



Community & Public Sector Union  
Civil Service Association of WA

## MEDIA RELEASE

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Civil Service Association of WA Inc

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**Friday July 12, 2013**

### Youth Custodial Officers voice safety concerns

Youth Custodial Officers do not want to move back to the Banksia Hill Detention Centre until all their safety and security concerns have been met.

They are also against a Corrective Services band-aid proposal to pay adult prison officers to work in the juvenile detention centre on their days off.

The custodial officers voiced their concerns at a stop work meeting at Hakea Prison on Friday.

Most of Western Australia's only dedicated centre for juveniles has been a construction site since it was heavily damaged in the January 20 riot with the majority of the juvenile population being housed at the nearby Hakea Prison for adults.

Initially the department wanted staff and detainees to return to Banksia Hill by June but the custodial officers were against returning until a lengthy list of safety concerns were adequately addressed.

Regular meetings between officers, the union and senior Corrective Services personnel had been working through the issues but the department cancelled this week's meeting and then told officers of plans to start the transfer on August 26.

Community and Public Sector Union/Civil Service Association acting branch secretary Rikki Hendon said ongoing negotiations with the department had been done in good faith and up until now no industrial action had been taken.

"The youth custodial officers recognise that Banksia Hill is the preferred location for the juveniles and they were happy to work with the department to improve the centre's security but they are not prepared to compromise their safety," Ms Hendon said.

"They are pretty angry the department has set a date when some of the major issues have not been addressed.

"Initially members were given a commitment to have culling on fences installed by mid August but the department is citing a steel shortage as the reason for the delay."

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Ms Hendon said without the cowling detainees could scale the fences within 30 seconds, making them ineffective.

The officers also want the introduction of a third recovery team.

The two-member teams wear utility belts that include handcuffs and they are the first responders to incidents when they break out.

“The department is saying they will consider a third recovery team when muster numbers increase but it is more about patrolling all the areas safely than it is about detainee numbers.”

The union has hit out at plans to recruit prison officers from adult prisons to engage in youth custodial work on an ad hoc basis.

The adult officers will be employed on a casual basis but the union is saying more should be done to put more full-time and properly trained custodial officers into the role.

**FOR COMMENT:**

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