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W I think optimally you want a good combination of – well, you need officers who have a good degree of obviously literacy and numeracy. They need to have some solid educational kind of background behind them. I mean, I think the days of being able to recruit officers that have just finished year 10 at school and have not done a whole lot else and we are going to bring you into the prison environment at 17 or 18 years of age, I think they should be largely over, in my humble opinion. The weight of the job is too great for that.

10

I know, however, around the country, not just in Queensland, there are a good proportion of officers who did not go right through, if you like, the educational system and have learnt on the job, and have turned out to be outstanding officers, but I think in this day and age by want something different.

20

Having said that, I absolutely am a believer in people who have taken initially a different path in life and have got some life experience, and can bring that to the role as well, and know something about – to answer your question pointedly, I would want to see people employed that know something about the nature of – a little about how society works, a little bit about the causes of crime, a little bit about social marginalisation. A little bit about, I guess, the different pathways that people can take in life and some of the struggles that they can confront. So I think life experience, there is nothing wrong with that, but you absolutely need people who are fairly confident in themselves. You need people who are very clear about why they want to join the correctional service, and the answer isn't just because, "I couldn't get a job anywhere else".

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You want people joining for the right reasons. The officers that I've met, who I hold very highly in terms of that role, when you ask them that, you know, they're there, they are aware of the limitations of the role. They are not there to save the world, but certainly they think they can make a difference to some people's lives, and that they actually hold the correctional officer role to be important. I think that is important as well, yes.

CA Is the skill set getting beyond the current pay level? Do you have a view about that?

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W I think that what we are asking – okay. A prison that is run in an optimal fashion, that has near full employment of prisoners, and by employment I mean proper employment, not just, "Oh, I'm the person that polishes the phones on the wing for 10 minutes and that's my employment done for the day", or, "I sweep the wing for an hour and that's my employment done." I mean a prison that is committed to industry, good out of cell, number of out-of-cell hours. A prison that has a full suite of educational and rehabilitative programs, et cetera, those types of prisons are complex to run.

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So, yes, an officer that is busy and is trying both to wear the hat of a caseworker, let's say, to a number of prisoners, and is also trying to do the routine things around counts three or four times a day, trying to manage the various demands from prisoners that come up, everything from, "I need a new pair of shares, boss" to, "I didn't get my phone calls",

or "My visit went crap and now I feel suicidal, what am I going to do, boss?", all of that; to that officer also having to mentor maybe new recruits, et cetera, for them to be aware when someone is at risk to the themselves, or others, yes, that is quite a complex task is what I am trying to paint, and I think it should be appropriately remunerated.

10 The conditions under which officers are employed should be such that one minimises the likelihood of burnout, or what I have termed and colleagues have termed, I guess, a sense of fatalism in the job, that "no matter what I do in the job, I really don't make any difference because I see the same people coming back time and time again", et cetera, and we can come to that later.

But to come to your remuneration question, yes, I think the role has evolved to be more complex, and where the role is done optimally and where it is done in that more complex sense of the term, the pay is probably not up to spec, I would say.

20 CA To build on the skills which, in the best of all worlds, we can assume exist, you have referred in your book to the need to build values.

W Mmm.

CA We are talking, are we, about building values on top of that skill set?

W Absolutely, yes.

30 CA This is something the Commissioner is interested in, too, I think, building a workplace culture.

W Yes.

CA What kind of values are to be aimed for?

40 W In the prison environment the best prisons – and this comes from an extensive study from colleagues at Cambridge University, Alison LIEBLING, Ben CREWE and others over many years who have tried to ask the question: what constitutes a good prison? How do we recognise good quality prison work as well? The answer comes back time and time again that if you look at the prisons with the least number of assaults, the least number of trafficking issues, the least number of misuse of information, and so forth, they are prisoners that place an absolute premium on building up stocks of dignity and respect and humanity and decency within the prison workplace, both for prisoners and those who work there.

50 They model that, and they try and measure that as well, as hard as that is. If you value the humanity, the human dimension of prisoners, that's got to be a starting point. If you value the idea that people can change, that's an important starting point as well for a good prison officer because, otherwise, you are just churning your wheels and falling back on static security. You may as well not engage in dynamic security if you don't believe in rehabilitation and the changed capacity of certain prisoners, in a sense, so that's one value, I think, that's got to be up there: the idea that people can change and that officers can play a meaningful role or help spark that.

10 The other values, I guess, are, you know, you've got to uphold conditions of safety. You have got to be committed to honesty and integrity also, obviously, and you have also got to value – I just have to say this. You have actually got to value people that want to air constructive criticism or, in plainer terms, have a bit of a whinge or say something negative about the environment that they work in. You have got to uphold that particular value. You have got to value people who are willing to stick their neck out and say, "Something is wrong here", and not neutralise or rationalise away what they are saying, but embrace and interrogate and look into what they are saying and try and work out whether there is any gravity to that.

So, yes, you want officer culture that values, and a line management and a senior management and, ultimately, a manager and a correctional complex, or correctional department, that values kind of a warts and all viewpoint from those working in the system, and doesn't shy away from it.

20 CA These days, from general managers down to correctional officers, people are pretty much required to participate in performance agreements, usually annually.

W Yes.

CA Is there a place for inclusion into that kind of management tool of integrity or values-based objectives?

30 W Yes, I think so. I mean, you could ask staff the question – I mean, this also comes to the idea of how do staff know when they are doing a good job? What does success look like in the prison officer role, and I think it is a legitimate question to ask staff to narrate or give examples of when you feel as though you have gone above and beyond the call of duty and when you have made a difference, or when you have had an opportunity to speak up about something that you thought might have been awry but you didn't, and, again, this all has to be in terms of a protective kind of atmosphere for that kind of feedback to come to the fore.

40 But, yes, in those performance reviews, absolutely, you can mine the values that are, if you like, keeping a particular officer buoyant and on track. You could also mine them to actually say, "Are there certain types of cliques or subcultures or values that are emerging in your workplace that you aren't so keen on and you think we need to be aware of?" I think the performance review process is often viewed as a process which is just about the individual and their own performance over the last, as you say, six months, 12 months, or whatever, but it could be a mechanism, especially in the prison environment, given that everybody has to ultimately go through it, to say, "Now, we're asking people about things they might have seen or heard that might not be on spec or as you would want them to be, is there anything that's on your mind that you wish to talk to us about?" Those moments are the starting points for more difficult conversations down the track. Otherwise, if you don't have a mechanism for inviting people to actually at least put something out there, however tentatively on the table, you're never going to know the true extent of the problematic activity going on on the ground.

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CA Can I ask you, just for a few minutes, about a different subject and it is that of uncovering and reporting corruption. How important is it that corrupt activity be reported?

W It's absolutely critically important, especially with the more serious kind. To be frank, in the worst case scenario, you've got people's lives at stake, obviously, staff and prisoners and in rare cases sometimes family members beyond the gate of prisoners, or staff family members beyond the gate of prisoners, in the worst sort of extortion kinds of cases, et cetera.

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It is absolutely important because it fundamentally undermines everything that a good prison should be about. Good prisons should be about the safety and security of its occupants, but it also should be about bettering their lives so that they don't return to prison on release. And as 98.5 or 99.5 of all people sentenced in this country are going to be released one day, that has to be a fundamental of prison, and all the things we have talked about undermine that process.

20

CA You have just emphasised the importance of reporting. In your book, however, you refer to the proposition that official reports and records of correctional corruption are likely to be just the tip of the iceberg.

W Yes.

CA Do you recall that from your book?

W Yes.

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CA Why is that so? Assuming that to be correct, why would that be so?

W My sense, or our sense, is that – well, for two reasons. The main one being that – under-reporting occurs where people believe, rightly or wrongly, that if they do report, little or nothing will come of that report. So they don't have confidence in the mechanisms available for something to be done about that which they do speak up about.

Secondly, they don't report because they worry that it will have consequences for themselves in the job and bear down negatively upon them.

40

Thirdly, they don't report, sometimes, because the pressure by certain staff on them to neutralise certain types of activities, which probably could be and should be reported, can be strong on occasion. That power and balance that exists, as you mentioned before, or touched on before, the difference between a very experienced officer who might be able to put pressure on a less experienced officer to sort of say, "Look, nah, don't worry about that, that's nothing" or, "This is the way we do it around here", that kind of thing, and just bring them into the fold or perhaps even offer them inducements not to report is another issue. Those are the main ones.

50

CA Peer pressure?

W Peer pressure, in short, exactly. Exactly. Peer pressure, yes. To come back to what you were saying earlier, this is where the Commissioner's phrase around and commitment to zero tolerance in terms of its signalling,

I understand that and fully support that and it matters, but the trick is how do you develop mechanisms for that to filter down to all levels of any particular prison complex so that the relatively new recruit who thinks, "Oh, that is the wrong way of doing things, that shouldn't have happened. This seems to be a pattern of behaviour that I need to report, and I know I need to report it because there is a zero tolerance stance towards this stuff", is not, in a way, undermined, as you say, by the peer pressure that doesn't believe in what the Commissioner is trying to do or whatever.

10 One of the most effective ways, unless you were going to go into it, in terms of actually overcoming corruption amongst staff, is to work out, for a prison manager, to work out which staff are fundamentally on my side and follow the vision of myself and the Commissioner and are doing things to the absolute best of their extent and have more or less impeccable records, which group of staff are in the middle and are kind of ambiguous or ambivalent about which way they want to go and give them the right of reply and give them a chance to actually get on board or they're out, and then learn which staff and try and discern which staff are actually never going to get on board and will do everything to undermine a progressive correctional climate, if you like, and get rid of them. It has been done overseas effectively by a particular prison governor, who I won't name, but that is how certain facilities have been turned around. It's been very pointed and sharp.

20 You will generally find, as a loose equation, there will be a third of people that are on board, a third of people that are ambivalent and a third of people that you will never turn around and will do untold damage behind the scenes to the vision that the Commissioner or a good prison manager might have.

30 CA Performance indicators, particularly perhaps for private centres that we have in Queensland, are framed around a range of things largely that can be quantified like assault rates, number of escapes.

W Yes.

CA The number of errors in identifying release dates, and so forth. Is there any perverse incentive, given that there are performance indicators of that kind, on the one hand, and the need to report on the other?

40 W Just to make sure I caught you correctly at the beginning there, you said in particular in relation to privately run facilities, there could be.

CA Privately run centres report to the Commissioner quarterly on a range of key performance indicators, most of which can be quantified of the type I have mentioned. Is that a disincentive?

50 W The short answer is, yes, there is a perverse incentive scheme set up under that scenario, yes, but I would also contend that the very best of prison managers or governors of private facilities don't fear the warts and all coming up and being reported. That's not to say that they can absolutely have everything reported because it relies on staff on the frontline doing the right thing and reporting it. No prison governor or prison manager can be across absolutely everything but, again, it can be attenuated. There is no necessary connection, if you like, between – it doesn't have to be a perverse incentive is what I'm saying. The best kind of prison managers,

public or private facilities, if they are getting that information, it's important information that is not necessarily the fault of the prison manager or governor themselves, there's something important and systemic or perhaps structural or even a little bit idiosyncratic that needs to be dealt with. It should be viewed as an indicator, not of things that need to change and not necessarily as a threat to the loss of a contract which, I think, is – that's where you might be headed with that sort of line of questioning.

10 Of course, in private facilities, they are worried about the contract and the standards to which they are held. They obviously are held to certain performance measures that sometimes state prisons are not. Yes, it can be in their interest to show a favourable level of reporting of various things such as, as you say, the number of out-of-cell hours, the number of assaults, the number of prisoners engaged in education programs, the number of contraband items found, et cetera, but, see, that can work two ways.

20 You could read very few, let's say, mobile phones being found in any one year in a particular private facility as an under-reporting, or you could say, actually, in our mechanisms for detecting pieces of contraband, or phones, have been very good and we have a very good idea of what's in there and what has come up, and we have very good prevention mechanisms at front of house, et cetera. Again, it can run two ways. But yes, in short, there is a danger of perverse incentives and I think that behoves others in the system, whether it is the Commissioner or the government to say to those private contractors, et cetera, that we value an accurate warts and all reporting of those kinds of activities, there is nothing to fear in terms of a possible loss of contract. Because what will ultimately lose from the contract is when all of those things become so embedded that something flies up in their face like, you know, assaults, or a trafficking ring-

30 CA Violence.

W Exactly – that's been going on for a while and they haven't been honest about reporting it.

40 CA Thanks, Professor HALSEY.

PO Mr MURDOCH, do you have any questions?

LR No, may it please the Commission.

PO Thank you. Anyone else who has any questions? No. Very well. Thanks, Professor. You are excused. Thank you for coming in.

50 PO Mr RICE, do I understand the next witness, Mr BALLANTYNE, is due at 2 o'clock?

CA Yes, 2 o'clock.

END OF SESSION

LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT