John Elferink
Minister for Correctional Services

**Prisoner Work Camp opens the doors**

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The people of the Barkly region will have a bonus this show weekend with the low security prisoner Barkly Work Camp throwing open its gates for a public Open Day tomorrow.

Minister for Correctional Services John Elferink said the 74 prisoners housed at the work camp assist with various projects in the Barkly region, providing free labour to not-for-profit community-based organisations and pensioners.

“Work completed by the prisoners includes beautification projects and grounds and lawn maintenance.

“Last financial year, an average of 58 prisoners per month participated in reparation activities in the Barkly region.

“They completed a total of 37,966 hours of voluntary work, which represents savings to the community of $569,490.

“The community gets a double benefit as these prisoners are gaining valuable work-based skills that will help them gain meaningful employment on their release from prison.

“Breaking away from welfare dependency is a known contributor to prevent reoffending and keep offenders away from the justice system.

“I’m also very pleased that the Tennant Creek business community has embraced the Sentenced to a Job program, with 15 prisoners leaving the work camp each morning for full-time and casual part-time work.

“Prisoners participating in Sentenced to a Job earn award wages, pay tax, board for their accommodation and contribute five per cent of their pay to a victims’ assistance fund.”

Mr Elferink has encouraged everyone in the region to attend the Open Day from 10.30am – 2.30pm where they can talk to prisoners and staff and enjoy the work camp’s hospitality.

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