

**BORONIA PRE-RELEASE CENTRE FOR WOMEN**

*Statement by Minister for Justice*

**MR J.B. D'ORAZIO (Ballajura - Minister for Justice)** [2.35 pm]: I advise the house of the achievements of the Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women as a category winner at the 2005 Premier's Awards for Excellence in Public Sector Management. Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women was the category winner in "People and Communities: Social and Community Development" at the 2005 Premier's awards and also was a finalist in the leadership award.

The Department of Justice's submission reflected the philosophy underpinning Boronia Pre-release Centre's vision, purpose and objectives; that is, to provide a custodial environment that enables women in custody to address their offending behaviour and ensure their successful reintegration back into the community. In line with the Gallop government's commitment to reviewing the needs and conditions of women prisoners, Boronia Pre-release Centre was officially opened on 5 May 2004. It is the first purpose-built prison for women in Western Australia. The aim of Boronia Pre-release Centre is to reduce the likelihood of women returning to crime on their release from prison. Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women works towards addressing offending behaviour. This often requires the re-socialising of women to overcome difficulties and improve their life chances by helping them develop essential social, psychological, parenting, educational, vocational, problem-solving and coping skills.

As I have previously advised the house, Boronia Pre-release Centre has so far experienced no escapes, no serious incidents, no assaults on staff and no attempted suicides by prisoners. The reoffending rate among women from Boronia Pre-release Centre currently is less than half the statewide rate of 45 per cent. Women at Boronia Pre-release Centre make reparation to the community through community work programs, which include partnerships with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Good Samaritan Industries and Landcare, and the preparation of breakfasts for at-risk kids. In addition, the community advisory group established to provide input during the development stage continues to operate and provide invaluable advice and links between the centre and the community. Through the commitment and hard work of all involved, the Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women has succeeded in offering an environment that provides women with independent living skills, employment training, empowerment, family responsibility, community responsibility, and respect and integrity. This represents a new approach in the management of women in prison and one that places reducing reoffending as the main goal.

I also note that the Department of Justice was also the winner of the Premier's award category of "Governance" for its collaborative approach to volunteering.

Since its inception, Boronia Pre-release Centre has developed a robust volunteer program that, over the past quarter, has provided services to the value of \$24 500 to the residents at Boronia Pre-release Centre. It was in this capacity that Boronia Pre-release Centre also contributed to this award. I congratulate all those involved. Well done.