MEDIA RELEASE

John Robertson MLC

Minister for Corrective Services
Minister for Public Sector Reform
Special Minister of State

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OBERON CORRECTIONAL CENTRE 'WORLD CLASS'

Minister for Corrective Services John Robertson will visit Oberon Correctional Centre with local MP Gerard Martin this Wednesday 8th July at 1:30pm to see the amazing work underway to help young offenders turn their lives around.

Minister Robertson will also see first hand how the partnership between the Oberon Correctional Centre and the local council has led to the completion of 2000 hours of community work by inmates since February this year.

"Oberon Correctional centre is a world class facility - running ground breaking programs for young adult offenders and working closely with the local council to conduct meaningful community works projects," said Mr Robertson.

"Research indicates that young adult offenders who complete the Gurnang Life Challenge here at Oberon are far less likely to reoffend than those in traditional correctional environments.

"The results are staggering, with as few as one in ten participants reoffending within two years of their release from custody – that is less than a quarter of the state average."

Local Member for Bathurst Gerard Martin said; "this success is testament to the work of correctional officers and program staff at the centre who work tirelessly to give every participant the best possible chance to turn their life around."

Inmates in the Gurnang program participate in traditional activities such as vocational training and counselling. The more unconventional aspects of the program include adventure based challenges including bush walking, abseiling and a ropes course.

The Minister also congratulated the centre on their excellent work supporting the local community through the Community Corrections Partnership signed with Oberon Council late last year.

"Already more than 2000 hours of community work has been done by inmates from Oberon Correctional Centre – including maintenance at the local showground and cleaning up memorial sites ahead of Anzac Day," said Mr Robertson. "Currently, inmates are helping to construct the fence along the Oberon/Tarana cycleway."

Local member for Bathurst Gerard Martin said he hoped the Minister would consider investing in additional beds, infrastructure and jobs locally after seeing the great work already underway in the region.

"There are more than 500 workers employed in Corrective Services in the Bathurst electorate, including 50 here in Oberon," said Mr Martin.

"As the Global Financial Crisis continues it is critical that the State Government is supporting jobs in regional communities."

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