



Improving Post-release Employment Outcomes for People Leaving Prison

Adult Prisoner Participation in Education, Training and Employment in Australia, 2008–15

Audit completed as part of the Future
Beyond the Wall: Improving post release
employment outcomes for people
leaving prison research project

ARC Linkage Project ID: LP140100329

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UNSW, Deakin University, Edith Cowan University

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Address for correspondence
Professor Eileen Baldry e.baldry@unsw.edu.au

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Executive Summary

The following report presents a summary of data on the proportion of eligible adult prisoners who participated in prison industries and in prison education and vocational training in all Australian correctional jurisdictions in the period 2008/09 to 2014/5. These data have been accessed from Reports on Government Services (ROGS) prepared by the Australian Productivity Commission (2010–2016), and from jurisdictional Annual Reports, supplemented by jurisdictional responses to survey questions about current correctional education, training and employment programs, and responses to follow-up questions by phone and/or email by managers of various sections within each jurisdiction. The data provide a snapshot of sector activity in the seven year period covered by the report and allow comparison between jurisdictions. Jurisdictional developments with respect to prisoner education, training and employment subsequent to 2014/15 have been foot-noted.

Correctional services across Australia are under pressure from an increasing prison population in ever-tighter fiscal situations that demand greater efficiencies and more stringent monitoring of performance. At the end of the period covered in this report, the structures, strategies, and performance measures of many jurisdictions were in process of revision or change: WA Corrections was undergoing a major restructure, Queensland Corrections was reviewing and remodelling its matrix of programs and re-entry strategies, NSW Corrections was in process of relocating education and training from programs and services to prison industries and had announced plans to outsource 90 per cent of education delivery and replace teacher positions with assessment officers and coordinators, both SA and Tasmania Corrections were reviewing their education provision and delivery, and Corrections Victoria was in process of responding to and implementing recent Ombudsman recommendations regarding programs and services including education and training. These developments and their impact are outside the time frame for this report.

What conclusions can be drawn from this audit?

Nationally more than 70 per cent of all eligible prisoners participated in a commercial or service industry at some stage during their sentence, and around one in three eligible prisoners participated in education to the extent of at least one session of one unit of competency, for each of the years covered in the audit. All eligible prisoners are given financial incentives to work at pay rates correlated with the level of skills and responsibility involved, and some jurisdictions provide additional incentives for productivity and performance. In all jurisdictions, an unemployment benefit is paid to prisoners willing to work when no work is available, prisoners categorised as ineligible for work, and prisoners on remand who choose not to work, however no benefit is paid to eligible sentenced prisoners who refuse to work. In all jurisdictions, prisoners are given financial encouragement to engage in courses that develop their basic literacy and numeracy, employability skills and vocational skills. However education is voluntary. All jurisdictions provide education and training specifically linked to prison industry jobs, and effort is made to ensure that employment conditions and employee performance maintain the standards that apply in the real world.

- **Employment rate data** for some jurisdictions are based on the number of prisoners employed on a single day calculated against the number of eligible prisoners in custody on that day. For other jurisdictions the rate is the averaged proportion of eligible prisoners employed on the first day of each month. *It is not clear what impact these different counting methods might have on reported results or the proportion of eligible prisoners unable to work because there is not enough work to go around. Here it should be noted that employment rates in the commercial sector fluctuate, as this sector is subject to factors outside the control of corrective services.*
- **With respect to post release employment, responsibility for employment and further education outcomes in most cases terminates at the gate.** However, each jurisdiction lays claim to efforts to engage potential employers and secure job placements for prisoner workers post release, in partnerships with service providers. The specific

employment programs described in this audit are each commendable in this respect, though until they are evaluated *we should probably exercise caution about recommending their further expansion*. The stigma of a criminal conviction is widely known to be an impediment to getting a foothold on the employment ladder.

- **Education rate data** for some jurisdictions are based on the number of prisoners in education on a single day, calculated against the number of eligible prisoners in custody on that day. In some other jurisdictions, the rate is the averaged proportion of eligible prisoners in education on the first day of each month. Only one jurisdiction bases its rate on a count of each prisoner participating in education. Again, *it is not clear what impact these different counting methods may have on reported results. There is also wide variation in how ineligibility is defined and how many groups of prisoners are excluded.*
- **A lack of data** about pre-prison employment histories and post-release employment outcomes makes it difficult to isolate any in-between effects of in-prison work experience and/or in-prison vocational education and training, whether on future employment or on re-offending. In the absence of paired matching of inmates in, or random allocation of inmates to, education or employment programs, it is difficult to make inferences about correlations between participation in such programs and employment outcomes.

Conclusion: There is an obvious need for improved data collection and development of standard definitions to assess activity. Jurisdictional agreement on other across-the-board eligibility criteria for education (such as only sentenced prisoners and/or only prisoners with a minimum sentence of 3 months) would provide greater comparability of data. Definitional agreements on 'need for service' and assessment of program efficacy would assist. Adoption of a national literacy/numeracy assessment tool would also be a step forward.

Adult Prisoner Participation in Education, Training and Employment in Australia 2008–15

Data and program information are presented first in overview, followed by within-jurisdiction figures, and finally by between-jurisdiction comparisons.

1.0 Prisoner Employment in All Australian Jurisdictions, 2008–15

As the graph below shows, in the period 2008–15 on average approximately three-quarters of prisoners eligible to work, that is “excluding those unable to participate in work programs because of full-time education and/or training, ill health, age, relatively short period of imprisonment or other reasons”,¹ participated in some form of prison industry. Participation in service industries was more common than in commercial industries, with an average of 44.9 per cent of prisoners participating in service industries in 2008–15 compared to an average of per cent of prisoners in commercial industries, a sector more affected by external economic factors that impact on capacity to attract commercially viable prison industries especially in remote locations.² An extremely small proportion (i.e. <1 per cent) of prisoners participated in work release programs, defined as employment in the community under industrial award conditions as part of a pre-release scheme.³ These trends remained relatively stable in 2008–15, with a slight drop in participation rates in 2011–12.

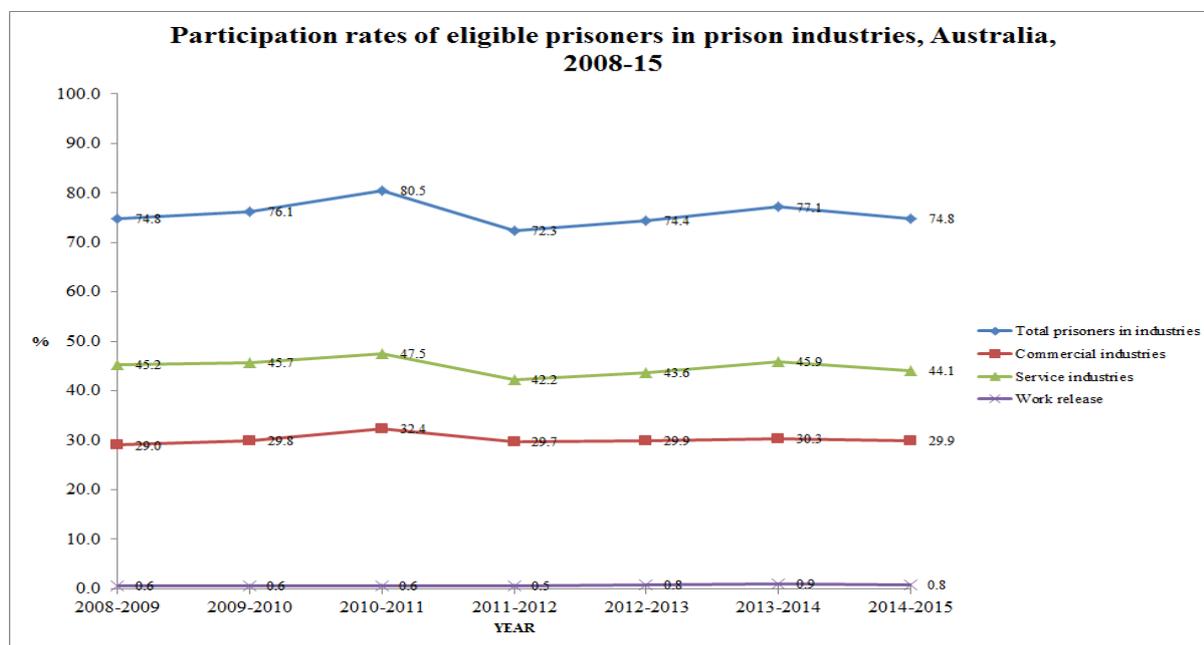


Figure 1: Participation rates of eligible prisoners in prison industries, Australia, 2008-15

¹ Ref 8.12 Report on Government Services, for all the years referenced in this audit.

² Ref Box 8.7 Report on Government Services.

³ ‘Jurisdictions operating transitional centres may therefore show “Not applicable” because those prisoners working in the community are not employed under industrial award conditions, such as being paid award rate wages.’ RogS Government Services, Table 8A.20, note (c).

While participation rates were relatively stable, there was a significant increase in the volume of prisoners and therefore prisoner workers during this period. Between 2008/09 and 2014/15, the overall prison population in Australia increased from 27,612 to 34,982, an increase of 26.7 per cent. These increases were experienced in all jurisdictions with the single exception of Tasmania where the prison population decreased by 28 per cent. Elsewhere increases were dramatic, ranging from 100 per cent in the ACT, 55.2 per cent in the NT and 47.7 per cent in Victoria, to 9.37 per cent in NSW.

Table 1: Prison populations per jurisdiction in 2008/09 and 2014/15

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
2008-09*	10,068	4,299	5,629	4,012	1,935	522	171	1,030	27,612
2014-15*	11,011	6,350	7,167	5,402	2,644	468	342	1,599	34,982
% increase	9.37	47.7	27.3	34.6	36.6	-28.0	100	55.2	26.7

* Average daily prison population tabled in RoGS for relevant years

Prison industries in Australian states and territories as described in policy documents have several functions with respect to correctional management, prisoner rehabilitation, productivity and commercial accountability. A comprehensive summary of these aims is provided in the Queensland Corrective Services as follows:

“Our policy objective is to provide prisoners with training and employment opportunities which will help prisoners to break the cycle of unemployment and offending behaviour when released. Under the Prisoner Employment Policy, QCS will:

- operate under a governance framework that promotes accountability and transparency in commercial arrangements
- engage prisoners with meaningful work activities in line with community expectations and for the maintenance of security and good order in correctional facilities
- provide vocational education and training opportunities to assist prisoners to obtain post-release employment
- provide prisoners with purposeful activities
- pursue public and private sector partnerships to maximise skill acquisition to improve a prisoner’s prospects of employment on release
- off-set prison operating costs.” (QCS, Prisoner Employment Policy and Action Plan 2008–2011)

There is an apparent conflict between these aims — summarised by NSW’s Corrective Services Industry (CSI) as “the competing dilemmas of operation (i.e. do correctional industry programs exist for inmate development, correctional centre management or economic functions)” — however in practice the aims are intended to be interdependent, with optimal productivity, ‘good’ correctional management, and enhanced prisoner employability skills being mutually reinforcing. CSI again:

“The critical link in providing this optimised implementation is to ensure that inmate training and work programs reflect, as far as possible and practicable within a correctional environment, the rigours and expectations of a community workplace including productive capacity, employability skills and commercial goals.” (CSI policy document: www.csi.nsw.gov.au)

In accord with prisoner employment aims, sentenced prisoners in all jurisdictions are required to participate in work as ‘an essential component of inmate development and effective correctional centre management’ (CSNSW policy), unless deemed ineligible because of incapacity, or for medical or classificatory reasons such as being ‘on protection’ or in segregation. Remandees, on the other hand, may work but are not required to work.

Prisoners are employed in two types of correctional industry: service industries that maintain the self-sufficiency of the correctional centre/s, and commercial industries where each industry runs on a fee for service basis. Service industries include: general maintenance, ground maintenance, domestic services (sweeper), food services, some laundries, and centre hygiene. Commercial industries provide goods and services for external markets as well as some fee for service functions for the correctional system, and include: textiles, timber and metal products, agriculture and food products, construction, assembly and packing, painting and powder coating, and mechanical work.

All prison jobs, whether service or commercial, are remunerated, while an unemployment benefit is paid to prisoners willing to work when no work is available, prisoners who are ineligible for work for any of the reasons cited above, and prisoners on remand who choose not to work. In all jurisdictions, unemployment benefits are not paid to eligible prisoners who refuse to work. The unemployment benefit varies from \$25 pw in Tasmania (currently under review) to \$7.50 pw in the Northern Territory, with other jurisdictions clustering around \$15 pw.

The scales for remuneration and categorisation of job levels vary between jurisdictions and can be quite complicated: in NSW there are 9 pay levels with service industry jobs starting on level 1 and commercial industry jobs starting on level 4; in the Northern Territory there are 6 pay levels with level 1 being the unemployment rate; in Victoria and the ACT there are 3 levels; in Western Australia there are 5 levels with level 5 being the unemployment rate; and in Queensland there are 3 pay rates in the service industry stream, 5 in the kitchen stream, and 5 in the industries stream, with other rates applying in the work camp stream. In some jurisdictions, such as NSW and South Australia, wage scale levels include a minimum and maximum amount, and a performance-based component as an incentive for positive achievement. Maximum performance allowances apply where a prisoner has provided an exceptional level of performance.

In all jurisdictions, prisoners attending an education or criminogenic program as part of their case management plan during work hours, who perform in a satisfactory manner in both work and education/criminogenic program, do not lose any part of their wages for that day. In Tasmania, employed prisoners engaged in a vocational course that develops skills related to their job receive an additional \$5 per week.

Prisoners engaged in a full-time education program are paid above the unemployment allowance in all jurisdictions: at levels 4–6 in NSW (and up to level 9 if participating in an Intensive Learning Centre program), at levels 1–3 in the services stream in Queensland, at level 1 in the ACT, at level 3 in the Northern Territory, at levels 3–1 in Western Australia, at level 7 in Tasmania, at level 2 in Victoria, and at the 'high' rate of the service industries allowance in South Australia.

Traineeship programs operate in two jurisdictions: in NSW where trainees are paid are at level 7, and in Western Australia where they start at level 3.

Most jurisdictions (6 out of 8) implement work release programs that allow minimum security prisoners day leave to undertake approved paid work or education in the community, though apart from the Northern Territory the number of participants in these programs is vanishingly small.⁴ All jurisdictions have agreements with one or more external job providers / job placement agencies to support prisoner post-release employment: 5 of the 8 jurisdictions offer some post-release employment support integrated with other post release support; and 5 of the 8 have developed some employer partnerships.

⁴ RoGS counts as work release participants only those who are paid industry scale wages.

1.01 Employment programs

Correctional employment programs are programs with education, training and employment components directed at specific post-release employment opportunities. Examples include the Corrections Victoria Industry Skills Centre, the Queensland Corrective Services Pathways2Employment program (to be discontinued in June 2016 when a new statewide re-entry service model is introduced), and Corrective Services NSW Gundi housing construction program for Aboriginal inmates and Heavy Vehicle Driver training program.

Other programs include the Western Australian Vocational Training and Employment Centre Fresh Start program which provides Aboriginal inmates at one centre with a pathway to employment in the mining industry, the Fairbridge Bindjareb Project (a collaboration between Bis Industries, Fairbridge WA and WA Department of Corrective Services) which provides a pathway from 14 weeks of supported training to a guaranteed job in the mining industry for those assessed as job ready, and the Diggers Rest Horsemanship Clinic at one of the work camps which provide a pathway to station work with horses and cattle. In South Australia, there is BHP Prisoner Reintegration Employment Opportunity Program, a partnership between BHP Billiton, ODT Australia, Carey Training and the Department for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, and in the Northern Territories there is the Sentenced to a Job program for prisoners in the last months of sentence. These programs are further discussed in the sections on each jurisdiction below.

1.1 Prisoner employment in NSW, 2008–15

In 2008–15 NSW Corrective Services reflected the national trends illustrated in graph 1 below. On average, three quarters of eligible prisoners participated in some form of employment in the period, when the adult prison population increased by 9.4 per cent from 10,068 to 11,011. In contrast to national trends, a higher proportion of prisoners participated in commercial industries (42.8 per cent) compared to service industries (32.3 per cent). While a work release option was available, participation numbers were small.

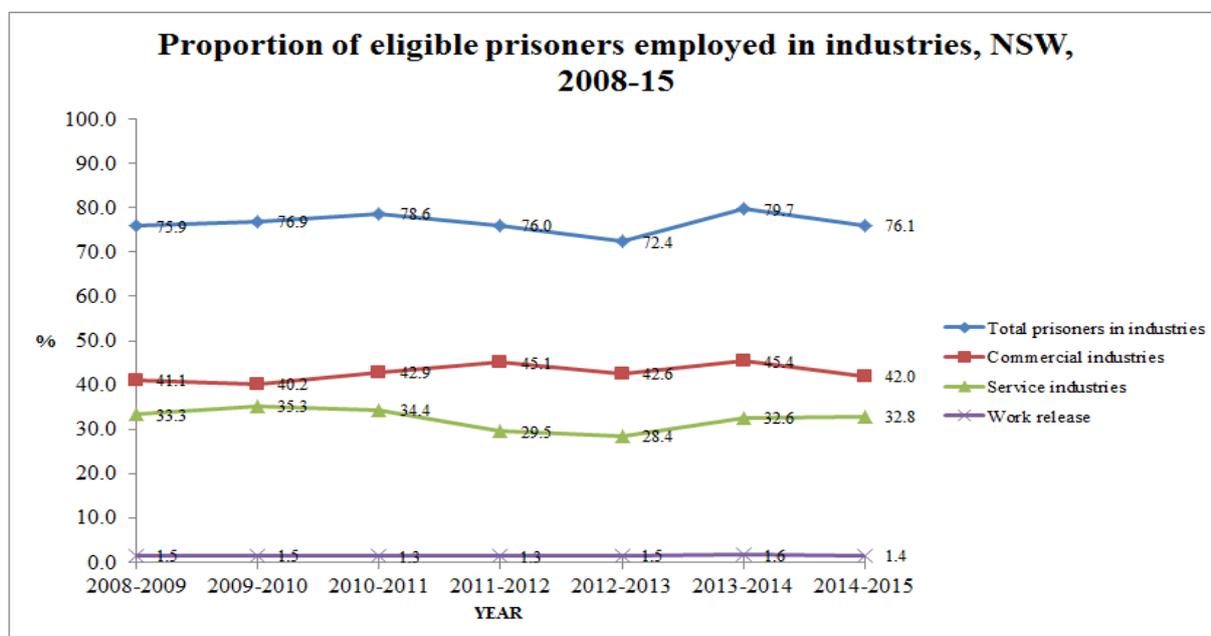


Figure 2: Proportions of eligible prisoners employed in industries, NSW, 2008-15

In NSW all prisoner work and program positions are covered by a formal position description that sets out the responsibilities required and enables assessment of performance. There are three levels of skill and responsibility that apply to both service and commercial sectors in all centres and in camps (designated below as levels 41–48).

Table 2: Prison worker task definitions, NSW

Service industries	Task	Business units & commercial industries
Level 1 & Level 41*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recurring process/service functions High level of training/supervision required 	Level 4 & Level 44
Level 2 & Level 42*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recurring process/service functions with limited technical requirements Medium level of training/supervision 	Level 5 & Level 45
Level 3 & Level 43*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive technical functions Limited training/supervision required High level of commitment required Provides training to other inmates 	Level 6 & Level 46
Level 3 with special loading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive technical functions Limited training/supervision required Exceptional level of commitment required Team leader to work location Provides tutoring to inmates 	Level 7 & Level 47
N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceptional technical functions Exceptional productivity requirements Exceptional quality requirements 	Level 8 & Level 48

Within each level, prisoner workers commence on the minimum basic wage and proceed to the maximum for that level when an acceptable proficiency level is achieved in accord with the position/level requirements, as follows:

Table 3: Prisoner wage scales for 30 hour working week (min- max-with loading), NSW

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9
Service industries domestic	\$17.76	\$18.87- \$20.85	\$22.15 \$24.15- \$35.15 with loading	\$23.10	\$29.31	\$33.84	\$39.12	\$48.81	\$52.26
Commercial services				\$23.09	\$29.31	\$33.83	\$39.14	\$48.81	
CSI business unit									

The wage ceiling based on a 5 day 30 hour week is \$70.55. However, the rate for a 5 day/30 hour week in centres designated as camps is \$81.00, and for a 7day/42 hour week is \$100. The maximum profile for prisoner employment in any one week is 42 hours (7 days x 6 hours).

The wage structure includes a performance based component intended to provide an incentive for positive achievement. Maximum performance allowances apply where a prisoner has provided an exceptional level of performance.

An unemployed rate of \$15.51 per week applies to remandees and to sentenced prisoners prepared to and registered for work, when no work is available.

On release, NSW prisoners are provided with a Corrective Services Industries reference that certifies the worker's history of employment and workplace performance and employability competencies achieved in the following key areas:

WORKPLACE SKILLS: Works to agreed quality standards and specification; Works to agreed WHS procedures and workplace behaviours; Maintains a clean & tidy workplace; Uses appropriate procedures, tools and equipment; Accepts and provides constructive feedback.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: Communicates effectively with others; Effective listening skills; Reading and interpreting documentation; Conflict resolution skills; Ability to assist others to learn on the job.

SELF MANAGEMENT SKILLS: Time management skills; Problem solving skills; Adapts to changing requirements and information; Identifies and accesses learning opportunities; Demonstrates a desire to learn and to apply learning.

TEAM WORK: Willingness to participate and be flexible where there are production pressures; Recognises and respects people’s diversity, differences and perspective; Works as an individual and a team member; Applying teamwork to a range of situations; Participates actively and enthusiastically within a team environment.

INITIATIVE & ENTERPRISE: Assesses situations and identifies problems; Shows interest and effort to the workplace; Seeks out additional work or information which helps the job at hand. It should be noted that the reference is clearly a correctional document.

It is not known how many ex-prisoners actually use this reference to assist them in obtaining employment. The reference is a CSI document so it is clear that it pertains to work history and employability skills in a correctional context.

NSW employment programs specifically set up to integrate education, training and post release employment include the Gundi housing construction program for Aboriginal inmates delivered in a rural correctional centre and the Heavy Vehicle Driving Licence (HVDL) program. Both programs are directed at employment outcomes in areas of the job market where skills shortages have created a demand. In the period April 2013–October 2015, 99 prisoners participated in the Gundi program. Of the 53 released in this period, 27 gained employment and 2 engaged in further education. In the period September 2012 to September 2015, 152 prisoners completed the HVDL program; of the 130 released in this period, 101 gained employment. The HVDL program is currently being evaluated.

1.2 Prisoner employment in Victoria, 2008–15

The graph below shows the proportion of eligible prisoners employed in industries in Victoria for the period studied.

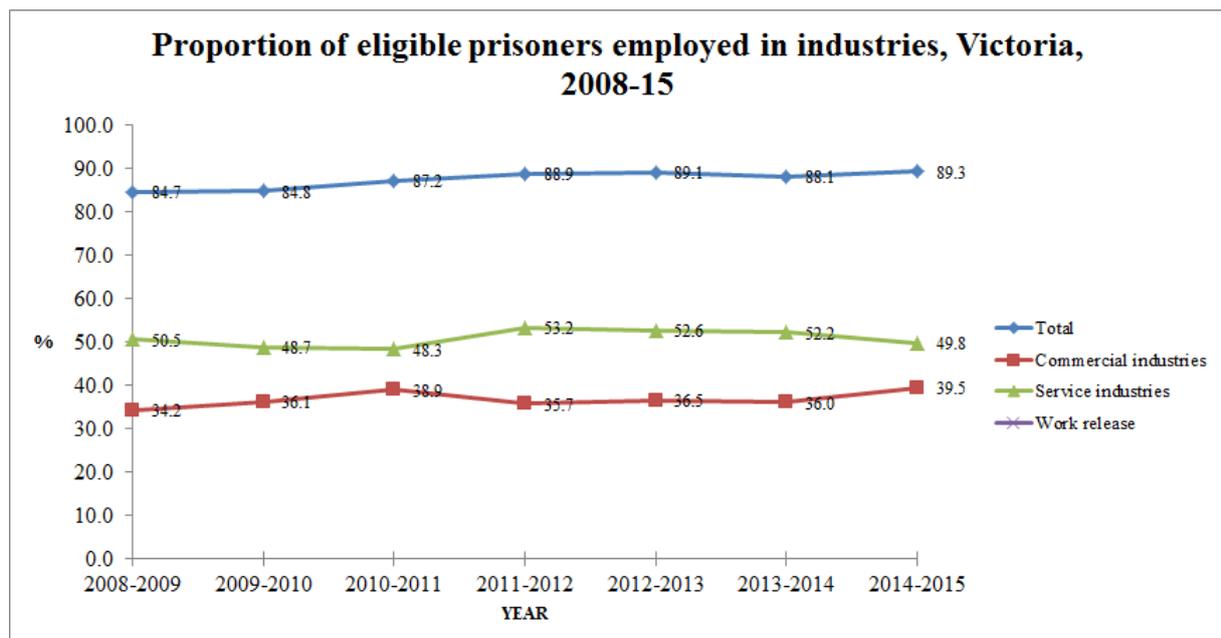


Figure 3: Proportions of eligible prisoners employed in industries, Victoria, 2008-15

Nationally, Corrections Victoria had the highest employment rate of eligible prisoners in the years 2008–15, a period in which the adult prison population increased by 47.7 per cent from

4,299 to 6,530. On average 87.4 per cent of eligible prisoners were employed, approximately half (50.8 per cent) in service industries and just over one third (36.7 per cent) in commercial industries. There is no work release program in this state however the Industry Skills Centre provides training directed at specific post release employment outcomes.

The wage scale for in-prison employment describes three levels of skill and responsibility, from entry level 3 to level 1, as follows:

Table 4: Wage scales for prisoner employment, Victoria

Employment level	Pay rate per day	Roles and Responsibilities
Level 3	\$6.50	Generally entry-level and low-skilled work. In service industries, this would generally involve cleaning and low-level maintenance work. In commercial industries, examples include simple assembly of pins and very basic industry tasks.
Level 2	\$7.75	Prisoners at this level have demonstrated their ability to work to a higher level of skill and responsibility. In service industries this would include, for example, food preparation. In commercial industries, this would include more complex assembly, for example, use of tools. Prisoners at this pay rate are expected to work under a lower level of supervision while maintaining high work standards.
Level 1	\$8.95	High-skilled roles, typically suited for prisoners who have demonstrated exceptional ability and responsibility. These roles could include limited supervisory duties. Head chefs (in service) and welders (in commercial) are examples of roles that would typically be classified a Level 1. Workers are expected to work under minimal supervision while leading other prisoners through their work.

Prisoners not working in an industry are paid an 'unemployed' rate of \$3.30 per day, that is approximately 50 per cent of the level 1 rate.

Prisoners undertaking an approved program or full-time education receive payment at level 2 rates during the TAFE academic year, however during semester breaks and TAFE College close-downs they are expected to work to receive this rate of pay. Prisoners unemployed during these periods receive the unemployed rate of pay.

Employed prisoners undertaking part-time education are paid their assessed full daily working rate on the days they attend half a day at industry and half a day at education.

Specific employment programs are limited to the Industry Skills Centre Program, a program that integrates education, training and post release employment available at 8 locations and funded to support a minimum of 120 prisoners. The program is designed to provide on the job training and develop employment skills with additional pre and post release support and employment placement options. A service provider is contracted to provide the post release support and job placement component. The program was recently evaluated by Edith Cowan University but this has yet to be made public.

Work release options are not available, however post release employment support by external organisation (e.g. employer, NGO, Not-For-Profit organisation) is available at most prisons.

1.3 Prisoner employment in Queensland, 2008–15

Queensland prisoner employment rates closely paralleled national trends in the years 2008-15. On average, just under three-quarters (71.7 per cent) of eligible prisoners participated in a prison industry in this period, during which the adult prison population increased by 27.3 per cent from 5,629 to 7,167. Participation trends in service industries and commercial industries were relatively stable (41.5 per cent and 30.3 per cent respectively) paralleling participation rates at the national level. There is no work release scheme.

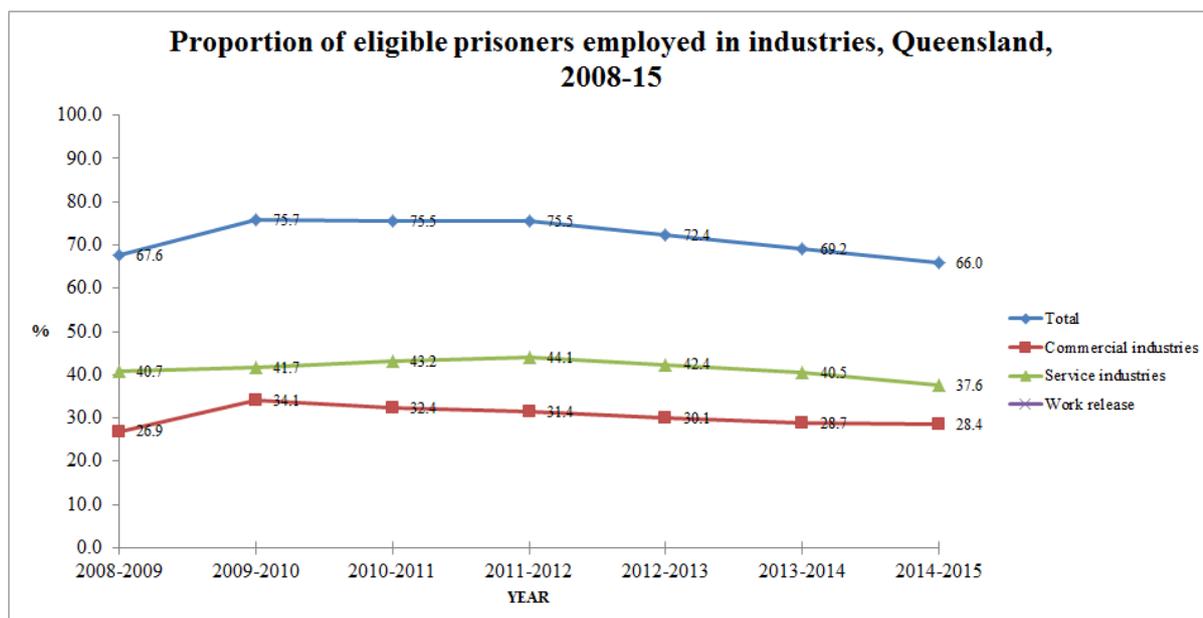


Figure 4: Proportions of eligible prisoners employed in industries, Queensland, 2008-15

Pay levels for prisoner workers are determined by QCS policy and remuneration is determined by the type employment in industry as per the table below. The wage per day for prisoners in the services sector is \$2.80–\$7.50. The wage per day for workers in the kitchen and in the industries sector is \$4.50–\$8.45. Prisoners participating in full-time education are paid at level S1, S2 (if they are ‘sound achievers’) and S3 (if they are ‘high achievers’).

Table 5: Wage scales for prisoner employment, Queensland

Job	Pay level	Pay rate per day
SERVICESSTREAM		
Cleaning	S1 – S2	\$2.50–\$3.50
Stores	S2 – S4	\$3.50–\$7.50
Grounds	S1 – S4	\$2.80–\$7.50
Gym/Activities	S1 – S3	\$2.80–\$4.25
Carer	S3	\$4.25
Education/Library	S1 – S3	\$2.80–\$4.25
Mess (Block kitchens)	S1 – S2	\$2.80–\$3.50
Accommodation	S1 – S3	\$2.80–\$4.25
KITCHENSTREAM		
Kitchen	K1 – K5	\$4.50–\$8.45
INDUSTRIES STREAM		
Carer	I 5	\$8.45
Maintenance	I 2 – I 3	\$5.60–\$6.80
Industries	I 1 – I 4	\$4.50–\$7.50
Farm	I 1 – I 3	\$4.50–\$6.80
WORKCAMP STREAM		
Work camp	W5	\$8.50

An unemployment allowance of \$1.30 per day is paid to prisoners “who are willing to comply with their offender rehabilitation plan, engage in employment and rehabilitative programs (if applicable) and who are temporarily or permanently medically unfit for employment (a medical certificate or medical officer's opinion must be provided) or for whom a work position is not available including those on safety orders or ‘at-risk’.” Prisoners on remand are not required to work, and must be paid the unemployment allowance if they choose not to work.

A large-scale employment program, Pathways2Employment, provides pre-release support to

enable prisoners to become job ready. In stage 1, co-ordinators conduct a skills audit, establish employment and training directions, and make referrals to Education Officers for training whilst in custody. In stage 2, providers engage with participants on release from custody and assist with job search activity, coordinate further training with external agencies, maintain links with Job Services Australia organisations or their equivalent. In stage 3, providers support ex-prisoners to obtain transport for the purpose of employment, and maintain contact and support ex-prisoners whilst employed for a minimum period of 13 weeks.⁵

In the period 2000–2014, 29,744 prisoners participated in stage 1, while 7,458 ex prisoners participated in stage 2 and 5,892 ex-prisoners participated in stage 3.

1.4 Prisoner employment in West Australia, 2008–15

Rates of prisoner employment in Western Australia reflected the national pattern with 75.4 per cent of eligible prisoners on average participating in work in the period 2008–15, during which the adult prison population increased by 34.6 per cent from 4,012 to 5,402. A substantially higher proportion of prisoners were engaged in service industries (60.5 per cent) compared to commercial industries (14.9 per cent). There is no work release program in this state however the WA Vocational Training and Employment Centre Fresh Start program provides Aboriginal inmates at one centre with a pathway to employment in the mining industry, and in 2014/15 a Diggers Rest Horsemanship Clinic at one work camp provided a pathway to station work with successful post release employment outcomes.

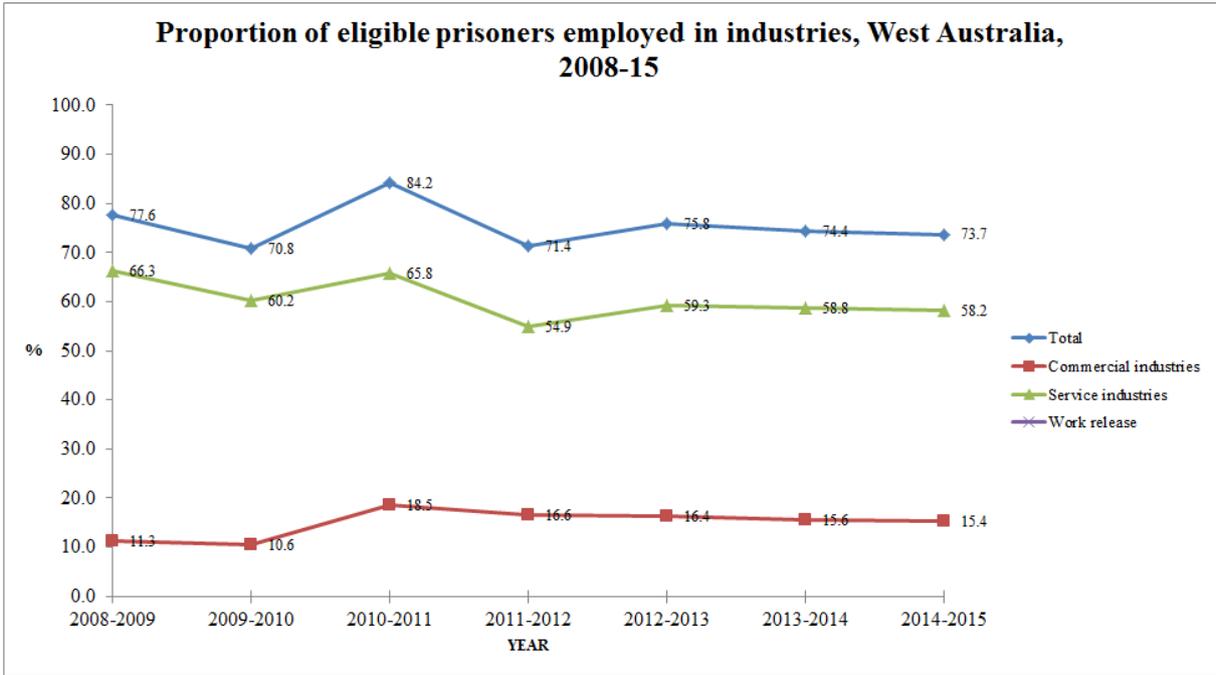


Figure 5: Proportions of eligible prisoners employed in industries, West Australia, 2008-15

There are four levels of employment in WA Corrections, commencing at level 4. The unemployment benefit is tabled as level 5, and loss of privileges as level 6, as shown in Table 6 below.

⁵ The Pathways2Employment program is being discontinued as of June 2016 when a new state-wide model of re-entry service delivery will be introduced.

Table 6: Wage scales for prisoner employment, Western Australia

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5 Unemployed	Level 6 Loss of privileges
Day 1	\$9.77	\$7.47	\$5.86	\$4.15	\$3.07	\$0.00
Day 2	\$19.54	\$14.94	\$11.72	\$8.30	\$6.14	\$0.00
Day 3	\$29.31	\$22.41	\$17.58	\$12.45	\$9.21	\$0.00
Day 4	\$39.08	\$29.88	\$23.44	\$16.60	\$12.28	\$0.00
Day 5	\$48.85	\$37.35	\$29.30	\$20.75	\$15.35	\$0.00
Day 6	\$58.62	\$44.82	\$35.16	\$24.90	\$18.42	\$0.00
Day 7	\$68.62	\$52.29	\$41.02	\$29.05	\$21.49	\$0.00
Total	\$68.39	\$52.29	\$41.02	\$29.05	\$21.49	\$0.00

There is no distinction in this wage scale between jobs in service industries and jobs in commercial industries. Prisoners participating in full-time education commence at level 3 and can be paid at higher levels if they take on more responsibility such as tutoring other students. Trainees also start at level 3.

An unemployment allowance of \$3.07 per day is paid to prisoners who are willing to work when no jobs are available. Prisoners engaged in part time education are also paid at this level. Prisoners who refuse to work lose privileges and are not paid. Prisoners on remand are not required to work, and must be paid the unemployment allowance if they choose not to work. Remandees may request work, however priority is given to sentenced prisoners when jobs become available.

Specific employment programs mentioned in the 2014/15 Annual Report include the Vocational Training and Employment Centre Fresh Start program which provides Aboriginal inmates at Roebourne Regional Prison with practical training and a pathway to employment in the mining industry with Fortescue Metals Group for the job-ready guaranteed, and the Diggers Rest Horsemanship Clinic at Wyndham Work Camp which provided a pathway to station work with horses and cattle, with the first group of participants all securing employment. In addition, the Fairbridge Bindjareb Project (a collaboration between corrections, Bis Industries and Fairbridge WA) provides a pathway from supported training at the Karnet Prison Camp to a guaranteed job in the mining industry in the Pinjarra region. In the period 2010–2014, there were 54 participants in this project, 80 per cent of whom proceeded into employment. A preliminary review of the project, completed in 2015, has not been published. The project is currently funded until July 2018.

1.5 Prisoner employment in South Australia, 2008–15

As the following figure shows, the average participation rate in prison industries in South Australia was 71.2 per cent during the period 2008–15, a time when the adult prison population increased by 36.6 per cent from 1,935 to 2,644. The average participation rate in service industries (at 49.5 per cent) was over twice as high as the average participation rate in commercial industries (at 20.5 per cent). There was a very low participation rate in work release programs.

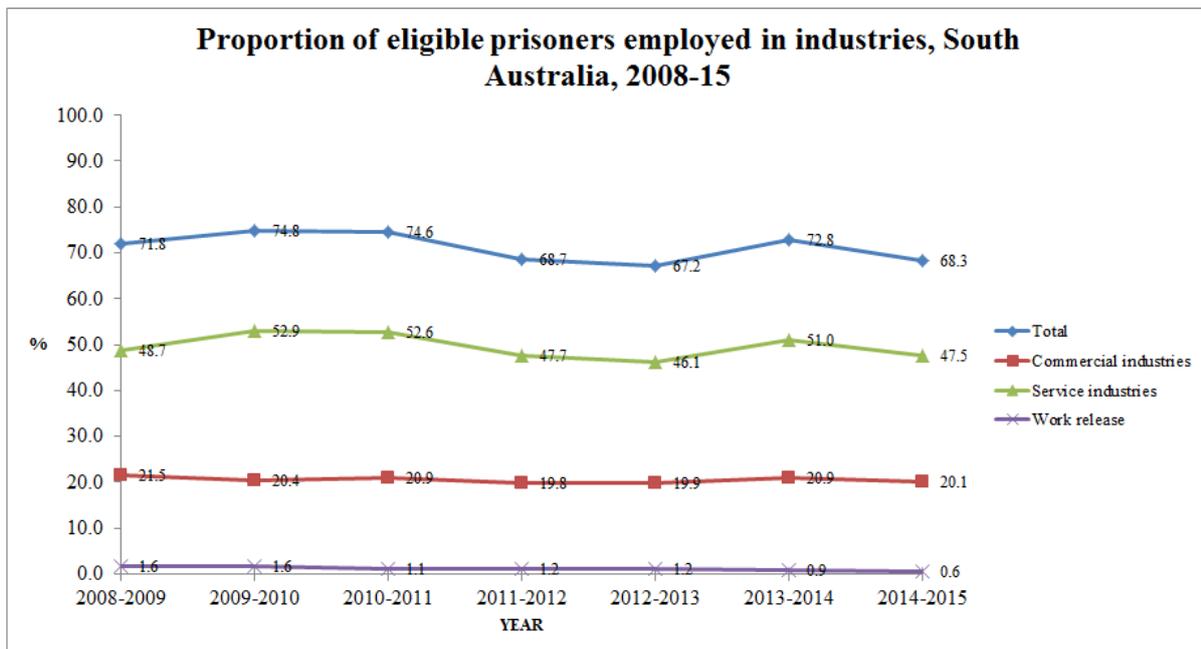


Figure 6: Proportions of eligible prisoners employed in industries, South Australia, 2008-15

The wage scales for prisoner employment in South Australia include a skill rate with four levels — low / medium / high / advanced (relating to the skills the worker brings to the job) and a performance rate with four levels — fair / good / very good / exceptional (relating to the motivation demonstrated on a daily basis). All workers get a basic allowance in addition to an allowance determined by skill and performance.

Table 7: Wage scales for prisoner employment, South Australia

Service industries – Work/Performance allowance per day				
Allowance	Low	Medium	High	Advanced
Basic	\$2.56	\$2.56	\$2.56	\$2.56
Work & performance	\$2.63	\$2.86	\$3.09	\$3.67
Daily total	\$5.19	\$5.42	\$5.65	\$6.23
Commercial industries – Work allowance per day				
Allowance	Low	Medium	High	Advanced
Basic	\$2.56	\$2.56	\$2.56	\$2.56
Work & performance	\$1.64	\$1.87	\$2.10	\$2.68
Daily total	\$4.20	\$4.43	\$4.66	\$5.24
Plus performance allowance per day				
Unacceptable	Fair	Good	Very good	Exceptional
\$0.00	\$0.77	\$0.99	\$1.21	\$1.54
Education allowance per day				
	Full-time in education/criminogenic program		Education workers	Flat rate per day
Basic	\$2.56		\$2.56	
Work & performance	\$3.08		\$3.67	
Daily total	\$5.64		\$6.23	
Unemployment allowance per day				
Unemployment rate		\$2.56		Flat rate per day
Refusal to work/dismissal from work or education		\$0.10		

Prisoners engaged in full time education or in a criminogenic program receive a flat daily rate of \$3.08 in addition to the basic allowance. Education workers who assist with preparing teaching materials, photocopying, cleaning etc. receive a flat daily rate of \$3.67 in addition to the basic allowance.

Prisoners such as remandees who are not assigned work receive the basic daily allowance of \$2.56. Prisoners who refuse to work or who are dismissed because of misconduct or other reasons receive 10 cents a day.

Specific employment programs in recent years include SA's Prisoner Reintegration Employment Opportunity Program (PREOP), a partnership between BHP Billiton, ODT Australia, Carey Training and the Department for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, which provided low security prisoners with the opportunity to develop skills and improve their chances to secure employment on release from prison. By 2014/15, eight PREOP programs had been run; 80 prisoners including 40 Aboriginal prisoners completed the program and 38 completers were employed on a contract basis post release. However, the mining industry has since slowed down and these jobs have dried up. Partnerships with employers / employment agencies for post-release job placement are now very limited.

There are currently some programs at the pre release centre funded by Corrections and Not For Profit agencies that allow prisoners to go off site, and a program for on-site training linked to employment placement support is under consideration.

1.6 Prisoner employment in Tasmania, 2008–15

Compared to the national average, Tasmania had slightly lower participation rate in prison industries in the years 2008–15, a period during which the adult prison population decreased from 522 to 468, a decrease of 28 per cent. Average participation in industries for eligible prisoners was 57.8 per cent in the period. On average, just under 50 per cent of eligible prisoners participated in service industries compared to less than one-fifth (16.9 per cent) in commercial industries. Tasmanian Corrections implements a very small work release program.

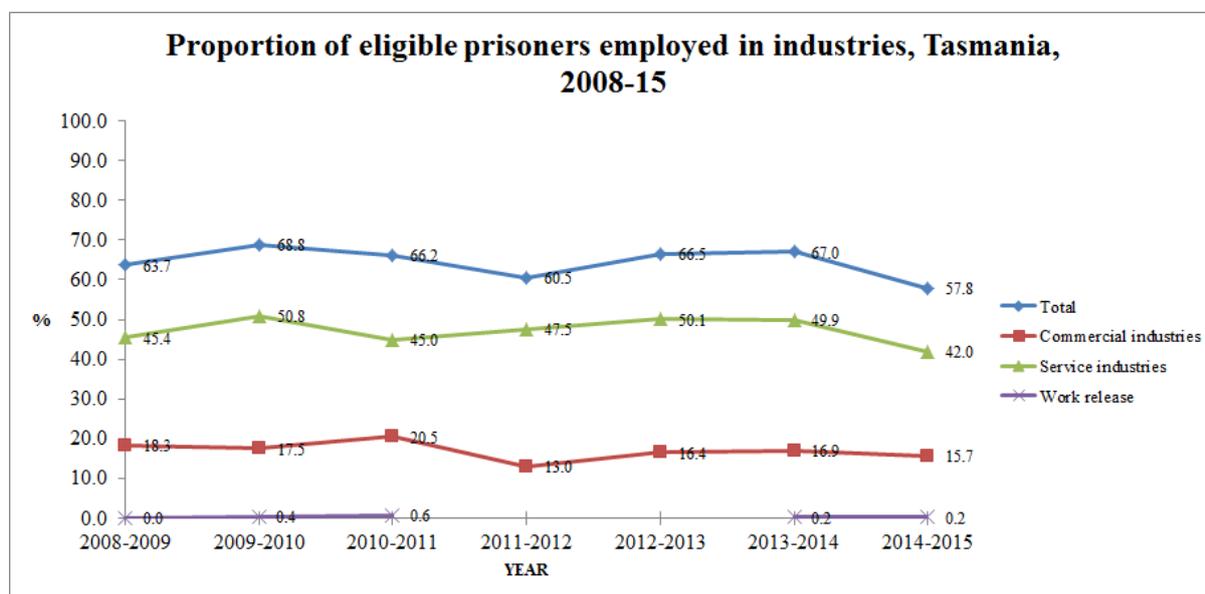


Figure 7: Proportions of eligible prisoners employed in industries, Tasmania, 2008-15

As shown in table 8 below, there are 15 pay levels in the wage scale for prisoners in Tasmania. Remuneration for work in prison industries ranges from \$32.50 per week to \$67.50 per week, while unemployed prisoners get a 'stand-by' allowance of \$25 per week.

Part time students receive \$27.50, full time students are paid \$37.50, and prisoners engaged in work and a work-related vocational course receive \$52.50. Employed prisoners undertaking a vocational course related to their employment receive an additional \$5.00 per week. These

rates are currently under review.

There is currently no specific employment program, however a program integrating education, training and post release employment support is about to commence that involves vocational training, intensive job searching and post release follow up. Employment placement is facilitated by prison-based industry programs, work release options while in prison to work for an employer or organisation in the community, and agreements with external job providers/job placement agencies to support prisoner employment post release.

Table 8: Wage scales for prisoner employment, Tasmania⁶

Job	Pay level	Pay rate per week
SERVICES STREAM		
Management allowance	1	\$0.00
Basic living allowance/unemployment allowance	2	\$15.00
Stand by allowance	3	\$25.00
WLC allowance	4	\$25.00
Part time student	5	\$27.50
General hand – Compound, Wardsman (max, RBMS), General Hand Laundry (MHWP)	6	\$32.50
Wardsman, General Hand Cleaner (MHWP), Full time Student	7	\$37.50
General Hand, Event Coordinator, Cleaner, Machinist, Assistant Event Coordinator, Criminogenic Program	8	\$42.50
General Hand – Laundry, Peer Support, Carer, General Hand (max.), General Hand Kitchen, General Hand Vegetable Processing, Volunteer Dogs Home	9	\$47.50
Peer Tutor, General Hand – Kitchen, Senior Hand Vegetable Shed, Senior Hand Kitchen (MHWP), Pre-Apprentice Program	10	\$52.50
Leading Hand – Kitchen, Senior Hand Maintenance, Senior Hand Woodwork, Vegetable Shed, General Hand Botanical Gardens	11	\$57.50
Tradesman	12	\$67.50
Weekly training Allowance & Program Participation Allowance	13	\$5.50
Peer Support Allowance	14	\$10.00
Sport & Recreation Allowance	15	\$10.00

1.7 Prisoner employment in the ACT, 2008–15

The ACT presents a unique context for the period 2008–15, as there was no commercial industry in operation and the only adult prison in the jurisdiction did not commence operation until March 2009. Prior to this, ACT prisoners were housed in NSW prisons or in ACT remand centres. During the period 2008-15, the total number of prisoners sentenced or remanded by the ACT increased from 171 to 342, an increase of 100 per cent. While the average proportion of eligible prisoners participating in industries in the period was 80 per cent, there was a steady decline from 2009 when 92.4 per cent of eligible prisoners participated in service industries to 64.6 per cent in 2015. There is a very small and recent work release program operating from the Transitional Release Centre.

⁶ These rates applied at 4.01.2010.

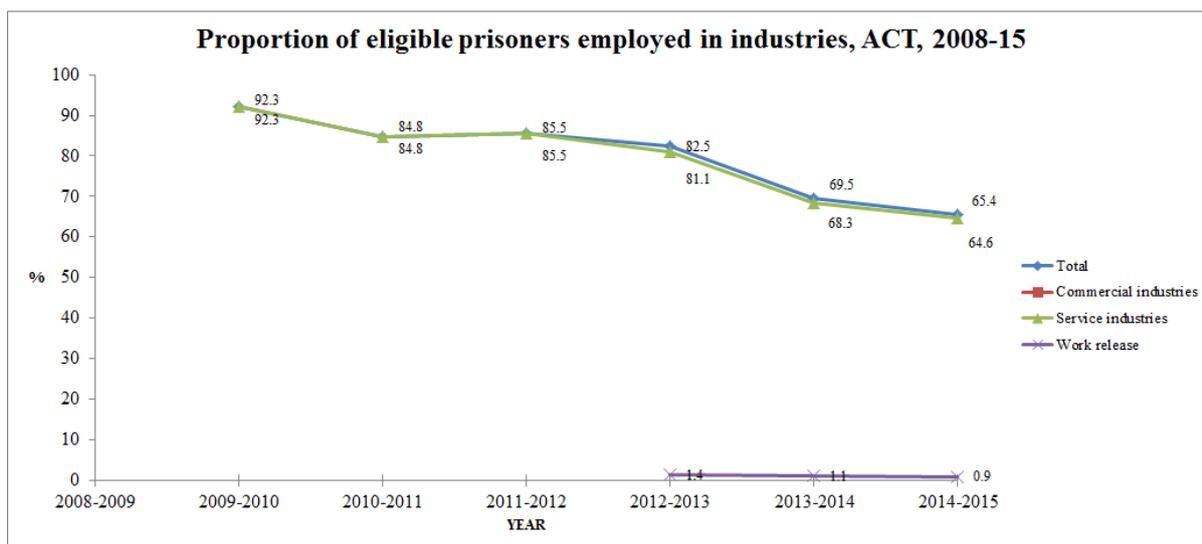


Figure 8: Proportions of prisoners employed in industries, ACT, 2008-15

As shown in table 9 below, there are three levels of prisoner pay rates in the ACT, from \$0.83 to \$1.67 per hour. Full-time and part-time students are paid at level 1.

Table 9: Wage scales for prisoner employment, ACT

Employment Level	Pay rate per day	Roles and Responsibilities
Level 1	0.83 per hour \$24.90/5 day wk, \$29.88/6 day wk, \$34.86/7 day wk	Prisoner is actively engaged in approved criminogenic program, and/or education, and/or employment; or any combination of these approved activities as per the prisoner's Case Plan and performing at a consistently acceptable standard.
Level 2	\$1.17 per hour \$35.10/5 day wk, \$42.12/6 day wk \$49.14 /7day wk	Promotion to Level 2 is based on merit, performance, experience, and qualifications and involves accepting a high level of responsibility within the designated activity area/s. ⁷
Level 3	\$1.67per hour \$50.10/5 day wk, \$60.12/6 day wk, \$70.14/7 day wk	Promotion to Level 3 is based on merit, performance, experience, and qualifications and involves accepting a high level of responsibility within the designated activity area/s. employment processes.

An unemployed rate of 0.50c per hour, \$15 per week maximum, applies to remandees and to sentenced prisoners prepared to and registered for work, when no work is available. Prisoners who refuse to work (who are classified as Non-Workers) receive no payment, a temporary classification that is reviewed weekly.

⁷ According to policy, appointment to Level 2 and Level 3 positions requires a job application, interview, and a current CV as per external employment processes, however in practice the process is primarily one of risk assessment.

1.8 Prisoner employment in the Northern Territory, 2008–15

The proportions of eligible prisoners participating in industries in the Northern Territory fluctuated in the period 2008–15, during which the adult prison population increased from 1,030 to 1,599, an increase of 55.2 per cent. While on average just over two-thirds of eligible prisoners participated in industries in the period, total participation fell to 44.5 per cent in 2012–13. Participation in service industries also dropped to its lowest point in this year. At 4.6 per cent on average, the proportion of eligible prisoners participating in commercial industries was lower than in any other jurisdiction, however there was a steady increase in the last two years of the period, reaching 13.1 per cent in 2014-15. The rate of participation in work release increased dramatically after 2012–13, when a new work release program for prisoners with an open security rating, Sentenced to a Job (STAJ), was introduced in all centres and work camps.

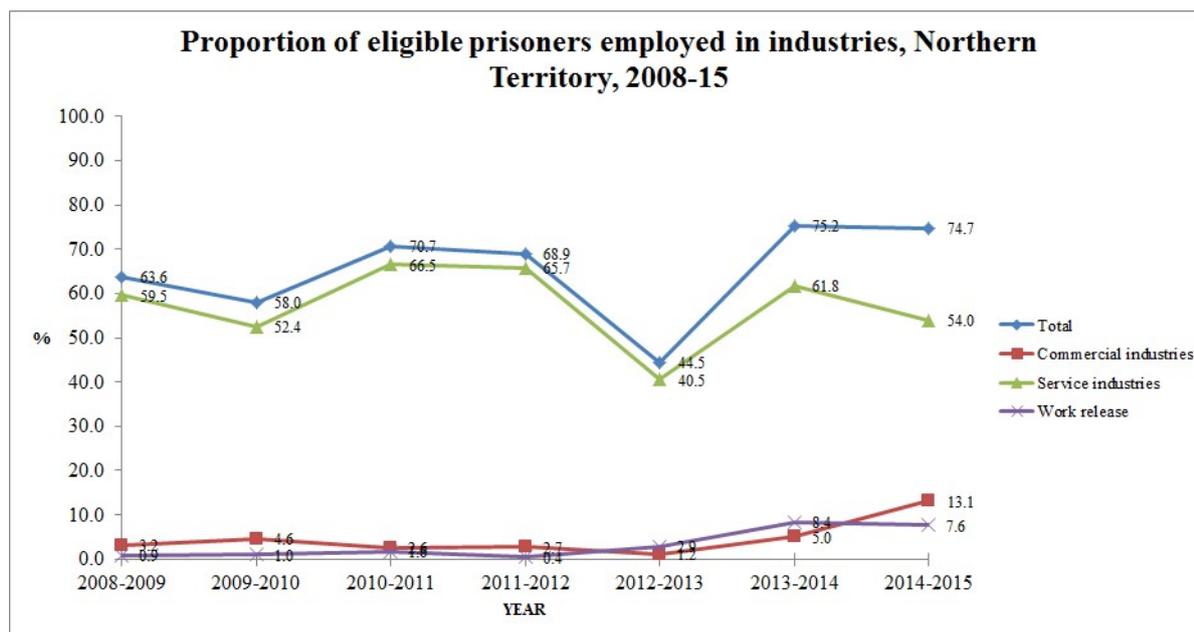


Figure 9: Proportions of eligible prisoners employed in industries, Northern Territory, 2008-15

There are 6 levels in the NT prisoner pay scale, and a separate pay rate for critical positions in the Datjala work camp, as shown in table 10 below. Prisoners in programs or education are paid at level 2. Prisoners at reception, or who refuse to work, or who have breached their order, get no payment. A prisoner who quits a job or is fired is not paid for 3 weeks.

Table 10: Wage scales for prisoner employment, Northern Territory

Employment Level	Pay rate per week	Roles and Responsibilities
Level 6	\$90.00 ⁸	NTCI internal – working with/for businesses inside the correctional facility
Level 5	\$60.00	Leading hand/Foreman/highly skilled
Level 4	\$45.00	Medium skilled
Level 3	\$32.50	Low skilled & full time education
Level 2	\$20.00	Unskilled, participating in programs or part time education
Level 1	\$7.50	Unemployment or 'base' rate – for high security prisoners and prisoners not enrolled in programs or education, training or employment
Datjala Work camp	\$290.00	Critical worker positions – Kitchen manager Food Services/Stores Manager/Cleaner

Prisoners participating in the voluntary employment phase of the Sentenced to a Job program

⁸ Weekly rates apply irrespective of whether employment is for 5, 6 or 7 days.

are paid at levels 4 – 6, depending on the level of skill and responsibility. Participants who progress onto paid employment in one of a wide range of local businesses are paid Award wages. Contributions toward board and lodging, Victims of Crime and Fines Recovery are deducted from their weekly wages. In 2014/15 there were 577 participants in the program, 53 of whom retained their paid employment after discharge. The number of employers offering work to prisoners in that year was 130.

NT Corrections is developing partnerships with education and training providers and industry sectors to address skills and labour shortages, and is in ongoing discussions with existing and potential employers to ensure prisoner need as well as business needs are met. Employer networks are in development to provide prisoners with opportunities to continue in employment post release.

2.0 Prisoner Participation in Education and Vocational Training, 2008–15

The right of prisoners to access education and vocational training programs in adult prisons is legislated under Section 47(1) (o) of the Corrections Act 1986 and since 2001 all education delivered in prisons has been required to meet national standards of data collection and credentialing to Australian Quality Framework standards.⁹ These developments recognise the fact that a high proportion of prisoners left school during the lower secondary years, and have poor Literacy, Language and Numeracy skills, minimal trade qualifications, and patchy histories of formal employment. All Australian correctional systems have policies, procedures and practices relating to prisoner access to education and training, in the stated belief that improving prisoner skills and experience in these domains will reduce the likelihood they will reoffend. The acquisition of trade qualifications via a combination of classroom delivery and on-the-job training in prison industries, together with literacy and numeracy support, has become the focus of prison education and training.

However while education and training are available in all adult correctional centres, education budgets and staffing levels are limited and in practice delivery is usually targeted to sentenced prisoners assessed as having the highest level of need. Jurisdictions may also limit eligibility to prisoners serving a minimum term of three to six months. Education opportunities for remandees are generally limited and restricted. Facility infrastructure especially in older centres, and operational constraints such as the time prisoners have out of cell, also limit the scope of what can be delivered and class sizes. Teacher resources to assist the minority of more educated prisoners eligible to enrol in higher education are scant, and prisoners enrolling in such courses are usually required to self-fund.

Prisoner participation in accredited education and training courses across Australia is recorded annually in the Report on Government Services (RoGS) as a percentage of *eligible* prisoners per jurisdiction, with 'Education and training' defined as

the number of prisoners participating in one or more accredited education and training courses under the Australian Qualifications Framework as a percentage of those eligible to participate (that is, excluding those unable to participate for reasons of ill health, relatively short period of imprisonment or other reason). Education and training figures do not include participation in non-accredited education and training programs or a range of offence related programs that are provided in prisons, such as drug and alcohol programs, psychological programs, psychological counselling and personal development courses.

Prisoners whose situation may exclude their participation include hospital patients who are medically unable to participate, fine defaulters who are incarcerated for only a few days at a time, prisoners held at centres where education and training programs are not provided as a matter of policy (for example, 24-hour court cells), and remandees for whom access to education and training is not available.¹⁰

The important distinctions here are between accredited 'education and training', non-accredited 'education and training', and offence-related 'programs', with participation in accredited 'education and training' being the only one taken account of in the productivity report. The terms 'education' and 'training' also have specific referents. Education as recorded in RoGS includes units of competency leading to certificate completions in three streams — pre Certificate 1, secondary school education, and tertiary level education — with a fourth stream reserved for vocational education and training that refers to units of competency leading to certificate completions in nationally accredited Training Packages in vocational skill areas such as

⁹ In 1996, the Senate Report of the Inquiry into Education and Training in Correctional Facilities (Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee 1996) recommended the development of a national VET strategy. The National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training for Adult Prisoners and Offenders in Australia was launched in 2001. All RTOs delivering prison education and training are required to be Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) compliant i.e. to meet nationally consistent data standards that ensure the accurate capture and reporting and analysis of vocational education and training (VET) activity throughout Australia.

¹⁰ Text from Report on Government Services Table 8A.21 for each of the years referenced in this audit.

horticulture, construction and the like. There is some crossover, however, as vocational Training Packages also include units of competency in literacy, numeracy and communication, skills which are usually categorised as education, and the confusion this can lead to, in terms of which units are counted in which stream, is discussed below.

As shown in figure 10 below, on average 33.9 per cent of eligible prisoners participated in accredited education and training in Australian prisons in the period 2008–15. There was a slight decrease in participation rates overall in the period, to some extent driven by falling participation in vocational education and training. Participation rates in secondary education and higher education programs were stable though low, and participation rates in pre-certificate courses over the time period showed a slight increase.

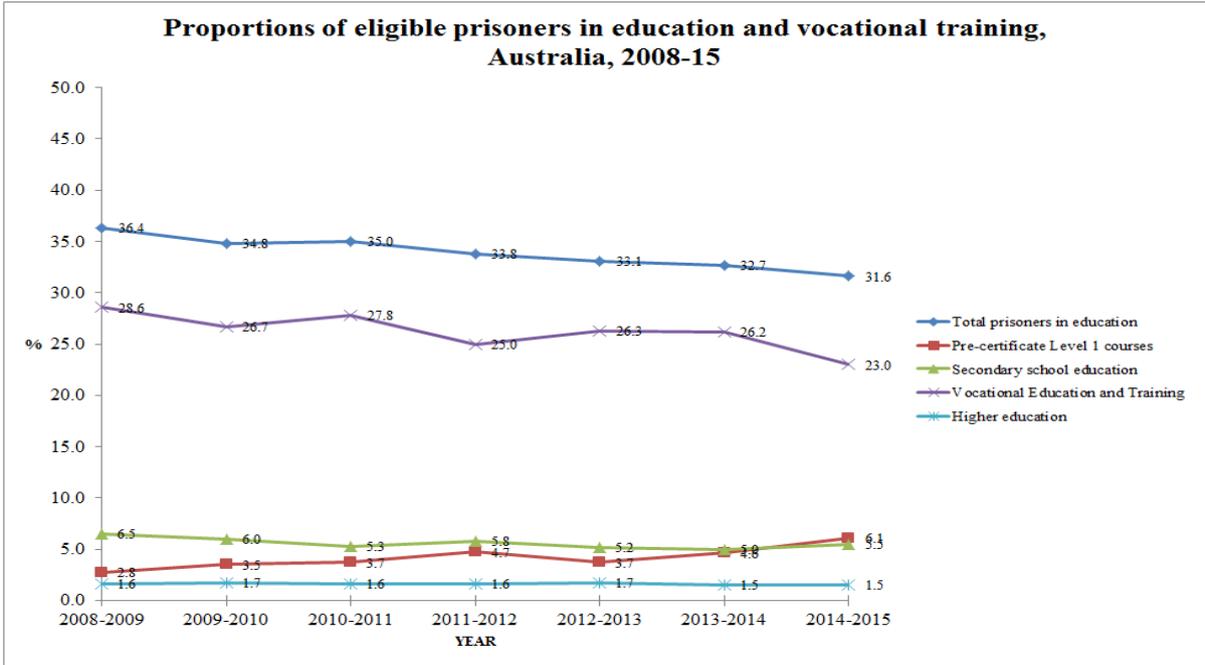


Figure 10: Proportions of eligible prisoners in education and vocational training, Australia, 2008-15

2.01 Jurisdictional differences

During the period 2008–15 jurisdictional participation rates varied between 84.6 per cent in the ACT, to 22 per cent in the Northern Territory. Other jurisdictional averages over this period were 51.9 per cent in SA, 36.4 per cent in Victoria, 33.8 per cent in WA, 33.6 per cent in NSW, 26.8 per cent in Queensland, and 23.5 per cent in Tasmania (see graph 23 for details). However some caution is required when making comparisons between jurisdictions, as differences in participation rates in part reflect jurisdictional differences in how *eligibility* is defined, with consequent inflationary or deflationary effects on reported rates — for example, in South Australia all remandees, that is around 35 per cent of the total prison population, are excluded as ineligible,¹¹ in NSW approximately 15 per cent of all prisoners are categorised as ineligible due to various factors,¹² whereas in Western Australia *all* prisoners are deemed eligible.

Rates of participation may also in part reflect the counting measure used to calculate the number of individual prisoners engaged in education over a year. For instance the percentage

¹¹ In past ROGS publications SA has excluded all remand prisoners, currently 40%, as ineligible. This is now under review. Pers comm, Mike Reynolds, Snr Information Consultant, SA Corrective Services 29.4.16.

¹² In NSW, prisoners in crisis and detox units, medical units, segregation and protection units, reception and induction units, some remand units, and with sentences of less than 3 months are counted as ineligible for education.

rates provided by jurisdictions in Victoria, WA, Tasmania and NT are based on the number of people in education and/or training on a single day as a proportion of the number of eligible people in custody on that day, Queensland Corrections counts the distinct number of eligible prisoners participating in education for the 12 months of the year as a percentage, and the percentage rates reported by the other jurisdictions are based on an average of the proportion of eligible prisoners enrolled on the first day of each month for the 12 months of the year (or, in the case NSW, 10 months). For these reasons, all rates reported in the ROGS tables with the exception of Queensland should be considered indicative.¹³

There is also a need for caution with respect to comparable rates of participation in the secondary school stream. In contrast to the juvenile correctional system where high school curricula are required to be taught, secondary school subjects are rarely taught in adult prisons. Instead, the focus is on 'adult basic education' geared to the learning preferences, life experiences, and interests of adult learners or, at a more advanced level, the Tertiary Preparation Program (TPP) made available in distance education mode by a number of universities. In NSW the 'basic education' course is a TAFE NSW Training Package called Access to Education Training and Employment (AEET), in WA and Victoria it is the Certificates of General Education for Adults (CGEA), in SA it is the Education and Skills Development course, in the ACT it is the Foundation Skills Training Package, and in Queensland it is Core Skills for Education and Training (CSET) and also Foundation Skills under the Certificate 3 Guarantee. Each of these broadly comparable certificated programs includes units of competency in literacy, language, numeracy and communication skills, generic employability skills and some vocational units. However, enrolment in such units is variously counted — in the secondary school education stream by Corrective Services NSW, and in the vocational stream by the correctional services of WA, Victoria, SA and Tasmania. There are also jurisdictional differences in whether the TTP is counted in the secondary school or higher education stream.

2.02 Data provided in Annual Reports

In addition to RoGS, prisoner participation in education and training is recorded in the Annual Report published by each jurisdiction. Some jurisdictions also include numbers of unit enrolments and completions (see Appendix 1 for details). The report published by Corrective Services NSW is perhaps the most comprehensive. In addition to the percentage of overall participation in education, it includes the number of initial Literacy and Numeracy assessments conducted and the proportion of enrolled prisoners assessed, the number of TAFE NSW enrolments per course and in total, the number and percentage of target groups in education, the number of unit and certificate completions including in distance education, and the number of traineeships commenced and completed and the percentage of completions.

The WA Annual Report includes number and percentage of Aboriginal prisoners participating in education, overall number of enrolments and completion rates, enrolments in tertiary courses, and traineeship enrolments and completion rates. The number of prisoners provided with employment guidance and employment assistance is also included. The Queensland Annual Report includes the number of enrolments in Vocational Education and Training short courses, Literacy and Numeracy courses, Foundation-to-Certificate 3 vocational courses and tertiary courses, as well as the number of participants in each stage of the Pathways2Employment program.

The SA Annual Report includes the number of enrolments and the number and percentage of completions. The Tasmanian Annual Report includes the number of nominal TasTAFE hours delivered in prisons. The report for Corrections Victoria is limited to education participation as a percentage of all eligible prisoners. The NT Annual Report includes the number of prisoners who commenced a course and the number of Vocational Education and Training and

¹³ For instance Corrections Victoria bases their rates of participation on snapshot data recorded on the last day of June, while Corrective Services NSW averages out enrolments over a 10-month period that excludes December and January. See also Vocational education and training for adult prisoners and offenders in Australia: Research readings (ed.) Susan Dawe. NCVET, Australian Government, 2007, p. 117

Statement of Attainment credentials awarded, plus data on the number of prisoners participating as paid or volunteer workers and the number of participating employers in the Sentenced to a Job program. Data provided in the ACT report include the number of units and certificates completed in each Vocational Education and Training course and the number of units and certificates completed in each of the four streams reported in RoGS.

2.03 General comments on education and training delivery and other matters

In five of the eight jurisdictions, education and training are delivered by a combination of external and correctional Registered Training Organisation (RTO) providers, while in the three other jurisdictions, education and training are the responsibility of a private provider under contract (see Appendix 1). TAFE institutes dominate the external provider market; however education and training can also be delivered by organisations other than TAFE such as Adult Community Colleges or employer organisations.

In all jurisdictions, prisoner participation in education programs is voluntary with the exception of some employment-related courses mandated for Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) reasons, such as 'white card', forklift, or safe food handling.

Jurisdictional responses to survey questions (tabled in Appendix 2) indicate that initial Literary/Language/Numeracy (LLN) assessments of prisoner skills against standardised national levels are widely conducted, though not all prisoners are assessed, and all jurisdictions deliver literacy and numeracy courses and vocational education and training courses (VET) at pre-certificate and certificate 1–3 levels. In some jurisdictions, some vocational courses are available at Certificate 4 and Diploma levels.

'Tickets' and certificated Training Packages that are widely available include some or most of the following: Workplace Hygiene (food handling), Ticket Construction Induction, Ticket Forklift, WHS General, Ticket Dogging, First Aid, Transport and Distribution (warehousing), Horticulture, Forestry, Electrical, Engineering, Hospitality, Laundry and Cleaning Services, Textiles (clothing production), Business Studies, Small Motor Maintenance, and Information Technology.

In all jurisdictions many if not most vocational courses are linked to specific prison industries operating in one or more of the prisons; two of the eight jurisdictions run a traineeship program, and three jurisdictions employ employment liaison officers.

Correctional services in South Australia and in Victoria run pre release centres. In South Australia a literacy support program is provided by community volunteers for both pre and post release clients, and Education and Employment Officers assist exiting prisoners with job placement or enrolments in external vocational courses.

2.04 Support for further education

In all jurisdictions, prisoners undertaking higher education courses do so through distance education arrangements that include course materials being sent by post or down loaded by education staff, as prisoner access to Internet and email is prohibited or made available in very limited circumstances. Exceptions are in Tasmania, where prisoners in minimum security have supervised access to the Internet at preprogramed times, and in the ACT, where there is limited access to on-line education courses including university courses through CyberSource Prison PCs, facilitated by education staff. To date the ACT is the only jurisdiction allowing prisoners to have up to 5 email addresses to send and receive correspondence.

The University of Southern Queensland is currently addressing impediments to wider on-line learning opportunities through an Australian government-funded project, Making the

Connection, which takes digital technologies that don't require Internet access into correctional centres, The project enables prisoners to enrol in a suite of pre-tertiary and undergraduate programs including the Tertiary Preparation program, the Indigenous Higher Education Pathway Program and three diploma programs (in science, arts and business administration). A version of the University of Southern Queensland's learning management system has been installed onto the education server of participating correctional centres. The second stage of the project will see notebook computers preloaded with course materials, allocated to participating prisoners.

As of April 2016, the project had been deployed at seventeen correctional centres in Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania, with 622 enrolments, and negotiations were underway for further rollout to Victoria, New South Wales, the ACT, Northern Territory and South Australia. It is expected that the technologies and processes developed for the project will enable the delivery of higher education to other cohorts without access to reliable Internet access.¹⁴

2.05 Prisoner-student wage policies

In all jurisdictions, as already noted, prisoners engaged in full-time education are paid above the unemployment benefit wage at various levels: at levels 4–6 in NSW (and up to level 9 if participating in an Intensive Learning Centre program), at levels 1–3 in the services stream in Queensland, at level 1 in the ACT, at levels 3 and higher in Western Australia, at level 2 in Victoria, at level 3 in the Northern Territory and at the 'high' rate of the service industries allowance in South Australia. In addition, prisoners attending an education or criminogenic program as part of their case management plan during work hours, who perform in a satisfactory manner in both work and education/criminogenic program, do not lose any part of their wages for that day.

Prisoners engaged in a traineeship in the two jurisdictions where this program is available are also remunerated: at level 7 in NSW, and at level 3 and above in Western Australia.

2.1 Prisoner education and vocational training in NSW, 2008–15

The average proportion of eligible prisoners enrolled in education programs in this period reflected the national trend, with 33.6 per cent of eligible prisoners enrolled. Participation rates in vocational education reflected the national pattern with an average participation rate of 22.7 per cent, and low proportions, similar to national averages, were recorded for pre-certificate 1 and higher education courses. However the rate of participation in secondary school education at 13.2 per cent was nearly twice the national average, an effect largely due to a jurisdictional decision to count participation in the Access to Education Training and Employment Training Package in the 'secondary school' stream, whereas in other jurisdictions equivalent courses are counted as vocational. The following graph shows the proportions of eligible prisoners in education and vocational training, in NSW, 2008–15.

¹⁴ An application has been submitted to extend 'Making the Connection' to November 2017. By this time, the project will be in at least 28 correctional centres and two remote Indigenous communities. A transition working group is moving towards incorporating the processes and technologies of the project into business as usual at USQ by the end of the project. Personal communication from Helen Farley, project manager, 28.04.2016.

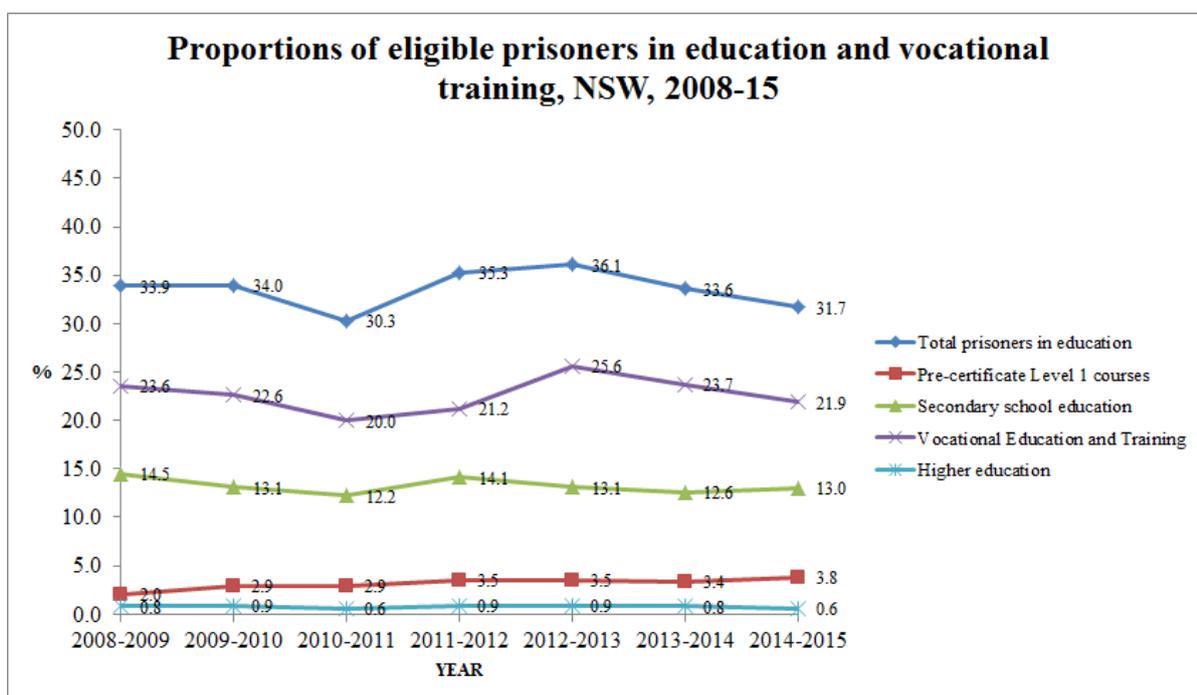


Figure 11: Proportions of eligible prisoners in education and vocational training, NSW, 2008-15

Corrective Services NSW recently realigned prisoner education and training from its program division to industries and employment, under a reformulated strategic framework that sees education reporting to the director of prison industries. In-prison education courses include basic adult education at pre-certificate 1 and certificate 1–3 levels, vocational courses at certificate 1–4 levels, courses at diploma levels, and industry specific short certificates. All courses are nationally accredited and credentials state the national qualification achieved without reference to a correctional context. Prisoner Literacy and Numeracy skills are assessed soon after reception. A wide range of traineeships linked to specific industries is available.

Data on education assessments, enrolments and completions are entered with all other prisoner data on an Offender Integrated Management System as well as on an AVETMISS-compliant credentialing system maintained by the Adult Education and Vocational Training Institute (AEVTI), the RTO responsible for prisoner education. Comprehensive education data are also tabled in the Annual Report which includes percentage of overall participation in education, number of initial assessments conducted and the proportion of enrolled prisoners assessed, the number of TAFE NSW enrolments per course and in total, the number and percentage of target groups in education, the number of unit and certificate completions including in distance education, and the number of traineeships commenced and completed and the percentage of completions.

Delivery of in-prison education courses is by a combination of AEVTI and external providers, including primarily TAFE but also adult community providers and other Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). Funding is allocated from the correctional budget. As a general rule, enrolment in education is restricted to prisoners with a minimum 3 month sentence, though some education is available to long term remandees. Vocational courses are linked to centre-specific industries, and some courses have eligibility requirements.

Education needs and pathways are addressed in prisoner case plans but participation in education is not mandatory. Specific target groups include Aboriginal prisoners and prisoners with low literacy levels. High need prisoners with a minimum 6–12 month sentence can be referred to one of the full time Intensive Learning Centres that deliver intensive classroom-based education at Certificate 1 and 2 levels. Literacy and numeracy outcomes for this program are encouraging.

Prisoners engaged in full time education are paid a wage at levels 4–6 (and up to level 9 if participating in an Intensive Learning Centre program) from the industries budget. In addition, prisoners attending education as part of their case management plan during work hours, whose

performance is satisfactory, do not lose any part of their wages for that day. Prisoners participating in a traineeship program are paid at level 7.

Current performance measures for education include:

- Inmates participating in education and training with a core skills assessment (target 100 per cent)
- Inmates participating in education and training with an individual plan for education and employment (target 100 per cent for inmates with a sentence of more than 6 months)
- Number of sessions an inmate participates in education (target minimum 20 sessions).

Work release options are available, though participation numbers are small. Two programs - the Gundi housing construction program for Aboriginal inmates delivered in a rural correctional centre and the Heavy Vehicle Driving Licence (HVDL) program — are directed at employment outcomes in areas of the job market where skills shortages have created a demand, however again participation numbers are small. In the period April 2013–October 2015, 99 prisoners participated in the Gundi program. Of the 53 released in this period, 27 gained employment and 2 engaged in further education. In the period September 2012 to September 2015, 152 prisoners completed the HVDL program; of the 130 released in this period, 101 gained employment.

Some informal post-release employment placements are facilitated at individual centres through arrangements and partnerships with local community businesses and organisations. However, as part of the current strategic plan, a framework is to be developed for post-release employment placement and ongoing support provided by external agencies under partnership agreements.

Although there is an evaluation framework, no education, training or employment program evaluations have been completed to date, though the HVDL program is currently being evaluated.¹⁵

2.2 Prisoner education and vocational training in Victoria, 2008–15

The overall proportion of eligible prisoners enrolled in education and vocational training programs in Victoria in the period 2008–15 is shown in the graph below. The overall proportion of eligible prisoners enrolled in education programs in the period 2008–15 reflected the national trend, with an average of 36.4 per cent of eligible prisoners enrolled. There was a high participation rate in vocational education, reflecting the fact that participation in the Certificates of General Education is recorded in this stream. Participation rates in pre-certificate 1, secondary school education and higher education were under 5 per cent each year in the period.

¹⁵ However an internal review of education delivered in CSNSW centres has just been completed and sweeping changes are being introduced to commence in 2017. Changes include outsourcing all education delivery except in the 4 Intensive Learning Centres, reduction of education staff by approximately half, replacement of most teacher positions by coordinator and assessment officer positions, and more ambitious targets for literacy, Numeracy and Vocational unit completions.

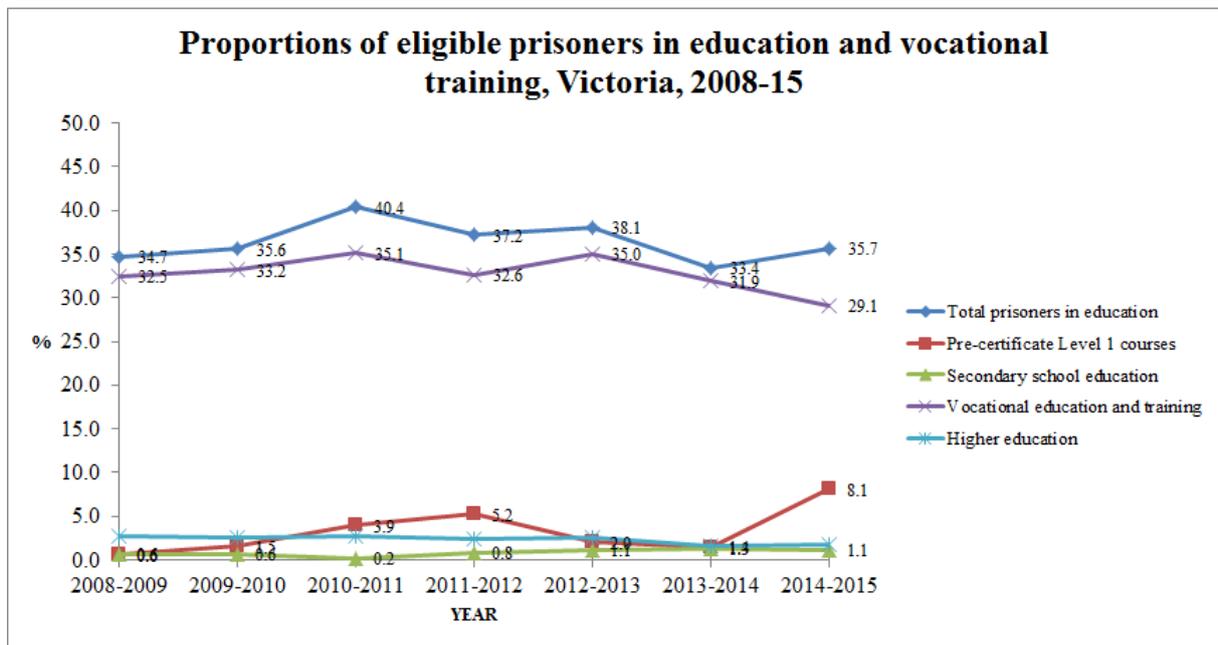


Figure 12: Proportions of eligible prisoners in education and vocational training, Victoria, 2008-15

All prison education in Victoria is outsourced to TAFE, and data on education assessments, enrolments and completions are maintained on the data base of each of the contracted TAFE providers responsible for delivery and for maintaining compliance with AVETMISS, not on the Integrated Justice Information System (IJIS). The correctional data system is thus fragmented. Education information provided in the Annual Report is limited to participation as a percentage of all eligible prisoners.

Corrections Victoria has developed a strategic framework for prisoner-based education, training and employment with key objectives being to improve outcomes to support successful rehabilitation and reduce reoffending by improving social and economic participation post release.

In-prison education courses include basic adult education at pre-certificate 1 and certificate 1–3 levels, vocational courses at certificate 1–4 levels, courses at diploma levels, and industry-specific short certificates. Certificates in hospitality, kitchen operations and commercial cookery are offered at all locations; other courses such as horticulture and cleaning operations depend on the TAFE provider. All courses are nationally accredited. Prisoner literacy, language and numeracy skills are assessed soon after reception, though not all prisoners are assessed. Distance education courses are also available. There is no traineeship program.

Some courses are restricted to sentenced prisoners or available in only some prisons, and some courses have eligibility requirements. Traineeships linked to specific industries are not available.

Target groups for priority access to education include prisoners with dual disadvantage (defined as prisoners who have not completed Year 12/or equivalent and who were unemployed before coming into prison), Aboriginal prisoners and prisoners with low literacy levels. There are specific courses for Aboriginal prisoners, young male prisoners, female prisoners and prisoners with low literacy levels. English as a Second Language (ESL) courses are offered in all prisons. Education needs and pathways are addressed in prisoner case plans but participation in education is not mandatory.

Funding to TAFE institutes to deliver in-prison education is allocated from the correctional budget. Prisoners undertaking full-time education receive payment at level 2 rates during the TAFE academic year, however during semester breaks and TAFE College close-downs they are expected to work to receive this rate of pay. If unemployed during these periods, they receive the unemployed rate of pay. Employed prisoners undertaking part-time education are paid their full daily working rate on the days they attend half a day at industry and half a day at education.

Current performance measures for education include:

- Units of competency completion
- Per cent of target groups enrolled
- Average class size
- ATSI specific delivery
- Data supply.

As mentioned in the section on in-prison employment, the only program to integrate education, training and post release employment is the Industry Skills Centre Program available at 8 locations and funded to support a minimum of 120 prisoners. The program is designed to provide on the job training and develop employment skills with additional pre- and post-release support and employment placement options. A service provider is contracted to provide the post-release support and job placement component. The program was recently evaluated by Edith Cowan University but this has yet to be made public.

Work release options are not available, however post-release employment support by external organisations (e.g. employer, NGO, Not-For-Profit) is available at most prisons.

No education, training or employment program evaluations to date have been made publicly available.

2.3 Prisoner education and vocational training in Queensland, 2008–15

In Queensland in the period 2008–15 an average of 26.8 per cent of eligible prisoners participated in education and training, slightly lower than the national average. The highest participation rates were in vocational education and training at an average of 17.8 per cent of eligible prisoners. Participation rates in pre-certificate, secondary school education and higher education were relatively stable, and did not exceed 10 per cent at any point over this time.

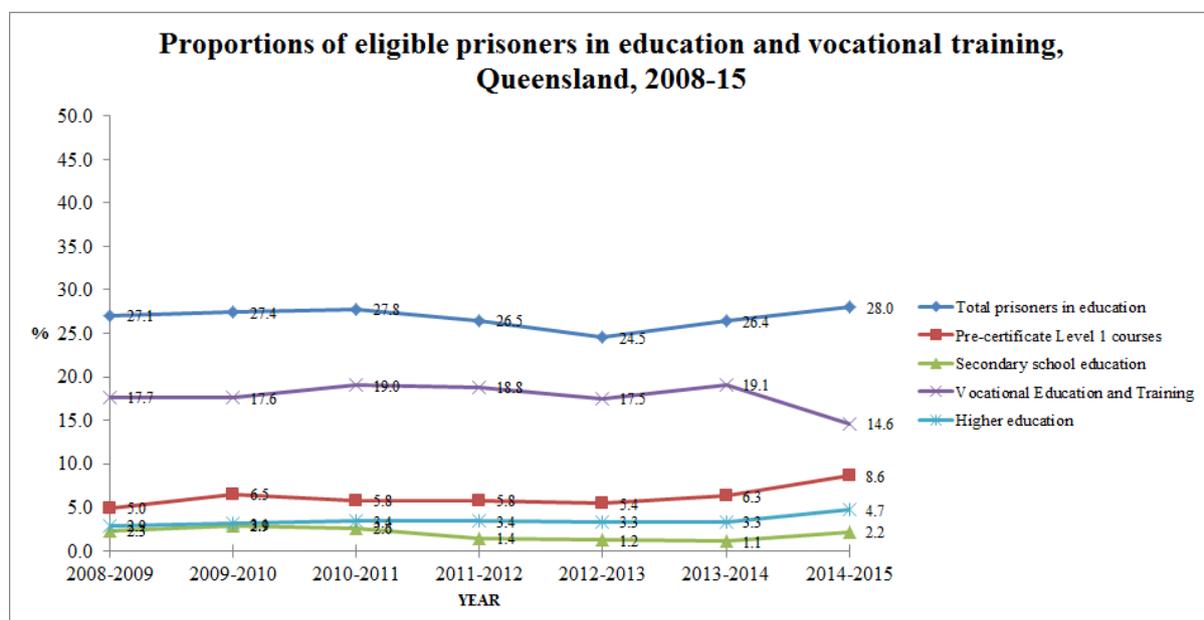


Figure 13: Proportions of eligible prisoners in education and vocational training, Queensland, 2008-15

The Queensland Government is a signatory to the National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training for Adult Prisoners and Offenders in Australia 2001 and participated in the development of its implementation plan. Queensland Corrective Services has a procedure for prisoner education separate to the model for re-entry services now in development. Key objectives are to provide education and vocational education and training that contribute to

employment and learning pathways that can support successful re-integration in the community.

Data on education assessments, enrolments and completions are included with other prisoner data on the Integrated Offender Management System (IOMS). Data on education provided in the Annual Report include number of enrolments in Vocational Education and Training short courses, Literacy and Numeracy courses, Foundation to Certificate 3 vocational courses and tertiary courses, as well as the number of participants in each stage of the Pathways2Employment program.

In-prison education courses include basic adult education at pre-certificate 1 and certificate 1-3 levels, vocational courses at certificate 1-3 levels, courses at diploma levels, and industry-specific short certificates such as forklift licence, food handling, first aid. However, the focus in Queensland is on Foundation and Certificate levels 1-2. All courses are nationally accredited. Prisoner literacy, language and numeracy skills are assessed soon after reception. There is no traineeship program. English as a Second Language (ESL) courses are not offered.

Queensland Corrections is also a participant in the University of Southern Queensland's 'Making the Connection' university preparation program developed specifically for prisoners, which makes a range of courses available from a custom-designed USQ server.

Some courses are restricted to sentenced prisoners or available in only some prisons, and some courses have eligibility requirements. Specific groups targeted for education include Aboriginal prisoners, young adult prisoners, prisoners with low literacy levels, and prisoners with sentences longer than 3 months. Education needs and vocational training pathways are addressed in prisoner case plans but participation in education is not mandatory.

Delivery of in-prison education courses is by external providers, primarily TAFE, with non-teaching correctional education officers determining service needs and co-ordinating service provision. Funding for courses at Foundation and Certificate 1-3 levels including in prisons is provided directly by the Queensland Government under a 'Certificate 3 guarantee' scheme. Limited funding to provide short vocational courses to support correctional service industries is allocated from the correctional budget. A tender to provide vocational education and training from 2016 to 2019 was called in March 2016.

Prior to 2013, measures for education and training were set by monthly targets for all correctional centres based on the amount of overall contracted delivery funded by Queensland Corrective Services in partnership with Department of Education, Training and Employment. Measures included annual hours of curriculum delivery (AHC) and successful completion rates. In 2014/15 Queensland Corrective Services had an agency level performance target of 32 per cent of eligible prisoners participating on education. Site based minimum delivery levels are developed for each correctional centre to ensure agency performance levels are achieved.

Prisoners engaged in full time education are paid a wage at levels 1-3 in the services stream of correctional industries. In addition, prisoners attending education as part of their case management plan during work hours, whose performance is satisfactory, do not lose any part of their wages for that day.

Prison industry-based programs offer support for employment at all prisons, pre-release vocational counselling is available, and post-release employment providers establish partnerships with specific employers to assist in job placements. There is no work release program, however the large-scale Pathways2Employment program provides pre-release support to enable prisoners to become job ready. As already mentioned in the section on employment, co-ordinators conduct a skills audit, establish employment and training directions, and make referrals to Education Officers for training whilst in custody. Providers engage with participants on release and assist with job search activity, coordinate further training with external agencies, maintain links with job provider services, support ex-prisoners to obtain transport for the purpose of employment, and maintain contact and support ex-

prisoners whilst employed for a minimum period of 13 weeks.¹⁶ In the period 2000–14, 29,744 prisoners participated in stage 1, while 7,458 ex prisoners participated in stage 2 and 5,892 ex prisoners participated in stage 3 of this program.

In addition to the Pathways2Employment program, successful employability and core skills outcomes have been reported for:

- the Integrated VET Program whereby prisoners receive on-the-job training in prison industries to develop work skills and behaviour and gain formal, recognised training under the Australian Qualifications Framework,
- vocational training in building and construction, hospitality, transport and distribution and engineering, and
- a literacy and numeracy curriculum that is contextualised to support vocational training.

A study has reviewed the contribution of vocational education to reducing recidivism in Queensland (see Callan V & Gardner J, 'The role of VET in recidivism in Australia', in Dawe S (ed), *Vocational education and training for adult prisoners and offenders in Australia: research readings*. Adelaide: NCVER: 27–36, 2007 <http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1789.html>). This study, based on over 1,800 people who returned to Queensland correctional custody within three years, looked at the links between prisoners' participation in VET and their chances of returning to prison. It found that 32 per cent of prisoners who did not participate in VET before their initial release returned to custody within two years, while only 23 per cent of VET participants returned. (see also *AICrime Reduction Matters*, Australian Institute of Criminology no. 65, January 2008)

Other reviews of the Pathways2Employment program and its earlier manifestations as Advance2Work and Prisoner Employment Assistance Program include:

- Cox R. and Carlin A., 'Review into the Delivery of Vocational Education and Training in Queensland Corrections', Queensland Department of Corrective Services, 1999
- Callan V. and Banks N., 'Evaluation of an Employment Assistance Service for Prisoners Post Release', 2001
- Callan V., 'Final report: Pre-release post-release employment assistance program for prisoners', Queensland Department of Employment and Training, Brisbane, 2004
- Callan, V.J., and Gardner, J. 'Vocational education and training provision and recidivism in Queensland correctional institutions', National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide, 2005 www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1592.html
- Callan V. and Gardner J., 'Evaluation of the Employment Assistance Program (PREAP)', 2006
- QCS and Queensland Dept Employment Economic Development and Innovation, 'Report of three year internal review Advance2Work program,' March 2010.

2.4 Prisoner education and vocational training in West Australia, 2008–15

The following graph shows the proportions of eligible prisoners engaged in education and training in West Australia. In the period 2008–15 the average education participation rate for eligible prisoners was 33.8 per cent, however this average masks a steady decline from almost 50 per cent in 2008 to approximately 25 per cent in 2015. As all prisoners in WA are counted as eligible for education, the decrease is partly an artifact of the overall increase in the prison population, as there was little change in the volume of participants. Participation rates in other education streams were below 1.5 per cent over the period.

¹⁶ The Pathways2Employment program is being discontinued as of June 2016 when a new statewide model of re-entry service delivery will be introduced.

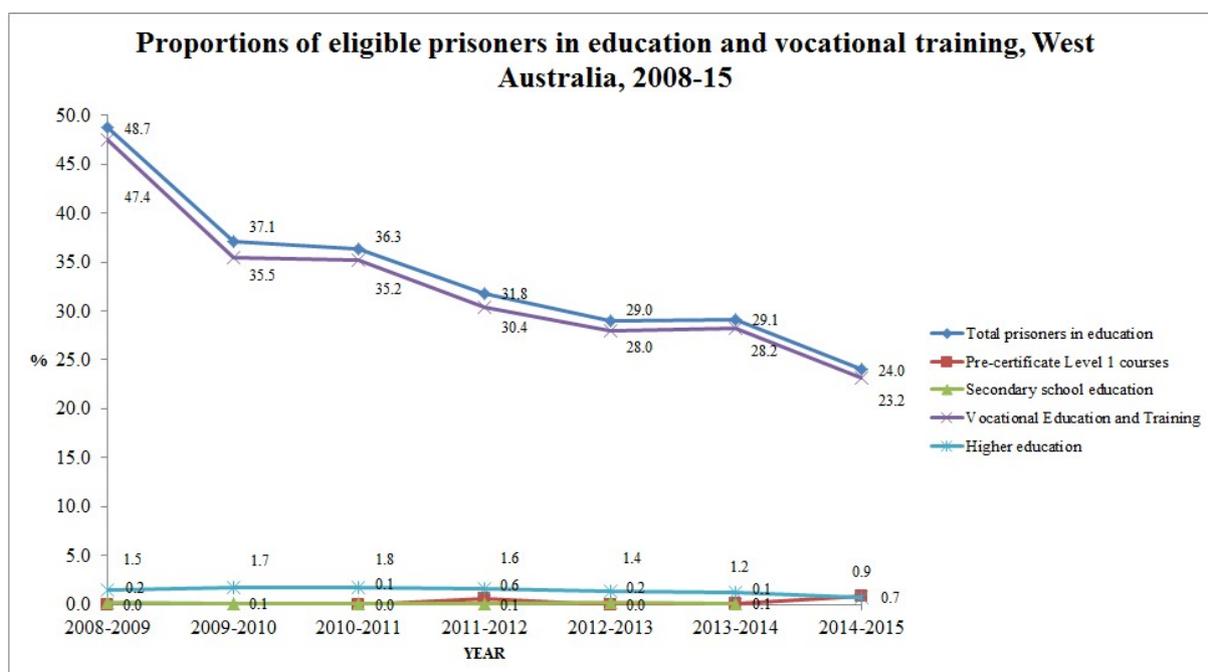


Figure 14: Proportions of eligible prisoners in education and vocational training, West Australia, 2008–15

The low participation rate in secondary school education reflects the decision to categorise participation in the Certificates of General Education course as vocational, in line with most other jurisdictions. The only courses included in the ‘school’ stream are enrolments in Department of Education High School correspondence courses, made available to prisoners in the most remote correctional centres.

Western Australia Corrections has developed a strategic framework for prisoner-based education, training and employment with key objectives to assist prisoners to acquire, develop, practice and apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to take responsible control of their own lives.

Data on education assessments, enrolments and completions are not included on the integrated offender data management system. Instead, a separate education data base compliant with AVETMISS is maintained. Education data tabled in the Annual Report covers the number and percentage of Aboriginal prisoners participating in education, overall number of enrolments and completion rates, enrolments in tertiary courses, and traineeship enrolments and completion rates. The number of prisoners provided with employment guidance and employment assistance is also reported.

In-prison education courses include basic adult education at pre-certificate 1 and certificate 1–3 levels, vocational courses at certificate 1–4 levels, courses at diploma levels, and industry-specific short certificates. Access to on-line education courses including university courses is facilitated by education staff. In addition, WA Corrections is a participant in the University of Southern Queensland’s ‘Making the Connection’ university preparation program developed specifically for prisoners, which makes a range of courses available from a custom-designed USQ server.

All education and training is nationally accredited. Prisoner literacy, language and numeracy skills are assessed soon after reception. English as a Second Language courses are offered at all prisons. A traineeship program is available, with traineeships linked to specific industries, and peer prisoner literacy tutors and vocational counseling are also available.

While some courses are available in only some prisons, and some courses have eligibility requirements, no category of prisoner is automatically excluded from education. In practice, however, sentenced prisoners are given priority when places are restricted, and education in remand centres is made available on a request basis only.

Education needs and pathways are addressed in prisoner case plans but participation in education is not mandatory. Specific prisoner groups targeted for education include Aboriginal

prisoners and prisoners with low literacy levels. Priority cohorts also include young adult prisoners, female prisoners, prisoners with a disability, and non-English-speaking prisoners. There are specific education courses for these cohorts.

Delivery of in-prison education courses is by a combination of internal and external providers, including primarily TAFE but also adult community providers and other RTOs. Funding is allocated from the correctional budget and the Commonwealth. Prisoners engaged in full-time education commence at level 3 and can earn up to level 1 if they take on certain responsibilities. In addition, prisoners attending education as part of their case management plan during work hours, whose performance is satisfactory, do not lose any part of their wages for that day.

Current performance measures for correctional education include:

- Per cent of prisoners engaged,
- Per cent of at risk (literacy) prisoners engaged,
- Per cent of Indigenous prisoners engaged, and
- Per cent of women prisoners engaged.

Education, training, in-prison and post-release employment are managed under the one umbrella in a coordinated statewide approach. There are industry-based education and training programs in all prisons, and prison-based programs support employment placement. Industry training programs are linked to labour market skills shortages. Employment placement support is provided by arrangement with external organisations (e.g. employer, NGO, and Not for Profit). Work release options to work for employers or organisations in the community while in prison are available.

Specific employment programs already mentioned in the section on employment include the Prisoner Employment Program, the Vocational Training and Employment Centre Fresh Start program which provides Aboriginal inmates at Roebourne Regional Prison with practical training and a pathway to employment in the mining industry with Fortescue Metals Group, and the Diggers Rest Horsemanship Clinic at Wyndham Work Camp which in 2014/15 provided a pathway to station work with horses and cattle, with the first group of participants all securing employment. In addition, the Fairbridge Bindjareb Project (a collaboration between corrections, Bis Industries and Fairbridge WA) provides a pathway from 14 weeks of supported training at the

Karnet Prison Camp to a guaranteed job in the mining industry in the Pinjarra region for those assessed as job ready. In the period 2010–15, there were 77 participants. An unpublished preliminary review of the project, completed in 2015, found that 80 per cent of the participants proceeded into employment. The project has funding until July 2018.

WA Corrections collects a range of data to monitor prisoner education outcomes. A study using five years of linked prison history, correctional education and income support payments data found that:

- ex-prisoners who have ‘upskilled’ in prison were less likely to commit more serious offences over time;
- the more classes prisoners successfully completed, the less likely they were to reoffend;
- ex-prisoners who successfully completed classes in prison were more likely to remain in the community for longer;
- the more classes ex-prisoners completed successfully in prison, the less time they subsequently spent on unemployment benefits, and
- prisoners who ‘upskilled’ in prison ceased receiving income support sooner.¹⁷

¹⁷ ‘Study in prison reduces recidivism and welfare dependence: A case study from Western Australia 2005–2010,’ Margaret Giles, Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice, Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology, 501-520, May 2016 http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current_series/tandi/501-520/tandi514.htm

2.5 Prisoner education and vocational training in South Australia, 2008–15

As the graph below shows, there was substantial fluctuation in SA participation rates in education during the period 2008–15. On average, 51.9 per cent of eligible prisoners were enrolled in some form of education, the highest participation rates being in pre-certificate 1 and vocational courses. However there was a substantial drop in vocational participation in 2011–12, while participation in pre-certificate 1 courses increased from 13.8 per cent in 2008–09 to 31.1 per cent in 2013–14. The participation rate in higher education averaged below one per cent in the period.

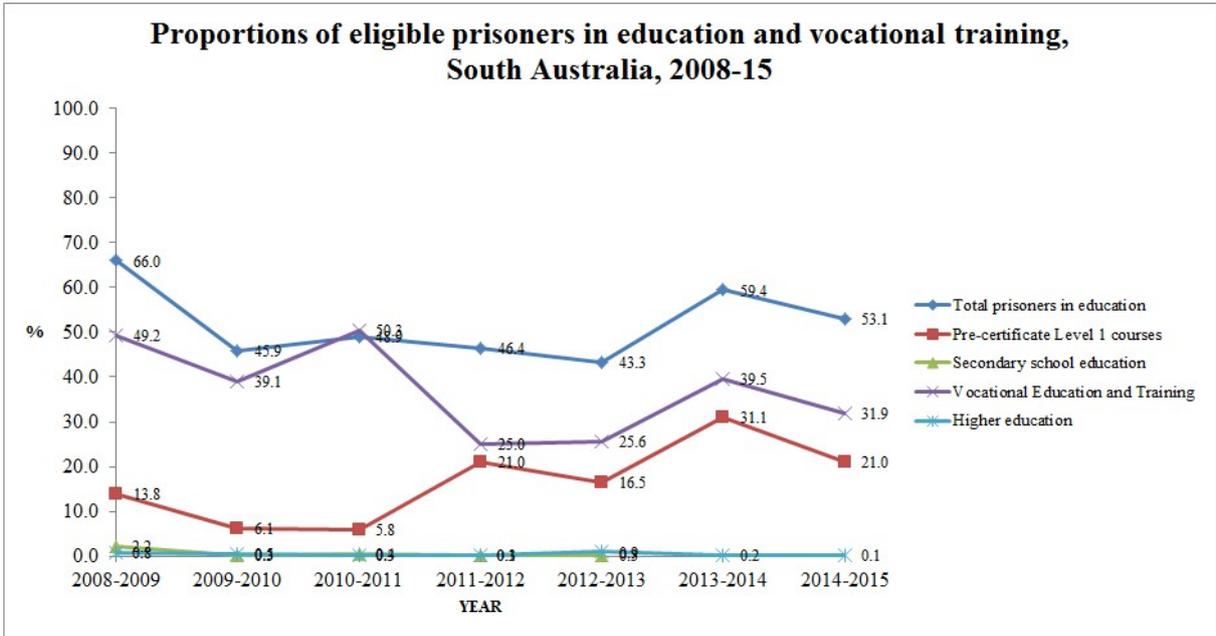


Figure 15: Proportions of eligible prisoners in education and vocational training, South Australia, 2008-15

The drop in vocational participation between 2010/11 and 2013/14 has been explained as due to a change in operational practice. Until 2011/11 a skilled Vocational Education and Training practitioner visited each prison to enroll and assess prisoners trained in vocational skills by industry officers in prison workshops. When he left the department there was a rapid drop in numbers. The current model of operation is seeing a considerable expansion in vocational education and training through external RTOs, such as TAFESA and some private providers.

The high rate of participation reported in the pre-certificate 1 stream reflects use of the Education and Skills Development course at Foundation level to prepare prisoners for participation in criminogenic programs. Prisoners enrolled at Certificate 1 level for the same purpose are counted as participating in the vocational stream. The only course included in the 'school' stream in this period was the SACE (South Australian Certificate of Education) delivered through external study.

Some data on prisoner education participation are included in the Justice Information System (JIS), however most prisoner education data is managed on VETtrak, an AVETMISS student management system that has no interface with JIS. Data on education provided in the Annual Report includes the number of prisoner enrolments and the number and percentage of completions.

South Australian Corrections is currently reviewing education and vocational training policies and practices, and has recently developed a strategic framework for prisoner-based education, training and employment designed around the desistance from crime literature. The department has endorsed the view that prisoners are more likely to desist from reengaging in criminal activity if they have skills to gain employment and undertake everyday tasks required to function in society. Prisoners are prioritised for education and training based on individual assessment that identifies literacy and numeracy needs as well as skill gaps related to

employment readiness and life skills that will support desistance from re-offending, with a focus on:

- Technical skills
- Literacy and numeracy
- Computer literacy
- Core employment and life skills

A quarterly reporting system of performance measures is maintained. The following groups of prisoners are prioritised under this new model:

- Group 1: Prisoners with low level literacy skills who are required to complete a criminogenic treatment program
- Group 2: Prisoners with low level literacy and numeracy skills who have an identified employment readiness need
- Group 3: Prisoners with functional literacy and numeracy skills who have an identified employment readiness need.

Education is aligned with both prisoner employment and prisoner programs and services, with an increasing emphasis on vocational courses. Courses include basic adult education at pre-certificate 1 and certificate 1–3 levels, vocational courses at certificate 1–4 levels, and industry specific short certificates such as Provide first aid, Excavator certificate, and Forklift licence. Vocational courses include: Certificate II in Hospitality (several different course styles), Certificate II in Women's Studies, Certificate II in Animal Studies, Certificate II in Civil Construction, Certificate II in Horticulture, Certificate II in Bakery, Certificate II in Resources and Infrastructure, Certificate II in Microbusiness. All courses are nationally accredited.

Education needs and pathways are addressed in prisoner case plans but participation in education is not mandatory. Prisoners with a sentence of six months or more are targeted for assessment including literacy, language and numeracy skills to allow resources to be targeted to those who have time to engage in education and training, and peer prisoner literacy tutors are available. There are specific courses for Aboriginal men and prisoners with low literacy. English as a Second Language (ESL) courses are not available. There is no traineeship program.

Some courses are restricted to sentenced prisoners or available in only some prisons (e.g. the Business Training Package is not offered at Remand centres), and some courses have eligibility requirements such as the literacy/numeracy level required or whether the prisoner needs to undertake a criminogenic program.

Delivery of in-prison education courses is by correctional teachers and by external providers, primarily TAFE institutes. Funding is allocated from the correctional budget and from prison budgets.

Prisoners engaged in a full-time education program are paid at the 'high' rate of the daily service industries allowance. Prisoners attending education as part of their case management plan during work hours, who perform satisfactorily, do not lose any part of their wages for that day.

As already mentioned in the employment program section, SA's Prisoner Reintegration Employment Opportunity Program (PREOP), a partnership between BHP Billiton, ODT Australia, Carey Training and the Department for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, used to provide low security prisoners with the opportunity to develop skills and improve their chances to secure employment upon release from prison. By 2014/15, eight PREOP programs had been run; 80 prisoners including 40 Aboriginal prisoners completed the program, and 38 prisoners were employed on a contract basis post-release. However the mining industry has since slowed down and these jobs have dried up. Partnerships with employers / employment agencies for post-release job placement are now very limited.

Some programs at the pre-release centre funded by Corrections and NFP agencies currently

allow prisoners to go off site, and a program for on-site training linked to employment placement support is under consideration.

No education, training or employment program evaluations have been conducted to date.

2.6 Prisoner education and vocational training in Tasmania, 2008–15

The following graph shows the participation of prisoners in Tasmania in education and training.

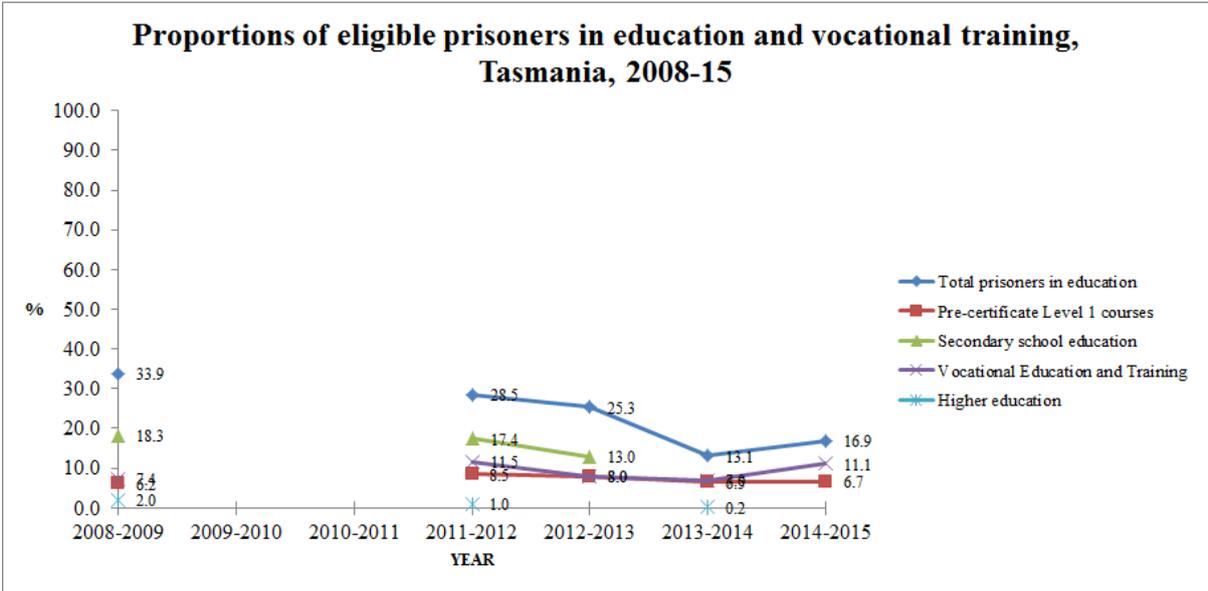


Figure 16: Proportions of eligible prisoners in education and vocational training, Tasmania, 2008-15

For two of the seven years in the period 2008–15, i.e. 2009–10 to 2010–11, there were no published figures for education participation in Tasmania, however for the five reported years, the average participation rate of eligible prisoners was 23.5 per cent. In 2008–09, the participation rate was 33.9 per cent, with 18.3 per cent participating in secondary school education, and less than 10 per cent in any other stream. Similar figures were recorded for 2011–12. However, by 2015 the proportion of eligible prisoners enrolled in education had almost halved. This decline is in part accounted for the introduction of an age cut-off for year 11 and year 12 correspondence courses made available by the Tasmanian Department of Education free of charge, which restricted enrolments to prisoners aged under 19. As of 2016, preparatory programs in Information Technology and Writing Skills are being accessed from the University of Tasmania. Like most jurisdictions, participation in Certificate 1 and 2 literacy and numeracy units delivered by TAFE is counted in the vocational stream.

Tasmanian Corrections is a participant in the University of Southern Queensland’s ‘Making the Connection’ university preparation program developed specifically for prisoners, which makes a range of courses available from a custom-designed USQ server. Currently, prisoners in minimum security have access to the Internet at preprogrammed times which are supervised, and the network allows education officers to switch any inmate computer in any area to the Internet if required, again under supervision. The intention is to move to a ‘White Listing’ of pre-selected and approved Internet sites to reduce or remove the need for supervision.

Corrections Tasmania has developed a strategic framework for prisoner-based education, training and employment with key objectives for prisoners to be work ready on release. Education sits within the Integrated Offender Management unit alongside other sections that include Therapeutic Services, Behavioural Intervention Programs, Prison Industries and Planning and Reintegration. However, while training is integrated with prison employment, education is considered to have a broader compass.

There are currently no formal education performance measures.

Data on education assessments, enrolments and completions are included with other prisoner data on the correctional data management system. Data on education provided in the Annual Report include the number of nominal TasTAFE hours delivered in prisons.

In-prison education courses include basic adult education at pre-certificate and certificate 1–3 levels, vocational courses at certificate 1–3 levels, on-line access to general education and university courses, and industry-specific short certificates. Most courses are nationally accredited. Prisoner literacy, language and numeracy skills are assessed soon after reception. Peer prisoner literacy tutors are available. There is no traineeship program. English as a Second Language courses are not offered.

Vocational subjects are linked to work in a similar industry, training on-site at prisons is linked to post-release employment placement support, and partnerships with employer groups assist placement post release.

Some courses are restricted to sentenced prisoners or available in only some prisons, and some courses have eligibility requirements. Priority cohorts include Aboriginal prisoners, young adult prisoners, and female prisoners. Specific courses are available for prisoners with low literacy levels.

Delivery of in-prison education courses is by a combination of internal and external providers, including primarily TAFE but also adult community providers and other RTOs. Funding is allocated from the corrections budget and prison budgets. Employment programs are funded by individual prison and departmental funds.

Education needs and pathways are addressed in prisoner case plans but participation in education is not mandatory. Part time students receive \$27.50, full time students are paid \$37.50, and prisoners engaged in work and a work-related vocational course receive \$52.50. Employed prisoners undertaking a vocational course related to their employment get an additional \$5.00 per week.

Currently there is no post release employment support, however a program integrating education, training and post-release employment support that involves vocational training, intensive job searching and post release follow up is in development. Employment placement is facilitated by prison-based industry programs, work release options while in prison to work for an employer or organisation in the community, and agreements with external job providers/job placement agencies to support prisoner employment post release.

No education, training or employment program evaluations have been conducted to date.

2.7 Prisoner education and vocational training in the ACT, 2008–15

As the following graph shows, from 2009–10, the year the ACT prison began operating, to 2014–15, the average participation rate of eligible prisoners in education was a very high 84.6 per cent. Though participation in vocational courses declined from 84.8 per cent to 51.4 per cent, there was a corresponding increase in participation in secondary school education from 15.2 per cent to 62.4 per cent, and an increase in participation in pre-certificate 1 courses from 1.7 per cent to 21.6 per cent.

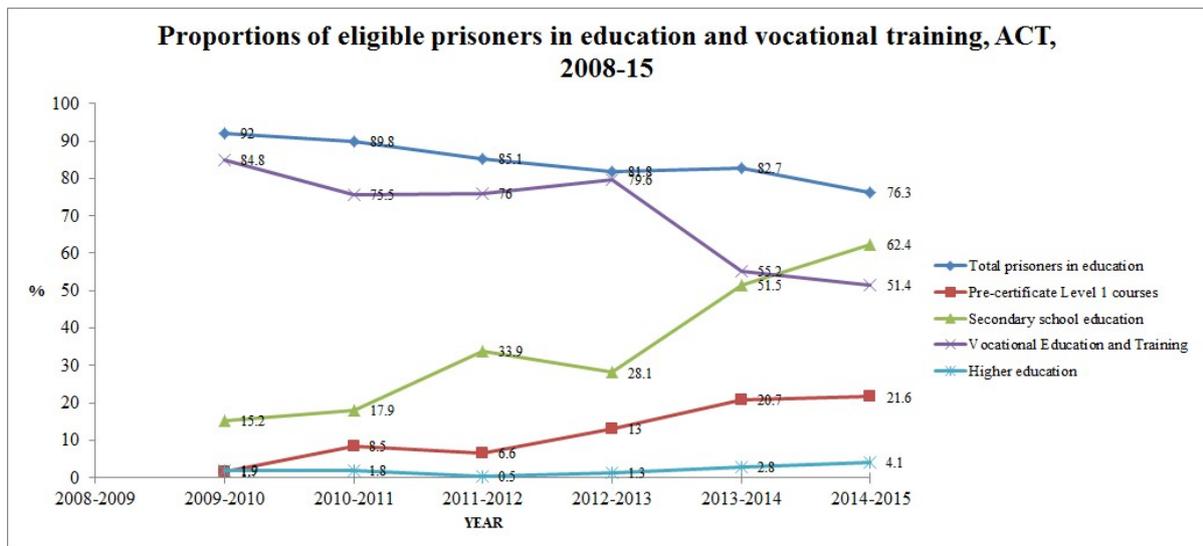


Figure 17: Proportions of eligible prisoners in education and vocational training, ACT, 2008–15

These trends, which commenced in 2012–13, are the result of a change in focus from vocational to literacy, numeracy and remedial, stipulated in a contract variation with the provider. The primary course is the Foundation Skills Training Package. Certificate 1 units in the Training Package are counted in the secondary school stream, while higher level units are counted as vocational.

The ACT's stated purpose for education and training is to assist prisoners to gain employment and thereby reduce the likelihood of reoffending. ACT Corrective Services are developing a Rehabilitation Framework and an Evaluation Framework that will encompass education, training and employment, as well as criminogenic and life skills programs.

Data on education assessments, enrolments and completions are not included on JOIST, the custodial operations data management system. The Annual Report includes the number of units and certificates completed in each VET course and the number of units and certificates completed in each of the 4 streams reported in RoGS.

In-prison education includes pre-certificate 1 and certificate 1–3 level courses, vocational education and training at certificate 1–4 levels, courses at diploma levels, and industry-specific short certificates. There is limited access to on-line education courses including university courses through CyberSource Prison PCs, facilitated by education staff. Most courses are nationally accredited. Prisoner literacy, language and numeracy skills are assessed soon after reception. Peer prisoner literacy tutors and vocational counseling are available. There are specific programs for Aboriginal prisoners and for low literacy prisoners. There is no traineeship program.

While participation in education is not compulsory, education induction that includes Literacy and Numeracy assessment and informs development on an Individual Learning Plan for each sentenced and remand prisoner is compulsory.

A unique feature of ACT corrections is permission for prisoners to have up to 5 (approved) email addresses to send and receive correspondence (similar to standard prisoner phone lists) and provision of limited Internet access through CyberSource Prison PCs. Prisoners can use 'common area' prison PCs or hire them for individual cell use in addition to those available in the library and education buildings.

Delivery of prisoner education and training services is contracted by public tender to an external provider. Additional courses or programs can be provided by other RTOs.

Prisoners engaged in a full-time education program are paid at level 1 in the industries wage structure. Employed prisoners who also access education are not financially penalised for attending a combination of education and prison employment programs.

There are employment support programs at the prison, and a post-release employment support

program for up to 12 months is included in the Throughcare Initiative, provided through agreements with external job providers/job placement agencies. Participation is voluntary. There are also work release options while in prison to work for employers or organisations in the community and the ACT Transitional Release Centre has a strong focus on paid work release. To date these initiatives are too recent to show clear outcomes.

No education, training or employment program evaluations have been conducted to date. An IEP pilot program for Indigenous clients was recently trialled for 12 months, but discontinued without evaluation when the Commonwealth chose not to continue funding.

2.8 Prisoner education and vocational training in the Northern Territory, 2008–15

The following graph shows the trends in the participation of prisoners in the NT in education and training.

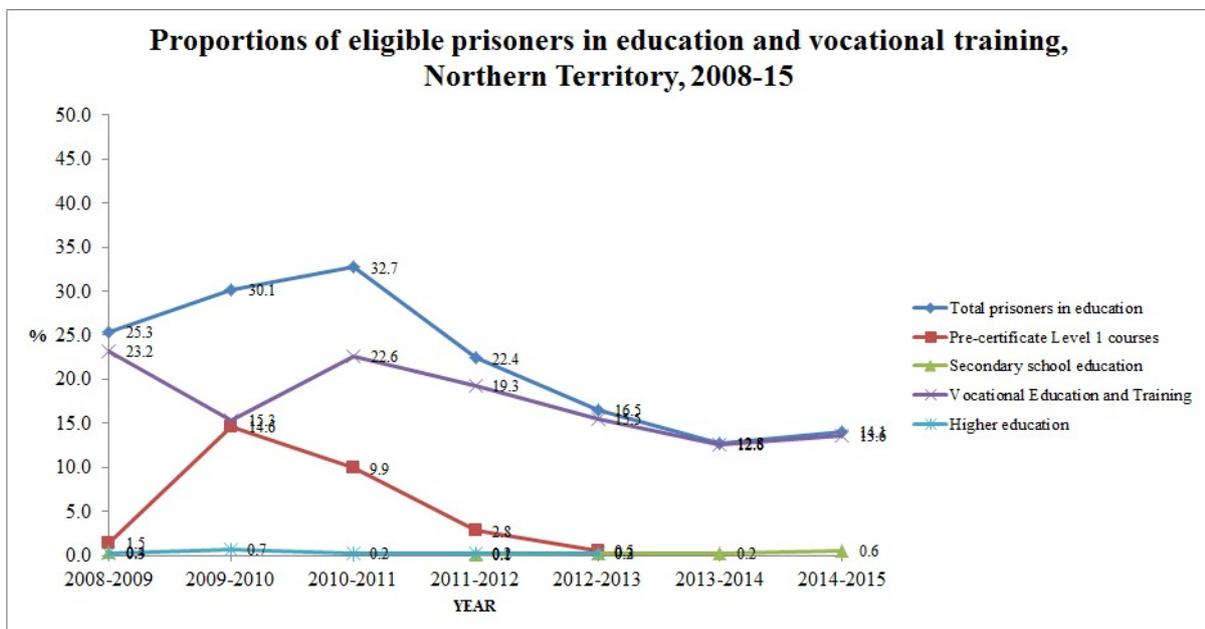


Figure 18: Proportions of eligible prisoners in education and vocational training, Northern Territory, 2008-15

In the period 2008–15, the participation of eligible prisoners in education in the NT averaged 22 per cent, however participation rates fluctuated significantly. The participation rate in 2008–09 was 25.3 per cent. This increased to 32.7 per cent in 2010–11, declined to 12.6 per cent in 2013/14, then rose slightly to 14.1 per cent in 2014–15.¹⁸ Participation in vocational education and training followed the same trend. Participation in pre-certificate 1 courses increased from 1.5 per cent in 2008–09 to 14.6 per cent in 2009–10, then decreased. Participation in higher education averaged less than one per cent and participation in secondary school education was similarly low over the period.

These fluctuations were partly due to a lack of facilitators and education staff across Darwin and Alice Springs in 2011–13 resulting in a decline in education outcomes, and registration expiry of the core literacy and numeracy Training Package. In 2012–15 Quicksmart, a non-accredited program developed by Professor Pegg from the University of New England, was introduced at Alice Springs and Darwin centres. More recently a preparatory course called Quick Start was also introduced. Transfer to these courses accounts for low percentages in these years. Transition to the new prison in Darwin in late 2014 also saw education slow down until operational matters were sorted out. In addition, significant issues with the Prisoner Interactive Learning System designed to be used by facilitators in an IT model of service

¹⁸ However, the participation rate tabled in the Annual Report for 2014-15 was 10 per cent. I have been informed that different counting methods are used for the Annual Report.

delivery impacted on delivery.

NT Corrections has strategic frameworks for prisoner education and training and prisoner employment. Separate draft plans have been developed for Correctional Industries Programs and prison-based Education and Training. The strategic focus is on improving post-release employment, basic numeracy and literacy, vocational education and training related to occupational shortages, and culturally appropriate remote community capability development.

Except for assessment results, data on education enrolments and completions are included with other prisoner data on the Integrated Offender Management System. Data provided in the Annual Report include the number of prisoners who commenced a course and the number of VET and Statement of Attainment credentials awarded, plus data on the number of prisoners participating as paid or volunteer workers and the number of participating employers in the Sentenced to a Job employment program.

Scope of delivery includes education at certificate 1–3 levels, vocational education and training at certificate 1–3 levels, on line education (in development), on line access to university courses (under review), non-accredited courses, industry training, and industry short certificates (e.g. forklift licences, food handling certificates etc.). English as a Second Language is available at all prisons. There is no traineeship program.

In development is use of Multimedia/Technology to provide culturally appropriate and relevant engagement, the introduction of a driver education program, and the establishment of “prisoner trainer programs” to deliver vocational training. Literacy, language and numeracy assessments are conducted soon after reception and peer prisoner literacy tutors are available.

Vocational subjects are linked to prison industries, and on-site prison training is linked to post-release placement support. Partnerships with specific employers or employer groups (for job placement post release) are in place, and post-release employment placement support delivered as part of a broader post release transition program is in development.

Prison-based employment liaison officers are employed, and Community Corrections have engaged external employment providers to place offenders into employment whilst on parole.

At this stage prisoners have no Internet access, however opportunities for “secure access” are being explored and the Corrective Services Administrators’ emerging technology working group is exploring expansion of this area nationally.

Key performance targets include:

- Education participation levels at 30 per cent of total population,
- Prison based employment programs at 65 per cent of the available population, and
- Work release programs for 75 prisoners.

ATSI prisoners, young adult prisoners, and low literacy prisoners are prioritised for education, and some courses are available only to sentenced prisoners. A program to train life sentence prisoners as peer educators/trainers is in development.

Consideration is being given to making education mandatory for all prisoners aged 18–24 years.¹⁹

Education is delivered by teachers from Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education under an MOU with that institution and by trainers from external providers such as community colleges, employer organisations, and RTOs such as the Motor Trades Association and Cattlemen’s Association. The partnership with Batchelor Institute is well established. Funding is provided by allocations from the Corrections Department and from grants for specific projects. Specific programs can be funded from both central and prison budgets.

Prisoners engaged in a full-time education program are paid at level 3 of the industries wage structure, and prisoners attending education as part of their case management plan during

¹⁹ A policy of mandatory education for all prisoners aged 18-24 years was introduced in 2016.

work hours, who perform satisfactorily, do not lose any part of their wages for that day.

As part of a review of Throughcare, a program to integrate education and training with post-release support through linking parole board decisions to the continued education of parolees at remote locations is under discussion. Support for post-release employment is currently provided by arrangement with external organisations (e.g. employer, GTC, NFP). A limited amount of support is available for those on a Community Corrections Order.

Successful outcomes in terms of improving employability and improving literacy and numeracy skills have been achieved by expansion of prison industries and therefore employment opportunities, iTalk (a multi media initiative in language groups), Quicksmart (an accelerated LLN program), Jumpstart (VET courses at Certificate I and II levels) and Sentenced to a Job Program (STAJ) which commenced in 2012.

As mentioned in the section on employment programs, STAJ provides prisoners with an open security rating in the final stage of sentence with voluntary and paid work experience, however there is no formal education or training attached to this program other than on-the-job. Participants are assessed for suitability and matched to jobs on offer from a wide range of businesses, NFP and commercial. In 2014/15, there were 577 participating prisoners and 130 participating employers across the territory. In that year, 53 prisoners retained their employment after discharge.

Partnerships with education and training providers as well as industry sectors to address skills and labour shortages are in development and active recruitment of new employers to meet prisoner rehabilitation needs as well as business needs are ongoing.

No evaluations of NT correctional programs have yet been conducted, however an evaluation framework is in development.

3.0 Between-jurisdiction comparisons of participation rates of eligible prisoners in prison, commercial and service industries, Australia 2008–15

3.1 Participation in prison industries — jurisdictional comparisons

This section shows the jurisdictional comparisons of prisoner participation in prison industries, commercial industries, vocational education and education.

Overall, Victoria had the highest proportions of eligible prisoners participating in industries in 2008–15 while Tasmania and the Northern Territory had the lowest averages. However even in these two jurisdictions, approximately two-thirds of eligible prisoners engaged in work.

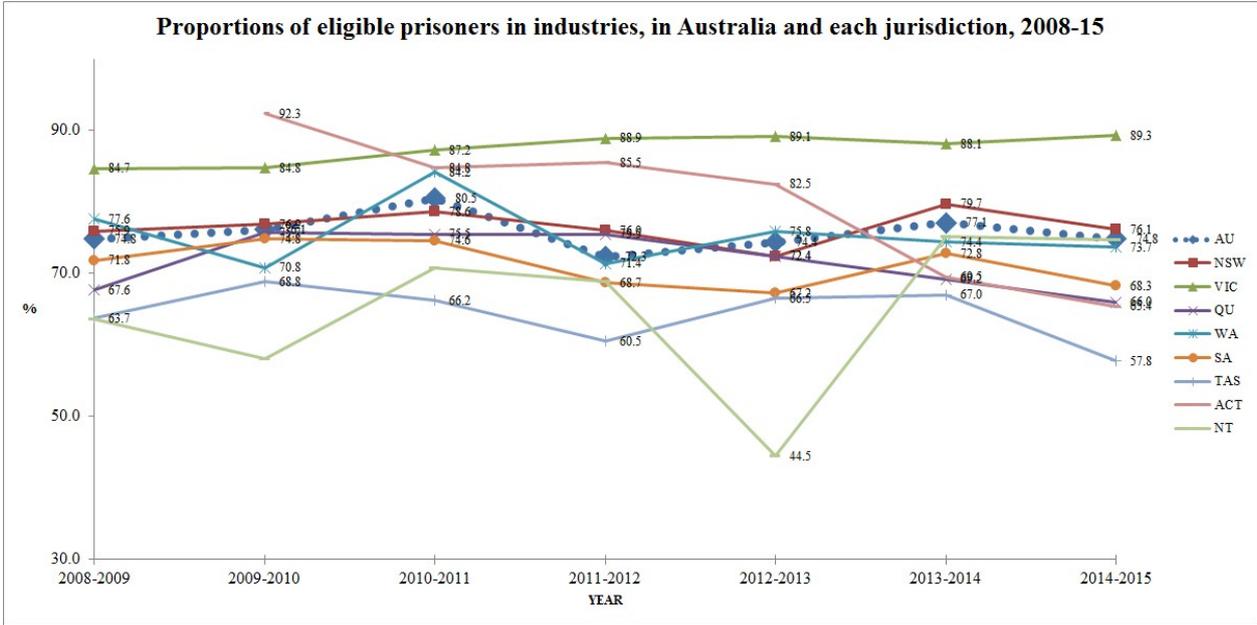


Figure 19: Proportions of eligible prisoners in industries, Australia and jurisdictions, 2008-15

3.2 Participation in commercial industries — jurisdictional comparisons

The proportion of eligible prisoners participating in commercial industries varied between jurisdictions in 2008–15. NSW consistently had the highest proportions, with an average participation rate of 42.8 per cent, followed by Victoria at 36.7 per cent. These were both above the national average. Queensland paralleled the national average at 30.3 per cent. The other jurisdictions were lower, the lowest being in the Northern Territory.

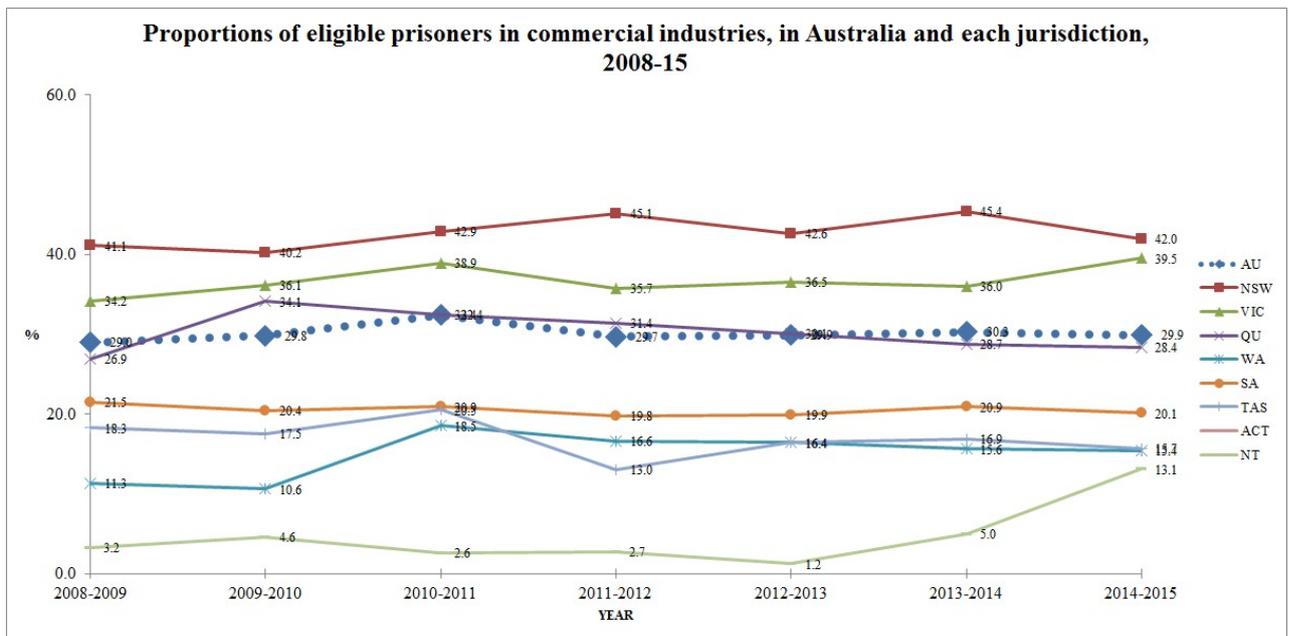


Figure 20: Proportions of eligible prisoners in commercial industries, Australia and jurisdictions, 2008-15

3.3 Participation in service industries — jurisdictional comparisons

The following graph compares participation in service industries in Australian jurisdictions. In most jurisdictions the proportions of eligible prisoners participating in service industries in 2008–15 clustered around the national average of 44.9 per cent. Exceptions were the ACT, substantially higher at 76.4 per cent, and West Australia and Victoria, also slightly above the national average at 60.5 per cent and 50.8 per cent respectively. NSW at 33.3 per cent had the lowest participation of eligible prisoners in service industries.

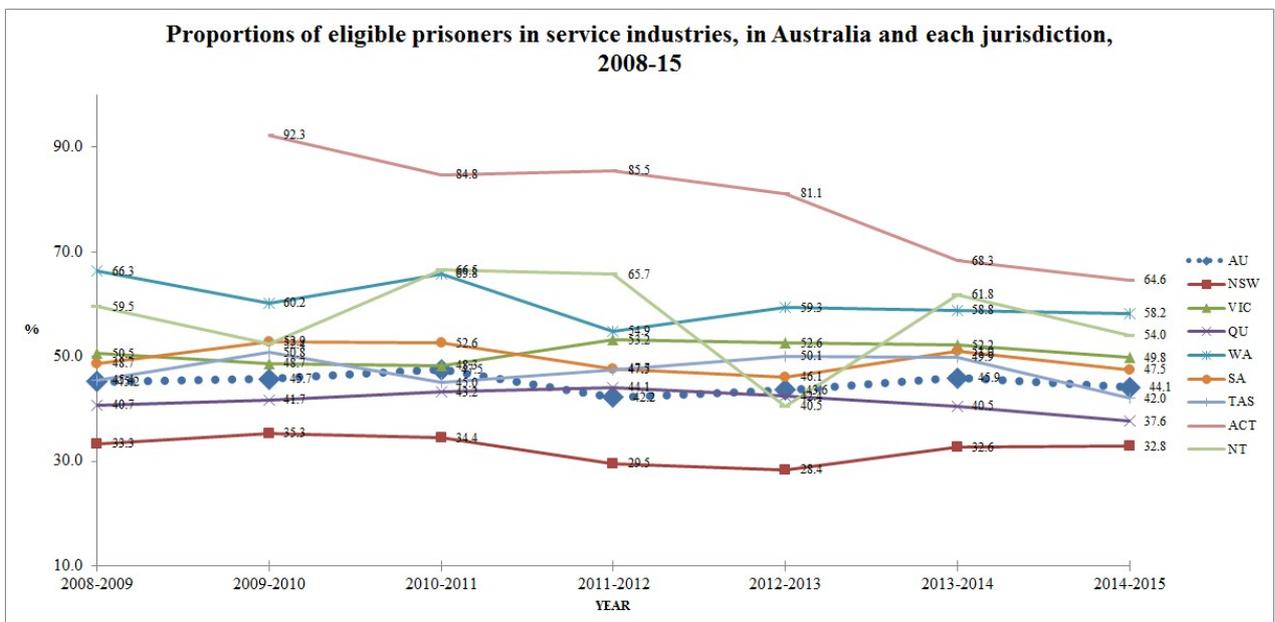


Figure 21: Proportions of eligible prisoners in service industries, Australia and jurisdictions, 2008-15

3.4 Participation in work release — jurisdictional comparisons

The following graph shows the jurisdictional comparisons for participation in work release.

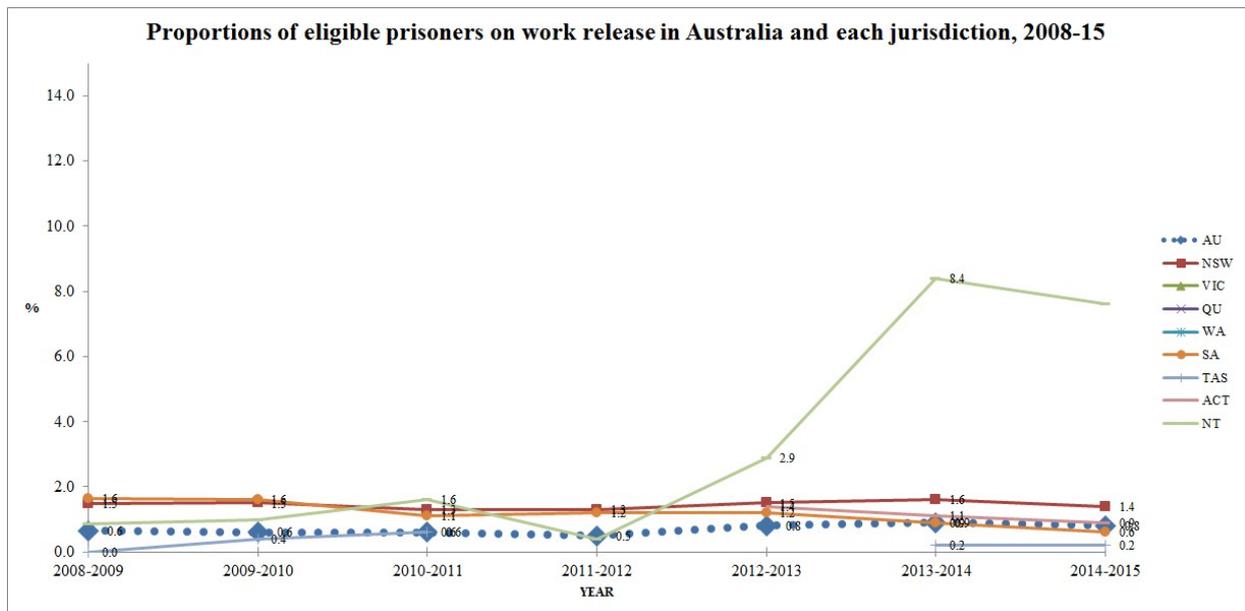


Figure 22: Proportions of eligible prisoners on work release, Australia and jurisdictions, 2008–15

The availability of work release programs varies between jurisdictions. Participation in work release was low in all jurisdictions, with the exception of the Northern Territory, where the proportion of eligible prisoners participating in work release increased from 0.9 per cent in 2010–11 to 8.4 per cent in 2012–13. This increase was due to the introduction of the Sentenced to a Job employment program, already discussed.

4.0 Participation in education and vocational training — jurisdictional comparisons

There are differences in levels of participation in education and vocational training in each jurisdiction, as the following graph shows.

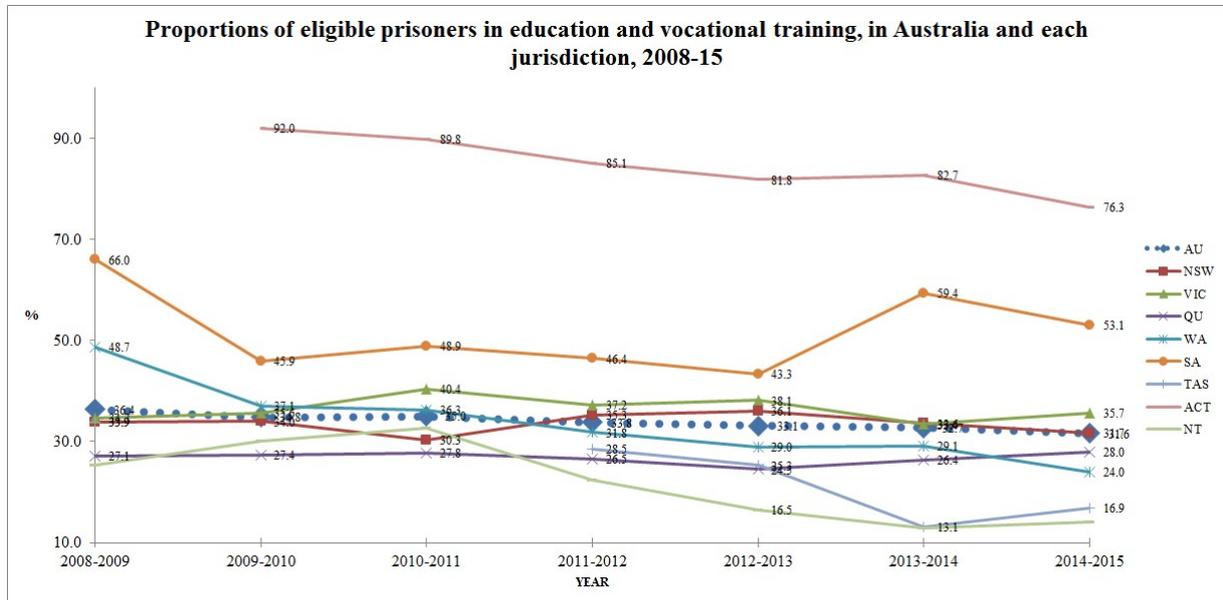


Figure 23: Proportions of eligible prisoners in education and vocational training, Australia and jurisdictions, 2008-15

Approximately one-third of eligible prisoners in Australian prisons participated in education and training during the period 2008–15. Two jurisdictions were exceptional — the ACT where 84.6 per cent of eligible inmates participated in some kind of education in 2009–15, followed by South Australia where an average of 51.9 per cent participated. Averages in other jurisdictions over this period were 36.4 per cent in Victoria, 33.8 per cent in WA, 33.6 per cent, in NSW, 26.8 per cent in Queensland, 23.5 per cent in Tasmania and 22 per cent in the Northern Territory. However, as pointed out in the discussion, we need to be cautious about attributing too much significance to these differences as to a considerable extent differences are an artifact of different eligibility criteria, counting methods and categorisation of courses as secondary or vocational.

4.1 Participation in Pre-certificate 1 Education — jurisdictional comparisons

Pre-certificate 1 or Foundation courses focus on basic literacy, numeracy and communication skills in preparation for courses at Certificate 1 level. Prisoners assessed as needing these courses have only rudimentary reading, writing and numeracy skills. The following graph compares the levels of participation in these courses in each state.

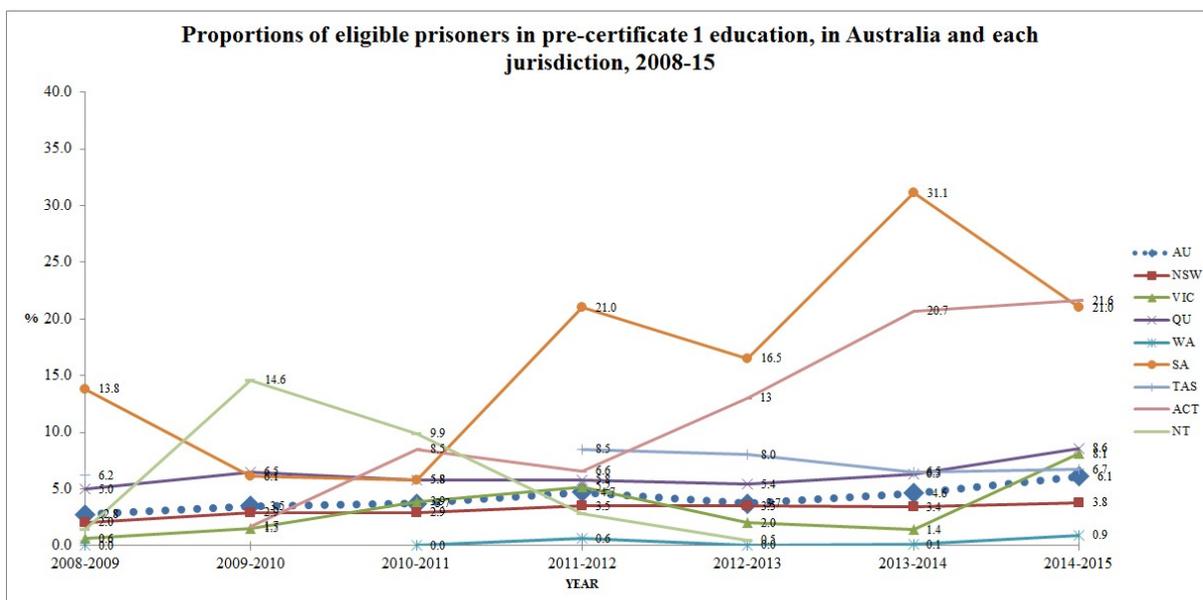


Figure 24: Proportions of eligible prisoners in pre-certificate 1 education, Australia and jurisdictions, 2008-15

On average across Australia, less than 5 per cent of eligible prisoners participated in pre-certificate 1 courses in 2008–15, however South Australia and the ACT were exceptions. In South Australia, the proportion of eligible prisoners participating in this stream increased from 5.8 per cent in 2010–11 to 31.0 per cent in 2013–14, giving an average for the period of 16.5 per cent. A similar increase occurred in the ACT where the proportion of eligible prisoners participating in pre-certificate 1 courses rose from 6.6 per cent in 2011–12 to 21.6 per cent 2014–15. The reasons for these relatively high rates were discussed in the previous section.

4.2 Participation in secondary school education — jurisdictional comparisons

The secondary school education stream includes courses that focus on literacy, numeracy and communication skills as well as generic employability skills at Certificate 1–4 levels, and may include tertiary preparation courses with subjects at senior high school level. The following graph compares participation in secondary education across jurisdictions.

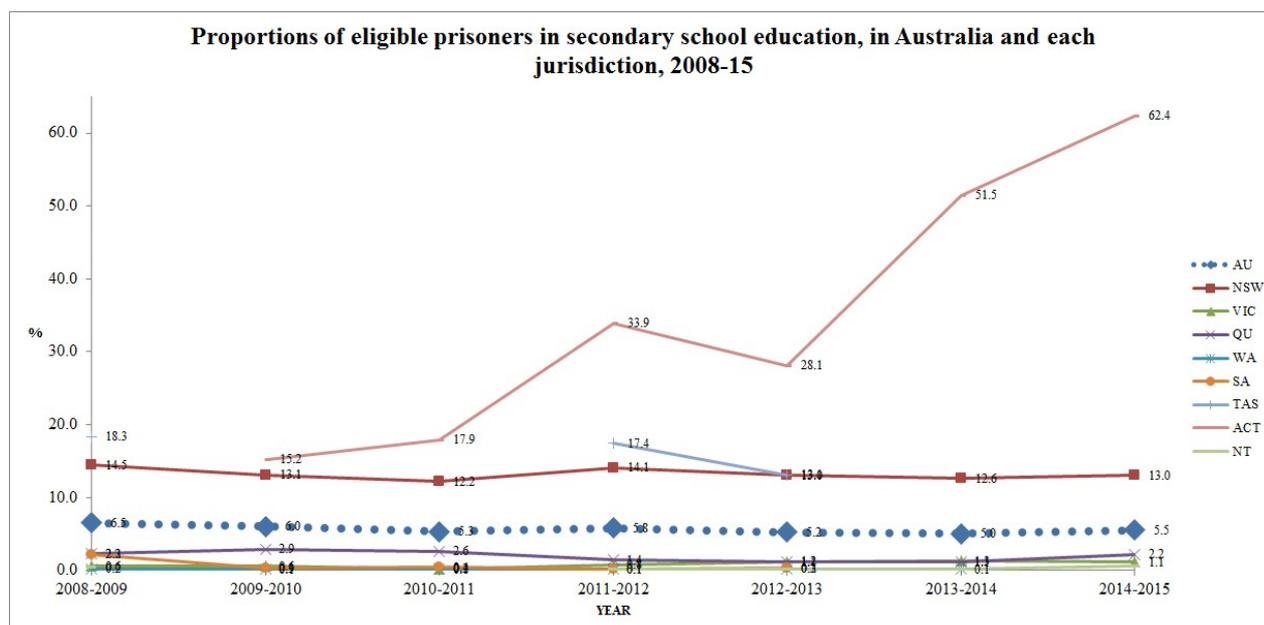


Figure 25: Proportions of eligible prisoners in secondary school education, Australia and jurisdictions, 2008–15

Participation in these courses was relatively stable across jurisdictions with 5.6 per cent of eligible prisoners participating in 2008–15. Most jurisdictions consistently fell below the national average in 2008–15 with the exception of NSW, with a substantially higher average of 13.2 per cent, and the ACT, which experienced a four-fold increase from 15.2 per cent in 2009–10 to 62.4 per cent in 2014–15. As already discussed, the higher rates recorded by NSW and the ACT in part reflect jurisdictional decisions to count as secondary school education units in Training Packages recorded by other jurisdictions as vocational. In the case of the ACT, it also reflects a change in focus from vocational skills to literacy and numeracy skills.

4.3 Participation in vocational education and training — jurisdictional comparisons

The following graph compares participation in vocational education and training across the jurisdictions.

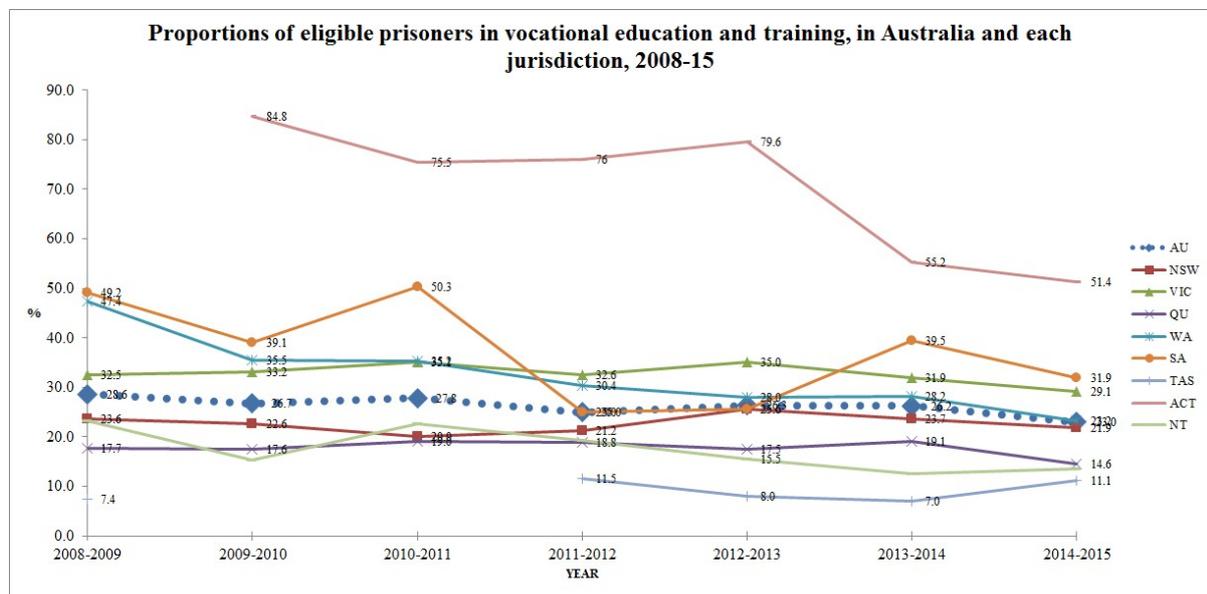


Figure 26: Proportions of eligible prisoners in vocational education and training, Australia and jurisdictions, 2008-15

Across all jurisdictions, the highest education participation rates in the period 2008–15 were recorded in the vocational education and training stream. The national participation rate was 26.2 per cent. Average participation rates in the ACT, South Australia, Western Australia and Victoria at 70.4 per cent, 37.2 per cent, 32.6 per cent and 32.8 per cent respectively, were all higher than the national average, with lower rates in other jurisdictions.

4.4 Participation in Higher Education — jurisdictional comparisons

The final comparison is the participation of prisoners in Higher Education is the last comparison, shown in the graph below.

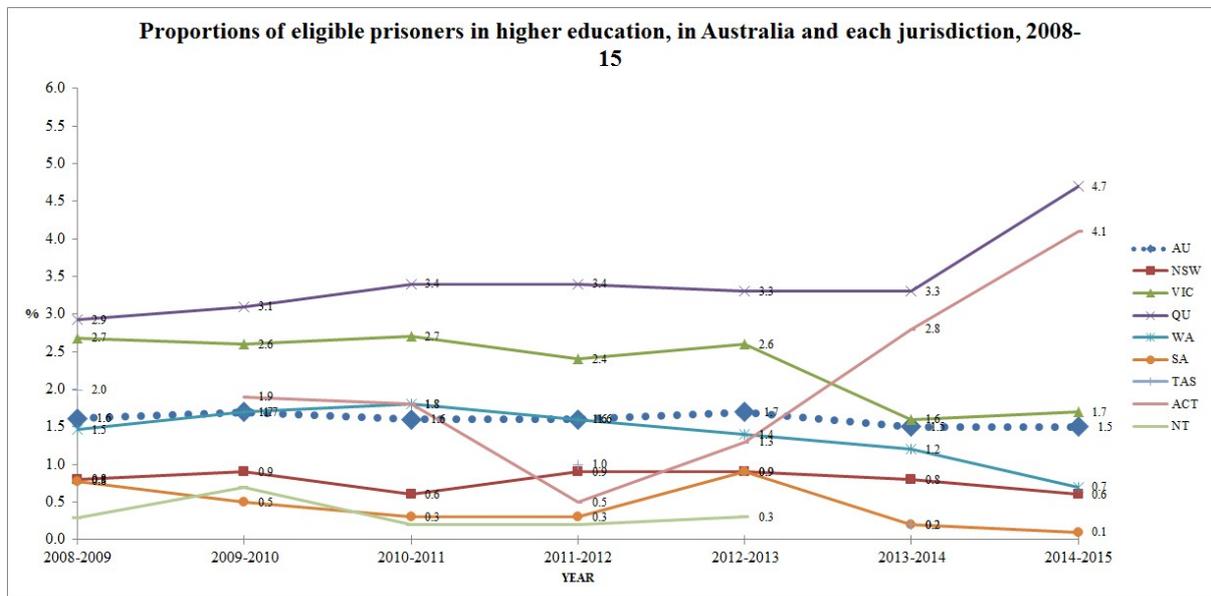


Figure 27: Proportions of eligible prisoners in higher education, Australia and jurisdictions, 2008-15

Participation rates of eligible prisoners in higher education in 2008–15 were low. While there was some variation between jurisdictions, no participation rate was higher than 5 per cent, and the national average was 1.5 per cent. This is not unexpected as few prisoners have the prerequisites for university study. At an average of 3.4 per cent, Queensland had the highest participation rate, followed by Victoria at 2.3 per cent. In the ACT the participation rate doubled from 1.9 per cent in 2009–10 to 4.1 per cent in 2014–15.

5.0 Conclusions and Comments

Data from Reports on Government Services tell us that nationally more than 70 per cent of all eligible prisoners participated in work at some stage during their sentence, and around one in three eligible prisoners participated in education to the extent of at least one session of one unit of competency, for each of the years covered in this audit.

With respect to employment rates, data for Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania, and the Northern Territory are based on the number of prisoners employed on a single day calculated against the number of prisoners in custody on that day who are eligible for work. Percentages for other jurisdictions are based on an average of the number of prisoners employed on the first day of the month. It is not clear what impact these different counting methods might have on reported results.

In all jurisdictions, prisoners excluded from employment as ineligible include those in full-time education/program, prisoners whose protection status precludes their access to employment, fine defaulters who are in prison custody for only a few days, hospital patients or aged prisoners who are unable to work, prisoners at centres where work is not available (for example 24-hour court cells), and remandees who choose not to work. What is not clear from the data provided, however, is the proportion of eligible prisoners unable to work because there is not enough work to go round.

With respect to rates of employment in the commercial sector of prison industries, it should be noted that the commercial sector is subject to factors outside the control of corrective services, such as local economic conditions, market changes, the vicissitudes of purchasing companies, which affect capacity to attract commercially viable prison industries especially when the location is remote, with corresponding impact on capacity to employ prisoners in this sector.

And in regard to the future work prospects of prisoners employed during their sentence, this again is subject to factors largely outside the compass of corrections. A major factor is the readiness or otherwise of employers to take on workers whose skills have been honed while in custody. While each jurisdiction lays claim to efforts to engage potential employers and secure job placements for prisoner workers post release, in partnerships with service providers, the stigma of a criminal conviction is widely known to be an impediment to getting a foothold on the employment ladder. The specific employment programs described in this audit are each commendable in this respect, though until they are evaluated we should probably exercise caution about recommending their further expansion.

With respect to education, data for Victoria, WA, Tasmania and the NT are based on the number of prisoners in education and/or training on a single day, calculated against the number of prisoners in custody on that day who are eligible for education. Queensland counts the distinct number of eligible prisoners participating in education for the 12 months of the year, when determining its percentages. Percentages for other jurisdictions are based on an average of the number of prisoners enrolled on the first day of the month. Again, it is not clear what impact these different counting methods may have on reported results. Also, in this method of calculation, a prisoner engaged in education on just one day and a prisoner engaged in full-time education are both counted as one, meaning that rates of participation without additional data on the number of units and certificates completed give a very minimal picture of how much education and training take place.

Prisoners excluded as ineligible may include hospital patients or those who are medically unable to participate, fine defaulters incarcerated for only a few days at a time, prisoners at centres where education and training programs are not provided (for example, 24-hour court cells), and remandees. However, there is wide variation in how ineligibility is defined and how many groups of prisoners are excluded. For instance, in South Australia 35 per cent of all prisoners are excluded as ineligible, in NSW, approximately 15 per cent of all prisoners are excluded as ineligible,²⁰ whereas in Western Australia all prisoners are deemed eligible. These differences can be expected to inflate or deflate recorded rates of participation, and for

²⁰ In NSW, prisoners in crisis and detox units, medical units, segregation and protection units, reception and induction units, some remand units, and with sentences of less than 3 months, are counted as ineligible for education.

this reason rates of participation can be considered at best indicative.

There is also a question about whether participation is by itself a sufficient measure of correctional education provision. As pointed out in RoGS, 'the indicator does not assess needs, or measure successful program completion'.²¹ Indeed, as already suggested, participation by itself does not enable a meaningful comparison between jurisdictions with regard to the reach and efficacy of in-prison education provided. A more useful measure would be the proportion of inmates assessed as in need of education who complete at least one unit of competency. While this is still not an equal playing field as units of competency can vary in duration between a few and several sessions, it is a step in the right direction. The data currently provided in some jurisdictional Annual Reports are a promising start in this direction.

Of course this measure would require an agreed definition of 'need', however jurisdictions are likely to agree that prisoners with assessed levels of literacy and numeracy below AQF level 3, or level 4, of the national standards set in the Australian Core Skills Framework would qualify, the actual level to be determined after national consultation.

There might also be consideration as to whether jurisdictions should agree on other across-the-board eligibility criteria, such as only sentenced prisoners and/or only prisoners with a minimum sentence of three months, which would provide greater comparability of results.

To be meaningful, such a measure would require jurisdictions to assess the core skills of all prisoners who potentially meet the eligibility criteria. Currently all jurisdictions do employ some form of literacy/numeracy assessment, but it is not clear what proportion of prisoners are assessed, or at what stage of their sentence. Again, adoption of an agreed national assessment tool would be a step forward.

In addition to the above points, lack of data about pre-prison employment histories and post-release employment outcomes make it difficult to isolate any in-between effects of in-prison work experience and/or in-prison vocational education and training, whether on future employment or on re-offending. Lack of random allocation to education or employment programs also makes inferences about correlations between participation in such programs and employment outcomes problematic. Australian researchers can only envy their counterparts looking at the effects of employment in Scandinavian countries, where personal identification numbers of convicted individuals can be cross-linked to 'information from various register sources ... [including] data from the Criminal Sanctions Agency, Population Register Centre, Ministry of Employment and the Economy and Finnish Tax Administration ... spanning the years 1999–2010'.²²

On a more positive note, it is clear from jurisdictional responses to survey and follow-up questions that all prisoners are given financial incentives to work at rates of pay correlated with the level of skills and responsibility involved, that in some jurisdictions there are additional incentives for productivity and performance, and that prisoners identified as priority targets for education are given financial encouragement to engage in courses that develop their basic literacy and numeracy, employability skills and vocational skills. In all jurisdictions, education and training specifically linked to prison industry jobs are available, and effort is made to ensure that employment conditions and employee performance maintain the standards that apply in the real world.

However, responsibility for employment and further education outcomes in most cases terminates at the exit gate, while with only a few exceptions, most recently in the Northern Territory, responsibility for assisting prisoners to gain jobs post release is increasingly being left to various community-based employment services with little correctional input.

²¹ Ref Box 8.9, RoGS.

²² M. AAltonen, 'Post release employment of desisting inmates', *Brit. J. Criminology* (2016), 56, 350-69, at p. 356.

APPENDIX 1: Summary of prisoner education & employment data provided by jurisdictions

	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT
Prisoner employment programs								
Service and commercial industry streams	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Prisoner wage scale linked to level of skill and responsibility required	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Productivity component built into wage scale	Y	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Wage scale includes pay for being in FT education	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
No loss of wages for attending education	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Mandated: that is, eligible sentenced prisoners are penalised for not working if work is available	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Remand prisoners not obliged to work	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Traineeship/apprentice program	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N
Works release program- % eligible prisoners 2014/15	1.4%	0%	0%	0%	0.6%	0.2%	0.9%	7.6%
Work reference provided on release	Y	?	?	?	Y	?	?	?
Prisoner education and vocational training programs								
Participation								
Voluntary	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Exclusions – some courses limited to (a) sentenced prisoners or (b)	Y (a) & (b)	Y (a) & (b)	Y (a) & (b)	Y (a) & (b)	Y (a) & (b)	Y (a) & (b)	Y (a) & (b)	Y (a)
Eligibility criteria e.g. sentenced, min. sentence, ATSI (for some programs), skill prerequisites	Y- Min sentence 3m	Y	Y	N	Y – sentenced only	Y	Y	Y – only prisoners on a sentence longer
Priority targets	ATSI, young adult, female, low LLN	ATSI, young adult, women, low LLN	ATSI, young adult, female, dual disadvantage (no year 12 &	ATSI, young adult, female, low LLN, Disability, CALD	ATSI, young adult, female, low LLN	ATSI, young adult, female, low LLN	ATSI, young adult, female, low LLN	ATSI, young adult, female, low LLN
Method of measurement (for RoGS report)	Average of number prisoners enrolled on 1 st day of each of 10 months as % all eligible prisoners	Distinct number of prisoners enrolled as % of all eligible prisoners	Number of prisoners in education on a single day as % of eligible custodial population that day	Number of prisoners in education on a single day as % of eligible custodial population that day	Average of number of prisoners enrolled on 1 st day of each month p a as % all eligible prisoners	Number of prisoners in education on a single day as % of eligible custodial population n that day	Average e of number of prisoners enrolled on 1 st day of each month p a as % all eligible prisoners	Number of prisoners in education on a single day as % of eligible custodial population that day

	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT
Education enrolments/ completions recorded on integrated offender data management system	Y	Y	N	N	Partial	Y	N	Y
Key indicators for correctional education performance								
Performance criteria	Inmates participating in education /training (1) with core skills assessment (100%); (2) with plan for education & employment (100% for inmates with sentence >6 months); (3) Number sessions of participation (target minimum 20 sessions)	Agency level target of 32% participation with site based minimum delivery levels for each correctional centre for all correctional centres based on amount of overall contracted training delivery incl.	10% contract value withheld against: (1) units completed; (2) % target group prisoners enrolled; (3) average class size; (4) ATSI specific delivery; & (5) data supply	Recidivism, % prisoners engaged, % at risk (low literacy) prisoners engaged, % Indigenous prisoners engaged, % women prisoners engaged	Quarterly reporting system per centre; monthly report for Senior Exec. includes prisoners enrolled in ed & VET programs & prisoner participation in on the job skills programs	None specified	In develop't	Over arching targets: education participation levels - 30% of population total; prison based employment programs - 65% of available population; work release programs – 75 prisoners
Performance reports against KPIs published in Annual Report	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Enrolment and completion data published in Annual Reports	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
RTO responsible for delivering correctional education								
Correctional RTO only	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
External RTO only	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N
Combination correctional & external RTO	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Teacher qualifications mandatory	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Use of external volunteers	N	N	N		Y		N	N
Use of volunteers – prisoner peer support	N	Y			Y		Y	Y
Initial literacy/numeracy assessment								
LLN assessment tool	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT
Nationally accredited courses delivered in prisons								
Basic education courses Foundation to C3	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
ESL courses	Y	N		Y	N	N	N	Y
Vocational courses C1-3	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Vocational courses C4	Y	N	N	Y	N		Y	Y
Trade quals & tickets eg forklift	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Tertiary level courses via distance ed.	Y	Y	?	Y	Y		Y	N
Non-accredited courses delivered in prisons								
Non accredited courses	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Vocational training delivered in prisons								
Pre release vocational counselling	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	N
Industry training	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Courses linked to specific prison industries	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Courses linked to specific post release job opportunities	Y – Gundi, & heavy vehicle driver licence programs	Y	N	Y – with mining companies	Y		N	N
Method of education delivery								
Classroom	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
On the job	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
On-line	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N
Distance education with education staff assistance	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Moodle - USQ trial	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N
Prisoner Internet access								
Classroom-based and supervised	Y – in ILCs	N	N	N	N	N		N
Individual - supervised (by correctional staff)	N	N	N	Y	N	Y		N
Individual – unsupervised	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N
Education staff download course materials as required	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT
Prisoner computer access								
Classroom access & library	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Available in common areas	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N
Available in cell	Y – trial in process	Y	N	N	N	N	Y – on hire basis	N
Post release employment								
Partnerships with JSAs for job placement and support post release	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y- but not current	N	Y	Y
In prison employment liaison/reintegration officer positions	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Prisoner education and/or vocational training and employment evaluations								
Internal	N	Y	Y – not published	Y	N	N	N	N
External	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N

APPENDIX 2: Survey questions on prison-based education, training and employment¹

1. Does your agency have a strategic framework for prison based education, training and employment? (Tick where applicable)

- Yes, it covers education, training and employment
- Yes, but specific to education and training
- Yes but specific to employment
- No
- Other (please explain in comment section below)

Comment:

2. Who is responsible for implementing this framework?

Name & title:

Contact details:

3. What are the key objectives of your strategy?

4. What educational areas do your strategy/programs cover? (Tick where applicable)

- Basic adult education
- On line education (general or TAFE level)
- On line access to university courses
- Apprenticeship certificates
- VET certificates level 1 to 111
- VET certificates level 1V
- Diploma/Associate diploma level
- Non accredited courses
- Language, literacy, numeracy assessment
- Peer prisoner literacy tutors
- Vocational counselling
- Individual education and training plans for prisoners
- Industry training
- Industry short certificates (e.g. fork lift licence, food handling certificate, first aid)
- Other (please list)

5. What type of industry and employment areas does your strategy/programs cover?

- VET subjects linked to work in a similar prison industry
- Training on site at the prison linked to post release employment placement support
- Traineeships/apprenticeships
- Post release employment placement support delivered as part of a broader post release transition program or case management
- Partnerships with specific employers or employer groups (for job placement post release)
- Prison based employment liaison officers
- Pre-release vocational counselling and support
- Supported pathways from prison industry to employment (please provide details)
- Other

¹ Survey questions modelled on survey conducted by Corrections Victoria December 2013, with permission

Comment:

6. Are there any limitations on who can participate in education or training programs? (tick where appropriate)

- Some programs are only available to sentenced prisoners
- Some programs only available at selected prison locations
- Some programs have eligibility requirements

Comment:

7. Please indicate any targets or KPIs (other than Report on Government Services outputs) that your department has for prison based education, training and employment.

8. Priority Cohorts - Do your programs or strategy identify specific prisoner groups as priority groups for engagement in education, training and employment programs? (Tick where applicable)

- ATSI prisoners
- Young adult prisoners
- Female prisoners
- Inmates with disabilities (e.g. cognitive impairment)
- Other

9. Do you offer English as a second language (ESL) courses?

- Yes, at all prisons
- Yes, at selected prisons
- No

10. If you offer education programs for specific groups, please tick the applicable group(s) below:

- ATSI men
- ATSI women
- Young adult male prisoners
- Young adult female prisoners
- Prisoners with a specific minimum sentence length eg >6 months sentence
- Low literacy prisoners
- Other (please specify below)

Comment

11. Are education programs mandatory for any types of prisoners?

If yes, (please specify in the comment box when participation is mandatory)

Comment

12. What are the delivery arrangements for education and training?

- All education and training is delivered by public TAFE institutes
- Some external delivery and some internal delivery (ie departmental employees)
- Some delivery by organisations other than public TAFE institutes (eg employer association, Adult Community Education provider, other RTO)
- Other (please specify)

13. How is education and training funded?

- TAFE budget (individual or departmental level)

- Individual prison budget
- Allocation from the Corrections Department
- Mixture of the above
- Other (please specify):

14. How are employment programs funded?

- Individual prison
- Central correctional agency
- Other state or federal department funding
- Philanthropic funding
- Mix of the above (briefly describe below)
- Other (please specify below)

Comment:

15. Do you have programs that integrate education, training and post release employment support? If yes, please briefly describe below:

16. Do you provide post release employment or training placement support?

- No
- Yes. (Please provide details in comments section)

Comment:

17. If you offer post release employment support programs, how is this delivered? (Tick where applicable)

- Prison or Departmental staff provide the support
- Support is provided through another departmental program (please identify)
- Support is provided by arrangement with an external organisation (eg employer, GTC, Not for Profit support organisation)
- Other

18. Do you offer prison-based programs that provide support for employment placement?

- Yes, prison industry based programs
- Yes, work release options while in prison to work for employers or organisations in the community
- Yes, agreements with external job providers/job placement agencies to support prisoner employment post release
- Other (please elaborate in the Comments box)

Comment:

19. Where are the employment support programs available?

- At a few prison locations
- At most prison locations
- At all prison locations
- Only available if the prisoner is participating in a broader transition support program
- Other

20. What is the level of remuneration available to prisoners undertaking employment?

- No remuneration beyond the daily prison allowance (please comment below if the prison daily allowance is different for participation in education compared to participation in prison industry)
- Remuneration linked to award or other industry rate (please describe in comments box)

- Other (please describe)

Comment:

21. Please describe the level of internet access available to prisoners who are undertaking education or training programs, and/or any internet based programs available to prisoners:

22. Could you describe any programs that you feel have been particularly successful in enabling prisoners to a) increase employability and find employment on release and/or b). increase literacy and numeracy levels:

23. Is there any evidence available on the impact of your education, training and employment programs?

- No evaluation findings
- An evaluation framework in place, but no completed studies available
- Evaluation and research completed (if the findings of these are available, please describe in the comments box where these reports could be viewed)

Comment

24. Is there separate governance, such as an independent or external advisory committee, for your education, training or employment Strategy/programs?

- No
- Yes (please describe in comments box)

Comment

25. How is the prisoner education unit aligned in your department?

- with prisoner employment
- with prisoner programs and services
- other