FROM THE MINISTER’S DESK

The Government is committed to a program of Corrective Services Industries that is commercially viable and publicly accountable.

On January 2, I released a report on the operation of CSI prepared by Mr Michael Easson, secretary of the NSW Labor Council.

I was delighted that Mr Easson strongly supported CSI, commenting that there was a "good story to tell" about its role in the rehabilitation of prisoners.

However, Mr Easson did identify some deficiencies in the operation of CSI, particularly concerning the pricing policy for prison-made products.

In response, I announced a package of reforms designed to ensure fair competition between prison industries and the private sector.

I am confident these changes, which I believe should allay concerns previously expressed by some businesses, will allow CSI to operate in harmony with the private sector.

During my five months as Minister, I have had the opportunity to see CSI in action at several correctional institutions - and I have been enormously impressed by what I have seen. I strongly believe CSI is a fundamental part of modern correctional policy.

I would like to congratulate all involved in the success of the program so far, and wish them all the best as CSI faces the exciting challenges of the future.

The Hon. Wayne Merton, MP.

CORFURN LAUNCHES SCHOOL FURNITURE RANGE

Manufacture and supply of furniture has formed an important component of Corfurn marketing endeavours over many years. In response to many enquiries and requests from School Principals the Corfurn range has recently been rationalised. The range of Corfurn furniture now provides schools with cost effective products delivered on time and manufactured to quality accredited standards.

As part of the Corfurn product evaluation program, a range of Corfurn school furniture was recently presented to Mr Peter Turner, Principal, Aquinas College, Menai. Seen in the photograph is local M.P. Mr Chris Downy (left) together with Mr Turner and pupils of the school. In acknowledging the presentation, Mr Turner commented positively on the need for greater competition in the marketplace and of the general difficulties that have been experienced in receiving deliveries of school furniture on time and of sound quality.
Regional News

Central Region

Preparations are underway for an Inmate Family Day at Emu Plains Correctional Centre on Saturday, 10th April, 1993. The special Easter celebration has been organised by inmates to thank their families for their support. A committee has been formed by the inmates to solicit donations and has been very successful. The three hundred children expected on the day will be entertained by a merry-go-round, the jumping castle, face-painting and the Magic Clown Pantomime Show.

In recognition of the efforts of all those involved in Industries at Emu Plains, CSI is donating a variety of salad vegetables and dairy products from the Agricoor business division.

South West Region

Governor Clame Dries and Operations Manager Fred Hucker have begun a revitalization program at Goulburn Correctional Centre. The Comet unit which is currently located centrally will be relocated to an external area. This will boost employment for X wing inmates.

The move will enable the Comet unit to expand by 50%, allowing for the transfer of the bookcase contract from Parklea to Goulburn.

Additional capacity will also be available for the manufacture of Comet's new range of educational furniture. It is expected that 50 inmates will be deployed in this area, doubling the capacity of the unit.

The imagination and effort of Governor Dries and his CSI Operations Manager in making more efficient use of resources is a credit to Goulburn.

Eastern Region

The Periodic Detention Centre at Long Bay is being upgraded in response to a recent spate of vandalism. The project calls for the installation of 112 window grills, the enclosure of a mini-segregation area and a special garage area for the storage of lawnmowers and repair.

The substantial cost of the plan has been offset by the enthusiastic co-operation of Silverwater Correctional Centre in the project. Gordon Flemming from CSI Silverwater, is working with a small team of inmates to manufacture the necessary items for Long Bay. It is anticipated that the project will be completed in two to three months.

Northern Region

Grafton Correctional Centre recently received a Trade Delegation from Vanuatu including the Minister for Finance, Mr Wily Jiminy, the Minister for Economic Affairs, Mr Wairimini Perei, and the Director for Customs and Taxes, Mr John Simbolo.

Positive talks have led to samples of educational furniture being made and to other business opportunities in the areas of book binding, printing and textiles. Grafton City Council have offered their full support to the Centre in developing the export base.

CSI
CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

The first meeting of the reconstituted Corrective Services Industries Consultative Council was held on 23rd March 1993. Under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner, Max Sullman, the Council considered a wide range of issues connected with the operation of CSI. In particular the Council considered an independent consultancy report on the pricing mechanism adopted by CSI in the pricing of its products and services. The consultancy concluded that subject to a number of controls, CSI does not enjoy an unfair pricing advantage over the private sector. The Council will further consider the implications of the report at its next meeting in May, 1993.

At its first meeting, the Chairman welcomed recently appointed Community Representative, Mr Alwin Thomas A.M. Mr Thomas possesses what can only be described as a remarkable military, business and community service background. The wealth of experience which Mr Thomas brings to the Council will be of immeasurable value to the future operations of the CSICC.

CSI
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