Up to 30 low security prisoners will complete a number of important community projects in Adelaide River in coming months.

Minister for Correctional Services John Elferink said the work parties, under the supervision of prison officers, will teach prisoners important work-related disciplines as well as providing valuable community support.

“Last year, the work parties proved extremely beneficial to the community with prisoners completing more than $3.5 million in projects and contributing almost 250,000 hours of labour,” Mr Elferink said.

“This year work parties are planned for a wide range of community organisations and events including the 2013 Garma Festival, Finke River Desert Race, Hidden Valley Drags and V8 events and the Henley on Todd Regatta.

“The first task in Adelaide River involved locating a historic locomotive shed in bushland around Adelaide River and beginning its reconstruction.

“Other projects include works for the Adelaide River Show Society, mowing lawns for pensioners and setting up a playground for the Coomalie Community Government Council.

“The works are important and necessary for the community but it is unlikely they would be completed without the work parties.

“The program provides prisoners with an opportunity to repay the Territory for the crimes they have committed as well as gain valuable work skills.

“Prisoners also receive training in the use of a range of small tools and equipment, making them more employable once they are released back into the community.

“Prisoners acquire practical skills to enable them to get a job outside of prison, and it is hoped they use these for positive change rather than returning to crime and alcohol and drug abuse.”

In last year’s Mini Budget, the Government committed an additional $450,000 to establish additional work crews in the Top End and Central Australia.

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