Indigenous Mentors to break the Re-offending Cycle

The Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Services (OARS NT) has been granted $490,000 by the Commonwealth National Community Crime Prevention Programme to train and employ Indigenous mentors to help break the high re-offending rates in the Northern Territory.

Mr Glen Dooley, Chairperson of OARS NT praised CEO, Bill Sommerville stating, “Mr Sommervilles years of persistence and research into re-offending and his commitment to the past 3 years of the ‘Reintegration After Prison Programme’ (RAPP) have all contributed to this successful grant application.”

Mr Sommerville claims “the employment of Indigenous mentors to support Indigenous prisoners prior to release, and work with them to integrate back into their Communities is the most effective strategy towards breaking re-offending.”

He goes on to praise the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, Mr Syd Stirling and the Department of Justice stating, “without the guaranteed financial support from the Department, the grant would not have been approved. Strong support and assistance was also provided by the Commonwealth Government and Members of Northern Territory Parliament.

“OARS NT also welcomes the appointment of the Executive Director of Correctional Services, Jens Tolstrup. Mr Tolstrup has extensive experience in and is a strong advocate for rehabilitation and reintegration as vital components of the correctional system.

“It is pleasing that governments and the community are recognising that building more prisons is not the answer to preventing crime”.

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