



General Media Enquires

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Staff freeze blamed for shortfall in training

The Community and Public Sector Union/Civil Service Association has blamed staff freezes imposed by the Barnett Government in 2012 for the lack of training for the next batch of youth custodial officers.

Traditionally the Corrective Services recruitment phase takes five months where applicants are assessed for suitability and short-listed for the three-month training program.

CPSU/CSA Branch Secretary Toni Walkington said there 17 people who made the cut from 350 applicants and qualified for training but were not put into the last school because of the staff cap.

“The fact that so many people missed out indicates that there is a stringent selection criteria to get the right people for the job and goes against the cheap comments by Corrective Services Minister Joe Francis that suggested some of the people in the system were not the right ones for the job,” Ms Walkington said.

“Of those 17 people accepted we understand that only 10 are currently available for the next school.

“At this stage we don’t even know when the next school will be held which is alarming considering it has been well-documented that there is a major staff shortage at the Banksia Hill Detention Centre.”

Ms Walkington suggested up to an additional 40 staff would be needed at Western Australia’s only juvenile detention centre when it is repaired after it was heavily damaged in a riot on January 20.

The union has reaffirmed its position that staff are not willing to move back to Banksia Hill from the nearby Hakea Prison until building works are complete and the centre is safe for them and detainees.

Ms Walkington has called on the Barnett Government to lift the staff freeze with chronic understaffing putting staff under increased pressure that has prevented children from getting access to adequate education and rehabilitation programs.

FOR COMMENT:

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