Prisoners Building New Accommodation

Corrections Minister Gerry McCarthy today opened a new low security accommodation unit at Darwin Correctional Centre.

Minister McCarthy said the project provided a real opportunity to put a stop the cycle of re offending.

“The Henderson Government is committed to making our streets safer, while police are working hard to apprehend offenders, in our prisons we are committed to providing more opportunities for training and rehabilitation.

“In partnership with Batchelor Institute prisoners have built a new 24 bed accommodation unit, the project has been incredibly successful as we have a building of excellent quality and more importantly prisoners have gone on to gain full time employment in the construction industry on their release.

“Ten of the prisoners who worked on the project are now employed in remote communities, this is a direct result of the training they received while working on the prison project.

“Other prisoners involved in the program have completed training in Certificate I and II in general construction and modules of Certificate III in carpentry.

“In mid 2008 Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education was awarded a $2.028 million dollar contract to build the accommodation unit and an education facility, this also included the construction of a fabrication centre on the grounds of Darwin Correctional Centre.

“The fabrication centre is now being used for on going vocational training for prisoners and Batchelor Institute plans to tender for other contracts in Darwin which will enable further training for prisoners.

“Through exposure to a real workplace environment prisoners are learning basic work skills including improved tool handling skills, increased problem solving abilities, job readiness and improved personal skills like dispute resolution and workplace communication.

“Being involved in the successful project has also increased the self esteem of prisoners and encouraged them to make plans for work in the future, this is a real step towards meaningful rehabilitation.

“The accommodation unit built by prisoners will now be used to house low security prisoners who have been found suitable to progress to the living skills unit.

“All projects undertaken as part of the Government’s $11.3 million commitment to provide 140 additional beds at Darwin Correctional Centre are demountable buildings which will be used for future prison operations like work camps.