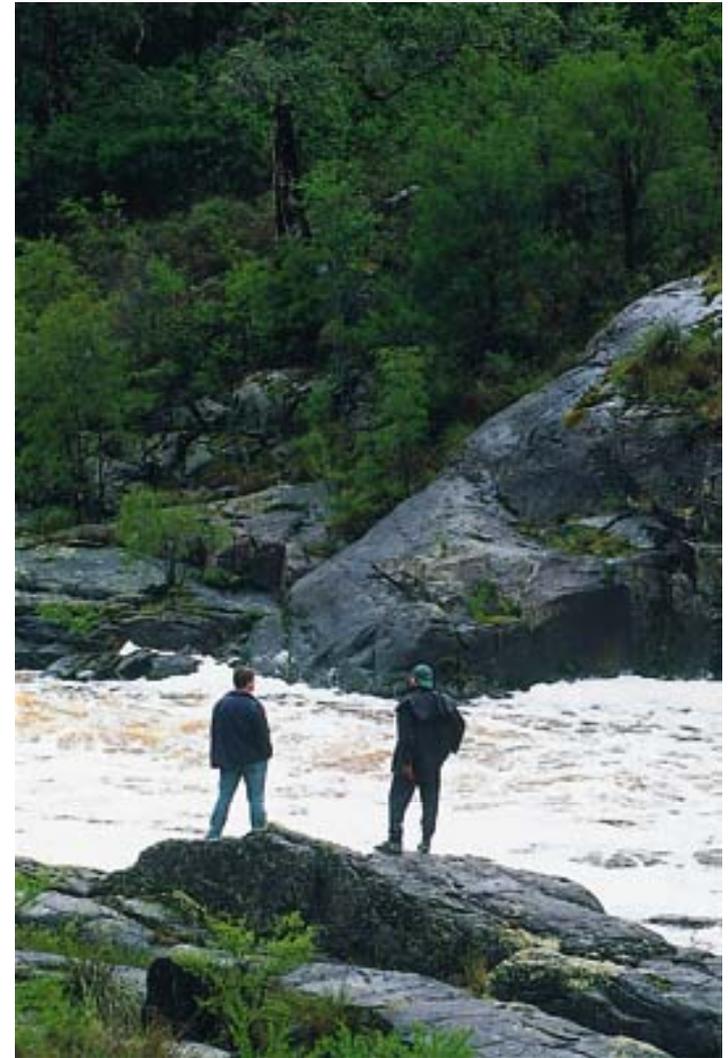
Prisoners' perspectives

- ◆ Improved emotional state
- ◆ Inner peace
- ◆ Healthier interpersonal relationships
- ◆ A sense of achievement
- ◆ A sense of being trusted
- ◆ Greater freedom and privileges
- ◆ Improved work related skills and jobs prospects
- ◆ Learning new skills'
- ◆ Learning basic life skills



A positive experience

Less institutionalised and more positive environment that encourages positive interaction between inmates and between inmates and staff



Outcomes for Aboriginal prisoners



Department of Corrective Services
Government of Western Australia

- ◆ They are more culturally appropriate
- ◆ opportunity to work on traditional lands
- ◆ develop closer links with the elders
- ◆ be involved in reparation for their own communities
- ◆ remain closer to family and country





Areas for improvement

- Facilities
- Higher intensity work camps for Aboriginal prisoners
- Training and employment
- Staff and training
- Work camps for women



Conclusions

Work camps are potentially powerful therapeutic, personal and social learning vehicles.

However to maximise their full potential need to be properly resourced.

This includes recruiting and training the right staff for the job.



Prisoner Work Camps

A successful community based program for minimum security prisoners who meet the criteria.

