

Question on Notice
No. 157
Asked on Tuesday 20 February 2007

MRS ATTWOOD asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services (MS SPENCE)-

QUESTION:

How much and what type of work has been performed by offenders and what have been the benefits to the community and the offenders?

ANSWER:

Probation and Parole

During 2005-06 Queensland Corrective Services managed an average of 12,000 offenders on community based orders.

During that same period, offenders performed close to 500,000 hours (444,022 hours) of community service valued at \$6.5 million worth of service to communities across Queensland at approximately 785 active community service sites.

Community service work makes an enormous contribution to communities across Queensland and the benefits to the community take many different forms. These include sorting recyclable items for resale to charities, recycling reading glasses to be sent to third world countries, assisting with food preparation and laundry services for residential care facilities, general maintenance work at sports grounds, cemeteries and parks across Queensland. Revegetation work is conducted along waterways, planting of trees, mulching and weeding.

Community service workers provide local bushcare groups with labour to help with revegetation work and clean-ups of local waterways. Local offenders are also helping Main Roads crews with graffiti removal, picking up rubbish and ensuring local roadways and highways are kept tidy.

Many welfare, Government and community organisations across Queensland benefit enormously by utilising community service workers who perform a range of tasks they would otherwise have to pay somebody else to do.

Another positive feature of community service is that it assists in developing a work ethic and work readiness for offenders. Workers gain job skills that can assist them finding employment. The community service program is a genuine example of the community interacting positively with offenders

Custodial Corrections

The Queensland Corrective Services Work Program is one of the most successful prisoner rehabilitation schemes in Queensland, injecting approximately \$1 million per year into regional Queensland through community service.

Regional communities benefit by having a source of labour to undertake projects or community work that would otherwise not be completed.

Prisoners perform a multitude of tasks, including maintenance of fences, cemeteries, playgrounds and showgrounds, and participate in many restoration and other maintenance projects.

During the period of July 2006 to January 2007, a total of 72 943 hours of community service work were conducted by prisoners at the Work Program.