

Campaign against prison privatisation in Australasia

Briefing about GEO

GEt Out GEO!

(NSW Government announced GEO to take over Parklea Prison 30/9/09)

See websites for analysis against privatisation.

<http://tinyurl.com/yc4asaf>

<http://www.stopthecelloff.org.au/>

<http://powertothepeoplesydney.blogspot.com/>

GEO is hiding behind name changes (they cite bad publicity affecting their business)
previously known as Wackenhut
previously as Australian Correctional Management ACM

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wackenhut#Australia>

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Pieter has had 10 years experience at a senior management level and managing director level in the services, security and electronics businesses. Pieter graduated with a Masters in Business Administration from Stellenbosch University in South Africa in 1981.

<http://www.zoominfo.com/Search/CompanyDetail.aspx?CompanyID=49403232&cs=QEC8dVgCM>

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Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

The GEO Group Inc

Boca Raton, Florida

was Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Wackenhut Corrections Corporation

NYSE: WHC

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WSI is one of the largest security companies in the United States and the leading provider of security services to the US Government.

We perform protective services for U.S. Government agencies and corporations which includes security and law enforcement, fire and rescue services, fire prevention, emergency medical services, hazardous material response and emergency management.

AUSTRALIAN PRISONS CONTROLLED BY GEO

* Junee Correctional Centre, a medium-security correctional facility in regional NSW, for the New South Wales Department of Corrective Services. JUNEE CORRECTIONAL CENTRE
 Park Lane Junee, NSW 2663 Phone: (02) 6924 3222 Fax: (02) 6924 3197

* Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre at Wacol in Brisbane, for Queensland Corrective Services.

* Fulham Correctional Centre, a minimum/medium facility in West Sale, Victoria.

* Fulham Nalu Challenge Community, a minimum security transition facility also located in Sale, Victoria for The Department of Justice, Corrections Victoria.

The GEO Group Australia also manages the Melbourne Custody Centre and associated court custody services for Victoria Police.

Different unions cover them in different states. Some guards join unions but their pay is much lower than public prisons. In NSW it is the miscellaneous workers union, in Qsld LHMU and Vic is the CPSU. For non-custodial there are other unions involved. There was a seven day strike in 2005.

Reference book:

In Government We Trust: Market Failure and the Delusions of Privatisation

Warwick Funnell , Rober Jupe , Jane Andrew, UNSW Press, February 2009, 320pp, (scan of chapter available for reference upon request to JA)

Woomera experience (IGWT p.239)

DCS dropped using monitor at Junee (IGWT p247)

Taking charities clothing rather than paying for them/concealed (IGWT 249)

Rape 12 year old boy Woomera coverup (IGWT 250)

Breaches of contract Insp Gen, govt not concerned [IGWT 252)

Teachers doing sex offender classo (IGWT 255)

Corruption.

In prisons management, everything is cloaked with secrecy. Security is the term. Add to that corporate interests – “commercial in confidence” and the linking of senior players in the public prison system to the multinationals, and the stench of corruption abounds.

Underneath is evidence given about concealment of material that would affect bonus payments. Evidence given by the prison officers to the NZ Select Committee 29/7/09 re GEO run ACRP (Auckland Central Remand Prison) is available on request from JA.

Additionally Corrective Services has Wackenhut/GEO ex-employees at the highest levels. For example:

Col Kelaher is now Assistant Commissioner, North West Region. Prior to this, Mr Kelaher held the position of Executive General Manager Operations for the GEO Group Australia Pty Ltd, the largest provider of outsourced correctional management in Australia. In this role, Mr Kelaher was responsible for the operational management of correctional facilities in NSW, Queensland and Victoria.

See critical documents/history Wackenhut/GEO

http://www.privateci.org/rap_geo.html
http://www.privateci.org/shame_aust.html

(from those websites)

Coverups at Private Prisons

November 30, 2005 Australian

THE bonus and penalty system on which private prisons in Australia are run has been accused of encouraging operators to cover up riots and drug abuse by prisoners. Queensland Prison Officers Association secretary Brian Newman yesterday accused private prison operators of covering up incidents in their facilities that could threaten performance bonuses worth up to \$500,000 a year. "Nine years ago I worked at Arthur Gorrie (Correctional Centre at Wacol, west of Brisbane) and I would make drug finds but the drugs would be flushed down the toilet in front of me by senior officials," Mr Newman said. "You were powerless to do anything about it. "Anecdotal evidence given to me is that it still goes on today. There is no incentive for privately run prisons to report incidents." The management contract of Arthur Gorrie operator, the GEO Group, formerly known as Australasian Correctional Management, with the Queensland Government provides a \$500,000 performance bonus to prevent crime, drug abuse and riots. The Arthur Gorrie contract, a copy of which has been obtained by The Australian, says the \$500,000 bonus will be reduced by \$100,000 for each escape, "loss of control (riot)" or death in custody. Penalties of \$25,000 are also imposed for a string of problems such as discharging a prisoner in error, assaults by prisoners resulting in injury or a case of self-harm or attempted suicide. Other incidents that incur the \$25,000 penalty include serious industrial injuries, deliberately lit fires, major security breaches such as attempted

escapes or hostage-taking and loss of high-risk restricted articles. If random urine tests disclose that drug use in the prison is higher than 9 per cent and does not reduce towards the target of 4 per cent, the penalty applicable is also \$25,000. The bonuses and penalty provisions are the same for the contracts the GEO Group, the Australian subsidiary of the Miami-based Wackenhut, has with the Victorian and NSW governments to run the Melbourne Custody Centre and the Fulham and Junee prisons. Mr Newman said his association had asked the Queensland Government to conduct an inquiry into allegations by staff at Arthur Gorrie that "incidents" had been covered up "to avoid financial penalty to breach of contract". GEO Group is paid almost \$800 a week for each of the 710 prisoners housed at Arthur Gorrie. A spokesman for Queensland Corrective Services Minister Judy Spence yesterday confirmed that contracts for privately run prisons did provide for performance bonuses. "However, we are not able to confirm amounts or any details on payments or deductions regarding the bonuses as these matters are commercial in confidence," he said. Col Kelaher, GEO Group executive manager of operations, said he could not comment on the contract with the Government.

Auckland Central Remand Prison (ACRP) NZ

September 28, 2009 NZCity

Further doubt is being cast on the claimed efficiency of privately run prisons. The Green Party's pointing to evidence presented during Selected Committee hearings on private prisons legislation about the historical cost of the Auckland Remand Prison when it was in private hands. The Greens say it shows the cost per prisoner was over \$57 thousand a year compared to around \$50 thousand in the public system. The party says it proves there can be no justification for claims private prisons are cheaper than public ones. Meanwhile, special monitors are being proposed as part of the oversight for privately run prisons. Parliament's Law and Order Select Committee has reported back on the private prisons bill and is recommending additional checks and balances be put in place. It advises special monitors employed by the Department of Corrections be given free and unfettered access to the facilities to ensure proper standards are met. The Committee also recommends all private prison operators be required to comply with instructions from the Chief Executive of the Corrections Department.

July 31, 2009 Radio New Zealand

ACT MP David Garrett says he does not believe he intimidated two submitters to Parliament's law and order select committee, as alleged by the Labour Party. Labour Party MP Clayton Cosgrove believes Mr Garrett breached parliamentary privilege when he told two prison guards their submission would stop them from getting a job in a privately run prison. He says Mr Garrett's behaviour was shameful, and brought the select committee process into disrepute. Mr Cosgrove says the guards had experience working under private prison management and were providing expert opinions. Corrections Minister Judith Collins has also weighed in, saying the comments were totally inappropriate. But Mr Garrett says it was never his intention to intimidate, and he is looking forward to responding to Labour's complaint. Speaker of the House Lockwood Smith will decide whether to refer the matter to Parliament's privileges committee.

Prison company (GEO) to pay \$42.5 million in beating death

By John MacCormack - Express-News 04/08/2009

http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local_news/Prison_company_to_pay_425_million_in_beating_death.html

<http://www.13thcoa.courts.state.tx.us/opinions/pdfOpinion.asp?OpinionID=17574>

In a searing opinion, the 13th Court of Appeals has upheld \$42.5 million in punitive damages against a private prison operator for the “horrific and gruesome death” of inmate Gregorio De La Rosa Jr. in 2001.

De La Rosa was beaten to death by two other inmates at a 1,000-bed facility in Raymondville while guards and supervisors looked on, according to trial testimony three years ago.

The trial judge concluded that prison officials, including co-defendant David Forrest, the prison warden, had destroyed or lied about critical evidence, including a videotape of the fatal beating.

When De La Rosa died, he had only four days left to serve on a six-month sentence for a minor drug offense.

In the appellate court's ruling late last week, it upheld all but \$5 million of the original \$47.5 million jury award, noting, “We find Wackenhut's conduct was clearly reprehensible and, frankly, constituted a disgusting display of disrespect for the welfare of others and for this state's civil justice system.”

Wackenhut Corrections Corp. later became the Geo Group, which operates about 50 private prisons in five countries, including 19 in Texas. Lawyer Reagan Simpson, who represented Geo, did not return a call seeking comment.

Ronald Rodriguez of Laredo, who sued Wackenhut on behalf of De La Rosa's family, said the appellate court sent “a clear message to the Geo Group that it will not tolerate (its) intentional malice, trickery and deceit, and attempted manipulation of the judicial system.”

JUNEE CORRECTIONAL CENTRE

(From the GEO website)

Visitor information

Junee Correctional Centre is a medium/minimum security institution for males located 450km south-west of Sydney and 40km from Wagga Wagga. It is the only privately run correctional centre in NSW.

The New South Wales Government called for expressions of interest from local councils in locating a new correctional centre in 1988. A total of 70 councils responded and State Cabinet selected Junee as the site of the new correctional centre in May 1989.

The contract was awarded in 1991, making Junee the first correctional facility in Australia to be designed, constructed and managed by the private sector under a single contractual arrangement. It was opened on 19 March 1993.

The centre can accommodate 750 inmates, 610 in medium security and 140 in minimum security. All inmates are held in individual cells, with certain cells equipped to accommodate inmates in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

Community involvement

The Junee Correctional Centre takes pride in its close relationship with the community and assists in a number of activities and events in the township. These include the rodeo, the Junee Show, the Junee Billy Cart Race, the National Schoolboys' Rugby Competition and street parades.

Other services provided by inmates include the maintenance of many streetscapes and grounds in town as well as the bowling club, churches, aged care facilities and community organisation facilities such as scout halls and football clubs. On Australia Day, the centre awards six local individuals with a \$1000 scholarship and sponsors the annual Australia Day 'Jailbreak' Fun Run.

Junee Correctional Centre also sponsors the Junee Diesels Rugby League Football Club, which plays in the NSW Country Rugby League Group 9 competition that involves teams in the Riverina district.

Capital works

In 2004, the NSW government approved a \$5 million refurbishment of the centre. These works included refurbishment of the kitchen areas, a new gatehouse, refurbishment of the intake and medical facilities and prisoners canteen, as well as a new staff amenities area.

An upgrade of the in-cell inmate communication system was completed in early 2005. This is a state-of-the-art system allowing inmates and staff to communicate easily and readily. It also has many added features such as digital recording of all system traffic. There was also an upgrade of the inmate telephone system that automatically monitors all inmates' telephones and integrates with the inmate accounting system to automatically credit/debit inmates' accounts.

The installation of a methadone iris-scanner and dispensing system to increase the accuracy and speed of identifying and dosing inmates was also undertaken recently. It was local initiative, first trialled in 2002, and Junee was the first correctional centre in NSW to use the iris methadone dispensing system.

Industries program

Junee Correctional Centre operates eight different industry programs that provide inmates with employment and training opportunities that will help them to gain employment when they are released.

The industries program workshops employ 15-20 inmates each and include producing metal components and wine racks for a furniture company, as well as a packaging and assembly program.

Junee also has a market garden that produces vegetables for the prison kitchen.

Education

The centre has an education partnership with the East Gippsland Institute of TAFE in Victoria, which allows training programs to be delivered by qualified and industry experienced teaching staff.

Courses offered include commercial cooking, hospitality services, small business management, literacy and numeracy, computer studies, distance education (correspondence) programs, Aboriginal culture, automotive studies, basic engineering, visual arts, forklift operation, and rural studies. In 2004 more than 100,000 education hours were delivered by TAFE.

Health Services

The centre's hospital (six-beds) and medical clinic provides 24-hour medical services and inpatient care. It is staffed by registered nurses employed by The GEO Group Australia.

The centre has a full-time medical officer, part-time dentist and part-time psychiatrist.

Services provided at the centre include:

- * Prescribing medication
- * Methadone treatment
- * Public health screening, including HIV and Hepatitis C
- * General medical visits
- * Dentistry and psychiatric consultations
- * X-ray facilities

Special Programs

Junee also conducts a number of special programs including:

- * Harm reduction, anger management, drug and alcohol discussion groups, and a HIV/AIDS program.
- * A dedicated Koori specialist counsellor.
- * NAIDOC celebrations to assist indigenous inmates to maintain links with family and their community.
- * KAIROS — an interdenominational Christian program that establishes strong Christian communities among the prison population and provide inmates with positive experiences of religious renewal.
- * Regular visits from Centrelink, Wesley Uniting (Inmate Employment Services), Aboriginal Health Services and local Aboriginal elders.