16 April 2013

Minister for Correctional Services, John Elferink, has returned from New Zealand where he visited a youth boot camp in Christchurch which deals with the country’s most serious male offenders.

Mr Elferink viewed the Military-run Activity Camp (MAC) ahead of developing a youth boot camp model in the Northern Territory.

“I remain committed to delivering positive outcomes for youth offenders in the Territory, and it is important to gain a full understanding of successful programs from both interstate and overseas,” Mr Elferink said.

“The MAC program addresses the underlying causes of offending, reinforces self-discipline, personal responsibility and community values.

“There are certain aspects of this program that I believe could be extremely useful in a Northern Territory model.

“The MAC program offers a disciplined approach demanding physical routine as well as expecting the most from young offenders.

“It is important that a youth camp provides discipline to change the attitudes and behaviour of the offenders, reducing their likelihood of returning to crime.

“A successful program must also deal with the causes for the youth’s offending behaviour; often drug and alcohol abuse.”

Mr Elferink, alongside New Zealand’s Minister for Social Development, Chester Borrows, attended a ‘march out’ ceremony and congratulated graduates on their completion of the MAC program.

“It is extremely fulfilling to see the graduates complete the program and understand there is a need for self-change and discipline,” Mr Elferink said.

“I am confident this Government can develop a model relevant to the Northern Territory, reduce the number of youth repeat offenders and put them on track for a better future.”

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