



DEPARTMENT OF
CORRECTIONS
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◆ Community Probation & Psychological Services

Plan to Improve Compliance with
Procedures for Managing Parole Orders

2008-2009

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Part One: Rationale and context

What is the Plan for?

The purpose of this Plan is to outline the steps already taken and the work underway or planned to address the impediments to, and ensure that staff follow, the procedures for managing parole orders.

While the Plan has a range of specific actions in it – one of the critical pre-requisites for success is that every manager and staff member take greater responsibility for ensuring that they exercise judgement within the context of compliance with procedures and always ensure they do not compromise public safety. As much as the culture needs to contain elements of judgement, compliance with procedures, and responsibility it must always be clear that the context of probation work is that of focusing on public safety.

Why is the Plan needed?

During 2008 there was a convergence of internal and external information that highlighted that staff and managers were not consistently following procedures for managing parolees.

The primary issue was one of timeliness – staff not completing procedures in the timeframes specified. There were, however, also some instances of procedures not being completed all. These issues were also not assisted by relatively poor documentation in casenotes which made it difficult to determine if or when actions had been taken.

The information outlining the issues arises from:

- During 2008 CPPS reviewed the management of each of the 554 parolees who were identified as high-risk offenders. The cases were spread across all 12 Areas and provided valuable information about the nature of specific issues where compliance with procedures, particularly those procedures bound by set timeframes, was an issue. Managers were tasked at the time with taking immediate remedial action to ensure issues with particular cases were addressed.
- CPPS operates a quality assurance system which monitors compliance with procedures against all sentences and orders and is compiled on a monthly basis. While this information has shown an improvement over time in compliance, the information from these checks has been reinforced by the findings of the larger and more specific offender reviews.
- During 2008 (Report to be tabled February 2009) the Office of the Auditor-General undertook an audit of the management of parole via 100 offender cases in four of the 12 probation Areas. The period of work under audit was from May 2007 to May 2008.

The audit found that the Department did not always manage offenders on parole adequately and did not always comply with its procedures. The audit report makes 20 recommendations of which the majority highlight procedures that the Office of the Auditor-General urges the Department to always follow.

What context has the Probation Service been operating under?

It is important to understand the context that the Probation Service has been operating in, in order to gain a more robust understanding of how the compliance issues have arisen. It is equally important to understand not just the actual results but why this has happened to ensure that the solutions are appropriately targeted, robust and will result in the necessary improved performance.

The Probation Service has been through a sustained period of growth and change. These two factors combined have impacted on the ability of the Service to achieve, and then consistently maintain, compliance with key procedures in managing parole. These factors have also combined to cause similar issues with other aspects of the Service's work, for example the ability to meet timeframes for pre-sentence reports to the court. Many of the initiatives in this Plan, although aimed at improving the management of parole, will have benefits across all parts of the Service's responsibilities.

What has been the growth in volumes of sentences/orders and staff?

The Probation Service has experienced growth each year since July 2003. The first increases covered a three-year increase of approximately 110 probation officer Full Time Equivalent staff (60/40/10 across the three years). This occurred as a result of the Output Pricing Review and following the William Bell RSA murders in December 2001. The increase involved 70 probation officers to meet increased volumes of offenders and 40 to restore quality levels to a satisfactory level. The last of these increases occurred in 2006/07.

Funding for a further 193 probation officer Full Time Equivalent roles was provided by Government in 2006/07 in anticipation of the additional work that would come from the implementation of the new sentencing structure in October 2007.

Throughout 2007/2008 the volumes of the existing sentences of supervision and community work and the order of parole increased well above funded levels. This put the Service under considerable strain at the same time as it was implementing a new sentencing structure.

The Government provided funding for a further 88 probation officer Full Time Equivalent probation officers in the 2008 Budget for implementation from July 2008.

In total, the Probation Service has had a growth in its front line probation officer staff of 95 per cent since July 2003. In addition its support staff and first level of managers have also grown in number.

48 per cent of probation officers have less than two years' experience.

Volumes of pre-sentence report requests and time spent in court supporting the judiciary have significantly increased in the past few months as a result of an increased number of offenders coming through the courts and measures taken by courts to speed up sentencing such as increasing court sitting hours.

Additionally, volumes of sentences have continued to rise above the new funded levels. Accordingly service delivery has remained under sustained pressure and a further Budget bid for resources has been submitted for the 2009 Budget round.

How has the nature and complexity of probation work changed?

During the 2006/07 financial year the Service was charged with the design and implementation of a new suite of community-based sentences. This involved repositioning of the existing sentence of supervision, some additional elements and changes to the existing community work sentence, re-positioning of home detention as a stand alone sentence and the introduction of two new sentences – community detention (electronically monitored curfews) and intensive supervision.

The purpose of the changes was to put in place a sentencing structure that provided the judiciary with more options for lower risk offenders by introducing a hierarchy of sentences and by allowing sentences to be combined to suit particular offending needs. The structure also introduced punishment options via restriction of freedom that were absent in the previous sentencing structure.

The design and implementation of the new sentencing structure was a significant activity over a comparatively short period of time. In particular there was a short design timeframe for the sentences, operational procedures and computer system changes, prior to a significant training design and implementation effort.

The process was successful and the new sentences were in place ready for use by judges in October 2007.

What focus has been applied to service delivery quality?

Since 2003 the Service has sought to lift the quality of its service delivery to the 'satisfactory' level endorsed by the resources provided in the 2003 Budget arising from the Output Pricing Review.

While the first priority for the resources was to manage the volumes, funding was also provided in 2003 to significantly enhance the training available for new probation officers.

The issues with quality were multifaceted and a range of initiatives were put in place. These included:

- redesign of the operations manual to make procedures clearer
- introduction of a senior probation officer role to focus on managing high-risk offenders and coaching other staff in key practice management issues

- introduction of the first comprehensive training curriculum for new staff – some 50 days training in the first two years with the Department (this replaced the 10-15 days that was previously available)
- review of the support provided by the Department's computer systems and commitment to a systematic redesign of the computer systems support to ensure it better supported staff activities.

At the same time quality assurance procedures and case review and investigation mechanisms were strengthened to ensure closer monitoring, on a regular basis, of the timeliness of actions taken both in regard to provision of information to the judiciary and to sentence management.

Further measures were introduced in 2007 to increase the focus on managing high-risk offenders. Procedures for taking enforcement action were strengthened in mid 2007 and a new role of assistant area manager was created in six of the 12 CPPS Areas to focus on improving the management of high-risk offenders.

The advent of the preparation for the management of the new sentencing structure, together with the significant recruitment efforts required in 2007 and into 2008 has meant that management focus was unable to be retained at the level needed to ensure timely compliance with all key procedures. This situation has been exacerbated by the continuous and increasing gap between the volumes of sentences and workload and the resources available to manage these to the required standards.

Achieving a suitable level of quality as determined in the first instance by timely compliance with procedures is essential and once more requires a comprehensive approach.

Part Two: Issues to be addressed

What are the Issues to be addressed?

As with all sentences and orders, probation officers are required to take specific actions within set timeframes. These actions form a set of procedures that are outlined in the Probation Operations Manual and supported by the Department's computer system, IOMS.

The procedures can be summarised in the following key categories:

1. Induction of the offender into the sentence/order.
2. Creation and ongoing review of the plan for managing the offender's sentence.
3. Managing the sentence or order.

The key areas where issues occurred under the third category are:

- Offender report ins to the office.
- Visits to the offender's home.
- Implementation of special conditions of the sentence or order.
- Appropriateness and timeliness of enforcement action against non-compliant offenders.

Managers have a particular responsibility for oversight of the management of high-risk offenders. This is exercised through regular checks within set timeframes of the management of each offender in this category. The primary purpose of the checks is to identify any compliance or offender management issues or action that probation officers should be taking with a specific offender. The checks ensure someone other than the probation officer is reviewing the offender's progress and compliance. This provides a greater focus on identifying whether or not there are signs or patterns of emerging risk that require some form of action. It is then the manager's role to ensure issues are remedied and identified action taken. This process is also used to coach and work with staff to ensure they understand the key procedures and the rationale behind them.

The audits and quality assurance processes show that staff are not complying with all the procedures for managing parole in all cases or are not doing so consistently. The extent of the issues varies considerably across the country as it does across particular activities. Overall, induction of new parolees is being done very well, but the timeliness of visits to offenders' residences is being done very badly. The results for other procedures fall between these two extremes.

What are the factors that contribute to the non-compliance?

There is no single reason why timely compliance with procedures for managing parolees is below a satisfactory level. There is some evidence of compliance improving since the period the audit work relates to (May 2007 to May 2008). The Quality Assurance System results for December 2008 showed an 80 per cent reading of procedures being followed without significant errors. This compares to 67 per cent in December 2007.

There has been a considerable amount of action to address the specific offender related issues from the audits and reviews and a significantly increased management focus in this area is clearly achieving better results.

While a significant amount of the remedial action is specific to the actions of managers and how they work with their staff, it is clear that without other action, the situation will deteriorate when managers and staff are again under similar pressures as in the last 18 months. Therefore this Plan largely focuses on initiatives needed to ensure as much stability as possible.

The key areas where work has been done or is required at a national level are:

Ensuring balance between resources and demand

There have not been enough probation officers available to manage the increasing volumes of offenders. This has led to probation officers having to prioritise their time, and not enough time being available to ensure all procedures are followed. While increasing the number of probation officers will not in itself address the service quality issues, it is a critical pre-requisite for doing so.

The resource issues have been compounded by a high percentage of new and inexperienced staff which in turn has put considerable pressure on experienced staff. Because of the growth over several years, 48 per cent of probation officers currently have less than two years experience.

Addressing the complexity of the work/operational procedures and systems

Roles and operational procedures

The roles of probation officers have become more complex with the implementation of new sentences as have the operational procedures that staff are required to follow. In total there are now nine different sentences and orders requiring different sets of procedures. New operations manuals were put in place in October 2007. These manuals have been in operation for just over a year. The Service has put in place comprehensive processes for staff feedback on the manuals which have been operational both in the development of the new manuals and since they were implemented. Staff have provided feedback that they have found the manuals difficult to navigate and not always easy to find the correct procedures when needed. Hence the CPPS 2008/09 Operational Plan includes initiatives to act on this feedback.

Computer system and documenting actions

IOMS, the operational computer system was reviewed in 2005 and a plan put in place to change its architecture and design over time to make it more flexible and user friendly. This plan was interrupted by the need to make changes to support the new sentencing structure. However, the majority of the work will be completed by June 2009. This will assist in alleviating staff concerns about system's usability.

The OAG audit identified a particular issue with the quality of documentation. Staff were not keeping appropriate records of their actions with offenders in the IOMS casenotes.

Alongside improvements in the usability of IOMS there will be an increased focus on ensuring staff take greater responsibility for appropriately documenting their actions. It is absolutely critical that the information staff input into IOMS accurately reflects the position of each offender.

Staff indicate that often work/tasks have been completed but not entered into the offender casenotes and this is because they have not had enough time to do so. As part of the 2008 Budget the level of support for Probation Officers was increased ensuring a ratio of one administrative support person to four Probation Officer FTEs. This is a significant increase designed so that support staff undertake more of the administrative tasks such as updating IOMS, thus freeing up probation officers for core activities.

Communication of changes to procedures

Changes have been made to the existing process of communicating changes to operational practice. Instead of weekly information about changes to or emphasis on practice/procedures, this has been moved to monthly with an advance warning of the nature of the next month's material. Front line managers are then required to hold practice meetings with their staff to discuss in detail that month's practice updates. Manager sign off when this has occurred.

The changes were made to the process because staff feedback indicated they did not often see or read or discuss changes to operational procedures as they occurred and were often unaware of changes that had been made specifically as a result of their feedback or in order to simplify or better explain procedures.

All key changes are also provided to staff for consultation and input. This is done via discussion documents on a dedicated CPPS Corernet site as well as inviting staff to make comments and suggestions via a dedicated email address, as and when they come across issues. This email address is directly linked to all senior managers and key head office staff. These mechanisms are supplemented with an annual process of Area wide staff consultation meetings whereby senior management seek staff input on particular issues and discuss and provide feedback on issues raised by staff.

Training for Probation Officers

Additional funding was received in 2003 to put in place a comprehensive training curriculum for new probation officers. While this is in place, about half of all probation officers have not been through the curriculum. These staff have received training only when new legislation, procedures or initiatives or new versions of IOMS have been implemented. The risk in this is that the more experienced staff do not have the same depth of understanding around the changes in approach and emphasis that have been made and that underlie the current procedures. This is most obvious in the increased emphasis now on sentence compliance.

At the same time as work is being done to expand the sphere of existing training, the methods of learning and training for the curriculum have also been reviewed, resulting, for example, in a change in balance between on-the-job and classroom training as well as the use of greater web based training methods, particularly for induction.

Appropriate level of management oversight of staff performance

Management oversight

As the volumes of the workload and the number of front line staff have increased, the management structure has now been outgrown, meaning that managers have larger numbers of direct reports than is appropriate. This has acted as a barrier to managers providing the necessary level of oversight and support to their direct reports and to staff. It has also meant that performance management of staff consistently not following procedures has not been consistently undertaken. These issues are also compounded by the fact that 56% of front line managers have less than two years experience which means a greater level of support and oversight is required by area managers.

Staff attitudes

In early 2008 a Department-wide culture survey was taken of staff attitudes. The survey was completed by around 39% of probation staff. This survey highlighted that probation staff had received the message that sentence compliance was important to senior management. They considered that management overemphasised sentence compliance at the expense of rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. These results demonstrate that while staff know what the emphasis is, they either don't understand why or don't agree with it. This may help explain why certain aspects of procedures as they relate particularly to taking timely enforcement action do not always receive the attention they should.

Additional work has been done, and will continue to be done, to work with staff to get them to understand that compliance and rehabilitation are not mutually exclusive and that rehabilitation cannot occur without compliance. This work is also dealing with staff feedback that they think they have failed when they have to take enforcement action, i.e. they have failed to reintegrate an offender back into the community.

Taking enforcement action for non-compliance is a key method of ensuring public safety – and the need for staff to see everything they do in the context of keeping the public safe is a key driver of current communication and work with them.

Staff were positive about the extent and opportunity for consultation and communication within the Service and these mechanisms have been strengthened and are being used to debunk some of the existing myths around the relative roles of compliance and rehabilitation.

What is the approach to address the issues?

The approach to addressing the issues is to undertake work in four workstreams, each of which ensures:

- One: the appropriate level of resources to manage the volume of work to the expected standards and procedures.
- Two: that operational procedures and systems are appropriate, easily understood and well communicated.
- Three: appropriate support is in place for probation officers and managers, including training, ongoing communication of changes, organisational structure and administrative support.
- Four: an organisational culture that supports compliance with procedures and accountability. This includes an appropriate level of management oversight so that performance is managed and action taken as required to address issues.

Part Three: Solutions and initiatives

Workstream 1: Ensure the appropriate level of resources to manage the volume of work to the expected standards and procedures.

Areas of focus in this workstream are to ensure:

- the nature of the gap between demand for probation services and availability of the right number of staff is identified
- that additional resources are sought from Government to close any significant gaps
- the service is using existing resources as efficiently and effectively as possible, reducing the need for additional staff
- procedures are reassessed and reduced when the resource gap is significant so that there is a consistent approach to identifying the tasks not done
- efficient and effective recruitment processes are in place
- workload pressures of individual staff and staff generally are recognised and managed.

Resources

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Put case to (previous) Government for 88 additional probation officer FTEs to meet increased volumes of parole, community work and supervision	General Manager	October 2007 for case, May 2008 for decision, July 2008 – December 2008 for implementation Additional resources approved by Government in May 2008 to apply from 1 July 2008 Status : all actions completed
Put case to Government for 134 additional probation officers and associated costs to meet increased volumes of home detention, community detention, supervision, court ordered programmes, 24/7 supervision for high-risk child sex offenders	General Manager	October 2008/January 2009 for case, May 2009 for decision, July 2009 – March 2010 for implementation Business case submitted for consideration by new Government in Budget 2009 Status : Case completed awaiting decision

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Consider whether additional staff can be funded for second half of 2008/9 to the level that can be trained and can be dropped by attrition if additional funding is not received in the Budget 2009	General Manager Manager Finance & Data Analysis (CPPS)	October 2008 Review remainder of 2008/9 budget undertaken. Decision made to recruit extra 46 probation officers and communicated to field in early November 2008. Status : Completed

Recruitment

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Implement plans to recruit the additional staff allocated in Budget 2008 and recruit for turnover at the same time	Manager HR (CPPS)	December 2008 Status : Completed

Efficiency and workload

Note: New initiatives will be required to relieve pressure on workloads if the Budget 2009 case is not successful.

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Following identification of how, implement ways in which administrative staff can better assist probation officers with the administrative components of their roles	Senior Management Group Area Managers	June 2009 Advance decision made in October 2008 to focus administration staff on assisting probation officers with computer systems work to relieve work pressure
Identify improvements to the efficiency of pre-sentence report work to free up resource for sentence management	Assistant General Manager CPPS Regional Managers	October 2008 Ways to improve efficiency of these processes were communicated to managers in November 2008 Status : Completed

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Identify temporary changes to operational procedures to be used until the gap closes between resources available and workload demand	Assistant General Manager CPPS CPPS Senior Management Group	October 2008 Decisions were made on temporary changes to procedures and communicated in November 2008. They will be fully implemented from December 2008 and reviewed in December 2009 Status : Completed

Workstream 2: Ensure that operational procedures and systems are appropriate, easily understood and well communicated.

Areas of focus in this workstream are to ensure:

- the procedures staff are required to follow are simple, clear and focus on effective service delivery
- the operations manual is easy to navigate so that procedures are easy to find
- mechanisms are in place and operational for effective communication to managers and staff about changes in procedures
- that communication is effective and always addresses the reasons why procedures are important or changes are being made, linking them back always to public safety
- that the support provided by the computer systems is effective.

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Review the format/style of the Probation Operations Manual as well as electronic navigation techniques to ensure it is streamlined	Assistant General Manager	New design approved March 2009 Implementation by 30 September 2009
Identify ways to more clearly identify and communicate the requirements for each sentence/order/report.	Assistant General Manager	Parole to be completed and released in March 2009 Remainder of sentences/orders/reports to be released as completed from June 2009.

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Review the circular system and implement more effective processes for communicating changes in procedures to staff	Assistant General Manager	February 2009 Status : Completed
Identify options to simplify and reduce documentation associated with probation procedures	Area Manager	December 2009
Develop and pilot an assessment approach for probation officers to monitor dynamic risk factors in offenders, particularly violent offenders	National Research Advisor	June 2009
Continue to develop and further simplify the core computer system by improving core areas of functionality in the June and November 2008 and the June 2009 releases of IOMS	Assistant General Manager	June 2008 November 2008 June 2009 Status : June 2008 and November Releases completed
Issue practice reminder to remind staff of criticality of making inquiries into the proximity of victims when assessing proposed accommodation.	Assistant General Manager	12 December 2008 Status : Completed
Practice reminder to also remind Service Managers to ensure the checking is done when they are reviewing the probation input into the parole assessment reports.	Assistant General Manager	12 December 2008 Status : Completed

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Practice reminder to also include emphasizing the importance of staff notifying the VNR coordinator of all relevant information when there is a registered victim.	Assistant General Manager	12 December 2008 Status : Completed
Service Managers instructed to discuss all the matters from the practice reminder with staff at team meetings and advise area managers that this has been done.	Service Managers	31 January 2009 Status : Completed
Area managers to advise regional managers that all actions associated with victims have been completed.	Area Managers	February 2009 Status :Completed
National Victims Notification (VNR) Manager to meet with all Area VNR coordinators to assess their understanding of the system	National Victim Notification Manager	December 2008 Status : Completed
Develop revised guidelines for VNR coordinators	National Victim Notification Manager	May 2009
Develop a training guide for future VNR coordinators	National Victim Notification Manager/ Manager CPPS HR	June 2009
Review the current content of the probation officer's curriculum to ensure the VNR section provides sufficient detail of the procedures to be followed	Manager CPPS HR	June 2009

Workstream 3: Ensure appropriate support is in place for probation officers and managers, including training, organisational structure and administrative support.

Areas of focus in this workstream are to ensure:

- the training curriculum for new probation officers appropriately emphasises quality of service delivery
- specialist training is available for managing high risk offenders on parole
- refresher training is available for probation officers who have either not been through the curriculum or have had more than three years experience
- training is provided on the computer system for all staff following the systems redesign – fundamental back-to-basics training
- training is developed for new managers regarding their roles in managing service delivery quality
- probation officer roles are designed appropriately for the nature of the work and that appropriate grouping of sentence management and other types of activities are in place.

Training

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Review the probation officer curriculum to better integrate modular/course training and on-the-job experience	Manager Human Resources (CPPS) Assistant General Manager Regional Managers Area Managers	June 2009
Identify training requirements and design curriculum for experienced probation officers	Manager Human Resources (CPPS) Assistant General Manager Regional Managers Area Managers	June 2009
Review the delivery model for professional supervision in probation	Manager Human Resources (CPPS) Regional Managers	February 2009
Identify training requirements and develop curriculum for administration support staff	Manager Human Resources (CPPS) Assistant General Manager Regional Managers Area Managers	June 2009

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Following consultation with staff, finalise and implement the revised competencies for key probation job families	Manager Human Resources (CPPS) Area Managers	June 2009
Design and provide training for specialist parole management roles	Assistant General Manager Regional Managers Area Managers	June 2009
Design and implement end-to-end training in the computer system once the new architecture and system is completed in June 2009	Manager Human Resources (CPPS) Assistant General Manager	December 2009
Design training for new service managers and review current induction programmes	Manager Human Resources (CPPS) Assistant General Manager Regional Managers	May 2009
Deliver workshops for service managers on the Offender Warning System and their responsibilities in implementing this system	Regional Managers Area Managers	March 2009

Workforce design

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Establish specialist prison release teams in order to provide greater depth of knowledge and skills in parole management in particular	General Manager Senior Management Group	April 2009 These teams will be responsible for input into the parole assessment process, and the management of parole, release on conditions and extended supervision orders

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Identify options and combinations of activities that best define the nature of a 'generic' probation officers role	Assistant General Manager Manager Human Resources (CPPS)	June 2009
Identify the guidelines, rules and parameters for the potential introduction of a second shift of probation staff	Manager Human Resources (CPPS)	June 2009

Workstream 4: Ensure an organisational culture that supports compliance with procedures and accountability. This includes an appropriate level of management oversight so that performance is managed and action taken when required to address issues.

Areas of focus for this workstream are to ensure:

- **the management structure appropriately supports effective management oversight of service quality, in particular to ensure that staff comply with procedures and exercise effective judgement in the management of offenders**
- **managers and staff adopt a culture that recognises the importance of compliance with procedures; and whereby they take personal responsibility for ensuring they comply with procedures and seek help when needed; and that they exercise judgement in the context of compliance and above all else that their judgements and actions do not compromise public safety**
- **there are appropriate consequences when managers and staff do not follow procedures**
- **appropriate support is in place for managers and staff who do not understand or are not familiar enough with procedures**
- **specification of performance standards so that they appropriately reflect expectations and accountabilities on the probation service**
- **alignment of measurement and reporting systems to focus on the key performance standards**
- **alignment of management meeting discussions at each level in the structure to reflect the key performance standards and accountabilities**
- **alignment of individual performance agreements to the performance standards and accountabilities of the service.**

Management structure

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Review management structure below regional level to seek optimal structure for appropriate oversight of service delivery	General Manager	October 2008 Proposal included in Budget Business Case for an additional layer of management between area and service managers
		The growth since 2003 is such that area managers now have between nine and 15 direct reports, which has negatively impacted on their ability to have appropriate oversight of service delivery quality and high risk offenders Status: review completed. Resources sought in Budget 2009

Staff engagement

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Implement local plans to manage issues staff identified in the culture survey and follow up discussions	Regional Managers Area Managers	Progress report to Senior Management Group May 2009
Increased focus on the purpose of team meetings and ensure key issues, changes in procedures discussed and regularly include casework discussions	Area Managers	Ongoing
Revisit the purpose and content of service manager forums to ensure stronger focus on their responsibilities, accountabilities and issues of the day	Regional Managers	Report to senior management group March 2009

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Ensure that area management team meetings regularly cover reviews of casework of specific offender files	Area Managers	January 2009 Status : Completed
Ensure Area staff meetings are held regularly and focused on critical issues and provide opportunity for staff input	Area Managers	Ongoing
Ensure annual Area consultation meetings held to consult staff in the development of major service delivery initiatives and in the ongoing development of procedures and systems	General Manager Assistant General Manager	The 2009 meetings are scheduled from mid May to mid June
Workshops held to work with senior probation officers to better align their practice with expectations around the operational procedures	Regional Managers Area Managers	March 2009

Management information and reporting

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Review all key service performance measures to ensure they accurately reflect stakeholder expectations	Manager BIP (CPPS) Assistant General Manager	March 2009
Align internal and external performance measures for the Service and ensure the critical measures are clearly identified	Manager BIP(CPPS) Assistant General Manager	June 2009

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
Redevelop the existing management reporting framework to ensure that relevant indicators and detailed data is available and targeted to the appropriate managers and management teams	Manager BIP(CPPS)	April 2009
Design a standard set of internal management reports that cascade to each level of management	Manager BIP (CPPS) Senior Management Group	June 2009

Part Four: Audit Plan to assess improvements in compliance with Parole Management Procedures

Quality assurance

The quality assurance model used in CPPS is a distributed one whereby quality assurance activities are built into the responsibilities of managers at each level.

This model will continue to be strengthened if the new assistant area manager roles are able to be implemented. Doing so provides the ability to increase the area manager role in terms of both quality assurance and more critically, quality improvement. This will occur with a greater level of management oversight and a specific focus on ensuring remedial action at a staff and offender level occurs in a timely manner as well as gaining an overall improvement in the quality and consistency of service delivery.

The quality assurance measures will be realigned as changes occur in the operational procedures and to reflect the realignment of key performance standards and accountabilities.

Quality assurance will continue to be done by service managers and monitored at an Area level on a monthly basis across all key activities of the probation accountabilities. If the proposed management structure is able to be implemented, responsibility for undertaking the quality assurance checks will go to the assistant area managers, increasing the focus of service managers on ensuring appropriate service delivery.

From time to time the quality improvement advisors will be asked to undertake an intensive review of particular sentences or types of work.

Over time the role of the quality improvement advisors will change to focus less on compliance and more on integrity and identifying improvements that can be made.

The Department is currently reviewing quality assurance system again to ensure that it is both as efficient (in terms of both the service manager time spent on the checks, and in the identification of issues) and as effective (in terms of both the follow-up of necessary remedial action in relation to individual cases, and the development of solutions to identified trends and issues) as it can be.

Service Manager checks of OWS cases

The Offender Warning System (OWS) was introduced in November 2001, in order to assist in the identification and management of higher risk offenders. It includes a requirement for service managers to regularly review the management of offenders registered on the Offender Warning Register (OWR), in order to ensure that this is being carried out in accordance with manual procedures.

These checks will continue to form a critical part of the quality assurance framework. The immediate focus, however, will be on designing and implementing refresher workshops for all service managers on the OWS, the purpose of the checks and how these should be done and followed up.

Incidents and case reviews

The incident reporting system will continue to operate as will the case review system. Case reviews will remain a critical means of identifying issues and working with specific staff members or managers to improve their service delivery. Both systems will be reviewed in 2009/10.

Audit Plan for the audit of improvement of service quality in the Management of Parole

This plan focuses on the management of parole as the area of work where there is currently concern about service quality.

Nature of the Audit	Responsibility	Timeframe
Review of each of the 100 parole cases audited by the OAG	CPPS Quality Improvement Advisors	June 2008 Status : Completed
Review of each of the 554 high-risk offenders on Parole	CPPS Assistant Area Managers	August/September 2008 Status : Completed
Re-review of each of the 100 parole cases to ensure remedial action has been taken	CPPS Quality Improvement Advisors	November 2008 Status : Completed
Review of each of the OWS parole cases that are new since the original review	CPPS Quality Improvement Advisors	December 2008 – February 2009 Status : Underway
Re-review of each of the 554 high-risk offenders on parole to ensure remedial action has been taken	CPPS Quality Improvement Advisors	March 2009
Audit of high-risk offenders on Parole	CPPS Quality Improvement Advisors	August 2009
Audit of high-risk offenders and sample of other offenders on parole	Corrections' Internal Audit	April 2010
Audit of the management of offenders on parole	Audit New Zealand (to be arranged)	March 2011

Appendix 1: Response to Specific Recommendations of the OAG Audit of Parole Management

This table outlines key steps taken/to be taken in response to each specific recommendation of the OAG Audit . **The actions in this table cannot be read in isolation as they only reflect a small proportion of the work done or underway.**

The information in this table must therefore be read in conjunction with the initiatives in all parts of the Plan to Improve Compliance with Procedures for Managing Parole Orders. That is because the Plan in its entirety focuses on capacity, capability and ensuring accountability for compliance. That affects all recommendations OAG has made.

The specific actions noted in this table are only those already taken (as at February 2009), and the first subsequent action to be taken. It should also be noted that:

- Senior managers have been working with staff for some time to increase their awareness of the importance of fully complying with operational requirements in all case, and particularly when managing high risk offenders. The general manager CPPS attended Area management team meetings in late 2008/early 2009 to discuss the role of service managers in managing high-risk offenders, and this message has been reinforced by regional and area managers.
- A sample of parole cases in every CPPS area has been reviewed, and follow-up action taken. Further reviews and audits are planned, and steps are being taken to ensure that oversight by local managers is adequate and appropriate.
- In March 2009 a practice reminder will be issued reminding managers of a range of key issues relating to the management of offenders on parole. The key intent of this practice reminder is to remind staff of the key requirements of parole management, and to provide a forum in which this can be discussed at a local level throughout the country. The practice reminder will include reference to *all* OAG recommendations (not just those against which the practice reminder is recorded as an action in the table below), as well as to other key aspects of parole management.
- Prison release teams will be established by 30 April 2009 and will create teams in which staff focus on the management of offenders released from prison. Training/briefing sessions for these specialised staff will be developed and delivered by 30 June 2009, in order to ensure that staff are fully familiar with the requirements of offender management in this context. These sessions will again make include reference to all OAG recommendations, as well as to other key aspects of parole management. Similar sessions will be made available for all staff rotating into a prison release team in the future.
- Work is underway to design training for new service managers by 31 May 2009, and for experienced probation officers by 30 June 2009. This training will include key aspects of offender management, and will include reference to all OAG recommendations as well as to other key aspects of parole management.

With specific regard to the 100 offenders audited – these cases were reviewed by Corrections in 2008 and corrective action has been taken to remedy any issues.

There will also be an ongoing programme of quality assurance, review and audit to ensure we track compliance with key procedures such as those mentioned in many of the recommendations in the following table.

Detailed Response to each specific recommendation and initial action taken / to be taken.

	OAG recommends that:	CPPS comments / initial action in addition to action in the overall Plan	Status / Due Date
1	<i>The Department of Corrections continues to work with the Parole Board to improve the clarity and consistency of information in parole assessment reports and psychological assessment reports about an offender's risk of reoffending.</i>	<p>Changes to the design of the parole assessment reports were implemented in June 2008.</p> <p>Changes are being made to psychological reports to make it easier to find information about the risk of the specific offender.</p> <p>Work with the Parole Board to continually improve the reports will be ongoing and based on seeking continual feedback from the Parole Board.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>April 2009</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
2	<i>The Department of Corrections always enquires into the proximity of registered victims to an offender's proposed accommodation, and takes appropriate mitigation action, before an offender is released from prison.</i>	<p>This is an existing procedure, and it should be complied with.</p> <p>In December 2008 a practice reminder was issued reminding staff of the importance of completing these enquiries and taking any appropriate action.</p> <p>Service managers then discussed the issues at team meetings and undertook the appropriate checks to ensure no outstanding issues.</p>	<p>Completed (practice reminder issued)</p> <p>Completed (service manager action and checks)</p>
3	<i>The Department of Corrections allocates all offenders to individual probation officers before each offender is released from prison.</i>	<p>This has been procedure since October 2007, and it should be complied with.</p> <p>In March 2009 a practice reminder will be issued reminding managers of a range of key issues relating to the management of offenders on parole. This requirement will be included in that practice reminder.</p>	<p>March 2009</p>

	OAG recommends that:	CPPS comments / initial action in addition to action in the overall Plan	Status / Due Date
4	<i>The Prison Services group and the CPPS group within the Department of Corrections work in close consultation so that relevant staff are aware of travel arrangements for all offenders when they are released to an area outside the area where they were imprisoned.</i>	<p>This is an existing procedure, and evidence demonstrates this policy is being complied with.</p> <p>In March 2009 a practice reminder will be issued reminding managers of a range of key issues relating to the management of offenders on parole. This requirement will be included in that practice reminder.</p>	March 2009
5	<i>The Department of Corrections provides national guidance for service managers on how to apply the assessment criteria for the Offender Warning Register.</i>	<p>Existing procedures have been reassessed in light of the OAG Report. It is considered they provide sufficient guidance for service managers in this area.</p> <p>Specific workshops will be designed and held for all service managers, to ensure that they fully understand and implement the requirements for OWS checks and appropriate follow up action. These workshops will remind service managers of the importance of appropriately assessing, and reviewing, OWS status.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>March 2009</p>
6	<i>The Department of Corrections completes assessment forms for the Offender Warning Register for all offenders at all required times, and provide clearly documented reasons for any decisions to override the assessment criteria.</i>	<p>This is an existing procedure and it should be complied with.</p> <p>In March 2009 a practice reminder will be issued reminding managers of a range of key issues relating to the management of offenders on parole. This requirement will be included in that practice reminder.</p>	March 2009
7	<i>Probation officers within the Department of Corrections complete offender induction tasks within a week of an offender's release on parole.</i>	<p>This is an existing procedure, and it should be complied with.</p> <p>In March 2009 a practice reminder will be issued reminding managers of a range of key issues relating to the management of offenders on parole. This requirement will be included in that practice reminder.</p>	March 2009

	OAG recommends that:	CPPS comments / initial action in addition to action in the overall Plan	Status / Due Date
8	<i>Probation officers within the Department of Corrections prepare plans for managing offenders that contain all the required information, and complete those plans within the required timeframe.</i>	<p>This is an existing procedure, and it should be complied with.</p> <p>In March 2009 a practice reminder will be issued reminding managers of a range of key issues relating to the management of offenders on parole. This requirement will be included in that practice reminder.</p>	March 2009
9	<i>Probation officers within the Department of Corrections regularly visit the homes of offenders on parole.</i>	<p>This is an existing procedure, and it should be complied with.</p> <p>Processes to ensure that staff plan and monitor the completion of all scheduled home visits were implemented for all offenders on parole by 31 December 2008.</p>	Completed
10	<i>Area managers within the Department of Corrections approve reporting and visiting requirements for offenders who reside in a psychiatric institution or residential rehabilitation centre.</i>	<p>This has been existing procedure since October 2007, and it should be complied with.</p> <p>In March 2009 a practice reminder will be issued reminding managers of a range of key issues relating to the management of offenders on parole. This requirement will be included in that practice reminder.</p>	March 2009
11	<i>Probation officers within the Department of Corrections complete the required re-integration checklist during the first week of an offender's period on parole.</i>	<p>This is an existing procedure, and it should be complied with.</p> <p>In March 2009 a practice reminder will be issued reminding managers of a range of key issues relating to the management of offenders on parole. This requirement will be included in that practice reminder.</p>	March 2009
12	<i>The Department of Corrections refers only offenders who meet the appropriate criteria for psychological assessment and rehabilitation programmes, and schedule appropriate referrals as soon as possible.</i>	<p>Existing procedures have been reviewed and are considered appropriate. Corrections is satisfied that the procedures are already reasonably well complied with.</p> <p>Corrections considers that by far the vast majority of formal referrals are made appropriately, and that we have appropriate mechanisms in place to manage those that are not accepted.</p> <p>No further action required.</p>	Completed

	OAG recommends that:	CPPS comments / initial action in addition to action in the overall Plan	Status / Due Date
13	<i>The Department of Corrections provides probation officers with customised and specific training in using the Integrated Offender Management System.</i>	<p>The 10 days training on the computer systems that are part of the probation officer curriculum will remain the primary platform for training staff on these systems.</p> <p>The computer system (IOMS) is part way through a set of functionality changes to improve its usability by staff. This programme involves changes in June 2008, November 2008 (completed) and the last set in June 2009.</p> <p>After these changes are complete 'end-to-end' training on the use of IOMS in probation work will be designed and delivered to all probation staff.</p>	<p>Planned IOMS improvements to be completed by June 2009</p> <p>Delivery of training to be completed by 31 December 2009</p>
14	<i>The Department of Corrections redesigns the CPPS operations manual so that users of the manual can easily find the information they are looking for.</i>	<p>The procedures in the manual are appropriate to meet the expectations on probation to undertake its responsibilities. However, there are issues with how user friendly the manuals are and whether they are as easy to navigate through as they should be. Work has begun on designing a new structure for the operations manual.</p> <p>The operations manual and key aspects of procedures, workforce design and best use of resources will also be a topic for the annual Area staff consultation workshops being held in May/June.</p> <p>This is an annual set of open forums whereby senior managers seek staff discussion and input on systems and procedures in addition to the business-as-usual processes for seeking such input.</p>	<p>New design to be approved March 2009</p> <p>Implementation by 30 September 2009</p> <p>May/June 2009</p>

	OAG recommends that:	CPPS comments / initial action in addition to action in the overall Plan	Status / Due Date
15	<i>Service managers within the Department of Corrections regularly check how probation officers are managing high-risk offenders.</i>	<p>This is an existing procedure and it should be complied with.</p> <p>Oversight of the management of high-risk offenders was a key topic of Area management team meetings late in 2008 and case studies are now discussed at these meeting. The general manager CPPS attended Area management team meetings in late 2008/early 2009 to discuss the role of service managers in managing high-risk offenders.</p> <p>Specific workshops will be designed and held for all service managers, to ensure that they fully understand and implement the requirements for OWS checks and appropriate follow up action.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>March 2009</p>
16	<i>The Department of Corrections enters casenotes in the Integrated Offender Management System that clearly cover the offender details that probation officers have to monitor.</i>	<p>This is existing policy, and we agree it should be fully implemented.</p> <p>Improvements to IOMS casenotes functionality were implemented on 29 November 2008. Guidelines for completion of casenotes were issued January 2009.</p>	Completed
17	<i>Probation officers within the Department of Corrections review offender plans as frequently as required and address all relevant matters relating to an offender's progress with their parole.</i>	<p>This is an existing procedure and it should be complied with.</p> <p>In March 2009 a practice reminder will be issued reminding managers of a range of key issues relating to the management of offenders on parole. This requirement will be included in that practice reminder.</p>	March 2009
18	<i>The Department of Corrections takes appropriate and prompt enforcement action for all offenders who have breached their parole conditions or re-offended.</i>	<p>This is an existing procedure and it should be complied with.</p> <p>Regional managers have undertaken a process to emphasise the importance of timely and appropriate enforcement action to their direct reports (area managers), and to cascade this message to all staff via the local line management structures.</p>	Completed

	OAG recommends that:	CPPS comments / initial action in addition to action in the overall Plan	Status / Due Date
19	<i>That the Department of Corrections notify registered victims within the required timeframes about convictions for an offender's breach of parole or when orders recalling the offender to prison are granted, declined or quashed.</i>	<p>This is an existing procedure and it should be complied with.</p> <p>In December 2008 a practice note was issued reminding staff of the importance of completing these enquiries and taking any appropriate action. Service managers then discussed the issues at team meetings and undertook the appropriate checks to ensure there were no outstanding actions.</p>	<p>Completed (practice note issued)</p> <p>Completed (service manager action and checks)</p>
20	<i>Probation offices within the Department of Corrections prepare sentence completion reports for all offenders before the end of the offender's period on parole.</i>	<p>This is an existing procedure and it should be complied with.</p> <p>In March 2009 a practice reminder will be issued reminding managers of a range of key issues relating to the management of offenders on parole. This requirement will be included in that practice reminder.</p>	March 2009