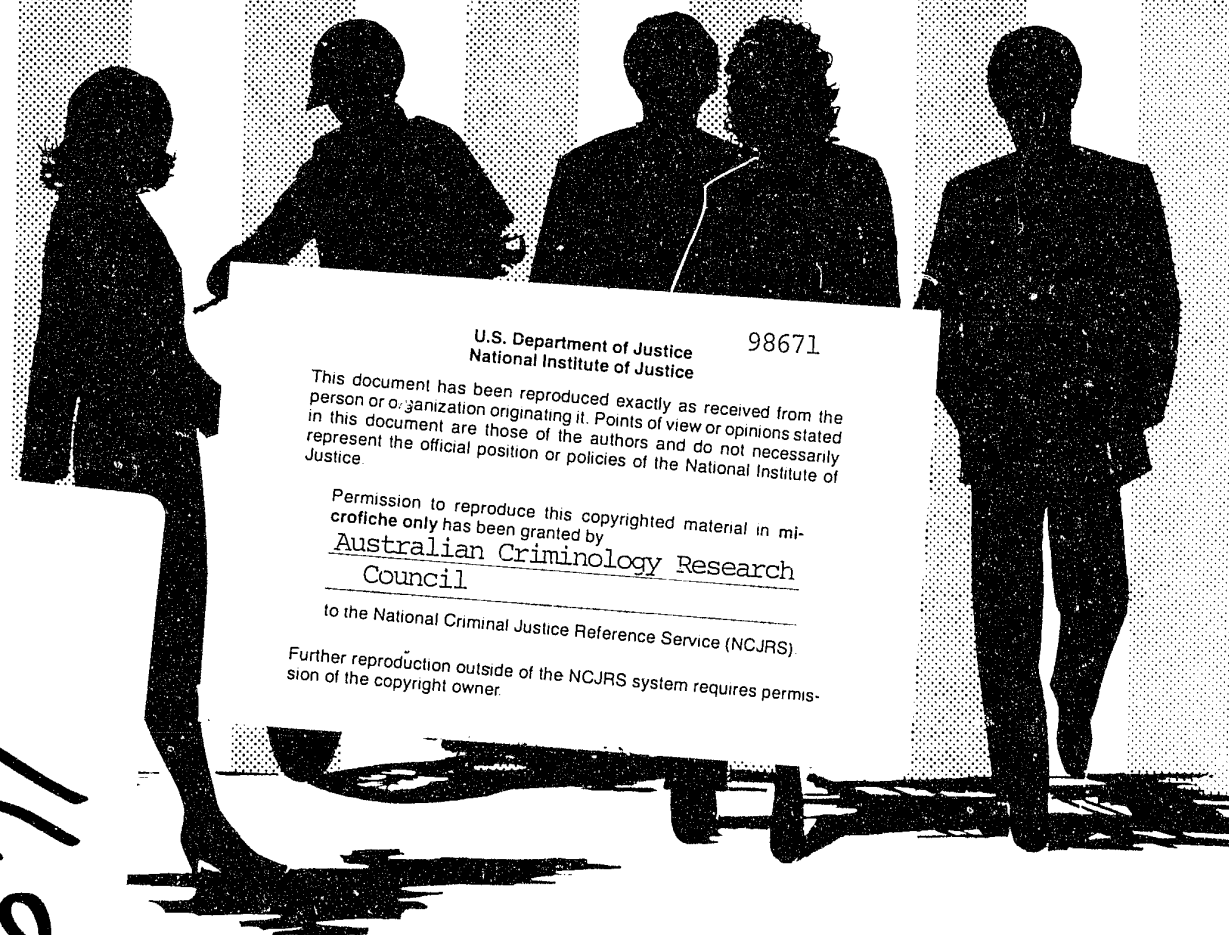


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QUEENSLAND PROBATION and PAROLE SERVICE

COMMUNITY SERVICE: An Evaluation of the
Impact of the Community Service Order Scheme
in Queensland



QUEENSLAND PROBATION AND PAROLE SERVICE

COMMUNITY SERVICE: AN EVALUATION OF THE
IMPACT OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER
SCHEME IN QUEENSLAND

A Report Prepared under a Grant from the Criminology
Research Council.

by

DR SALLY LEIVESLEY

April 1983

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ACQUISITIONS

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Foreword

As Minister responsible for corrective services in Queensland since December 1980, I have taken a keen personal interest in Community Service Orders as a court-sentencing option.

Now, nearly two and a half years after the first order was made in Toowoomba in February 1981, I am very pleased indeed to add my opinion to the general belief that the scheme has been judged as being both beneficial to the offenders individually and the overall population of Queensland.

This in-depth evaluation by Dr. Sally Leivesley of the formative years of Community Service Orders in Queensland is an important addition to the available data on corrective programs being undertaken in Australia today.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Terry White'.

TERRY WHITE
Minister for Welfare Services

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation of the Community Service Scheme in Queensland was made possible by a grant from the Criminology Research Council. The grant from the Criminology Research Council and the assistance from the Research Division of the Australian Institute of Criminology is gratefully acknowledged.

Twelve community organisations involved in Community Service from: Toowoomba, Townsville, Brisbane and Woodridge, willingly gave assistance to the study. Seventeen representatives of the Queensland Probation and Parole Service including seven Community Service Supervisors from Toowoomba, Townsville, Brisbane, Woodridge, Ayr, Southport, Rockhampton and Ipswich also participated in the evaluation. Three magistrates and three judges from Brisbane, Toowoomba and Townsville assisted with discussions on the functioning of the Scheme over the past two years.

Appreciation is also extended to the libraries within the Queensland Department of Welfare Services and the Australian Institute of Criminology for their co-operation in obtaining literature on Community Service Schemes in other countries.

INTRODUCTION

The Community Service Order Scheme was introduced in legislation under the Offenders Probation and Parole Act 1980, Part V, Community Service Orders. The first Order was made in February 1981 in Toowoomba and Community Service commenced in the following month. In the first 23 months of operation (March 1981 - January 1983), 1453 offenders were given Community Service Orders totalling 170,878 hours of voluntary work to the community. This represented in terms of casual wages a contribution of \$854,390 in voluntary work.

The evaluation of the impact of the Community Service Order Scheme on the community was proposed by the Queensland Probation and Parole Service and funded by a grant from the Criminology Research Council.

A three month study commenced in January 1983 with visits to different centres in the State by an evaluation team.

There were two central hypotheses to the evaluation study:

1. That the efficacy of any particular program is dependent on the complex relationship between the responsiveness by the offender to work in the community, the capacity of the community to be involved in a statutory program, and the organisational effectiveness of the community service program.
2. That the working out of this complex relationship in practice has observable effects on the community which will influence significantly the community's continued involvement in Corrections.

In summary, the project was to identify the response to Community Service by community groups, the offenders and the Probation and Parole Service.

There were three aims to the study:

1. To assess the respective contributions and responses to the scheme by the 'community hosts' (organisations and individuals using the Scheme), Community Service Supervisors, Probation and Parole Officers, the Judiciary, and the offenders.
2. To measure both in quantitative and qualitative terms

the effects of Community Service Orders on the community as a whole and significant sections of it.

3. To identify the relevance of community networks involved in the development of Community Service projects by the Probation and Parole Service.

The methods involved the establishment of a two person team by the Probation and Parole Service. The team consisted of an external evaluator who was a Consultant to the Probation and Parole Service and the Chief Community Programs Officer in the Service who had responsibility for the administration of the Community Service Scheme.

A comprehensive literature review was undertaken to identify relevant findings from community service projects in other States of Australia and from overseas. The field work involved visits by the team to a number of centres in Queensland which were selected to obtain an overview of the operation of Community Service throughout the State:

Metropolitan suburbs Brisbane Office
Expanding Provincial City Townsville
Rural Area Darling Downs
Recently Introduced Centre Ayr

In total, interviews were conducted with 39 people. Sixteen people in twelve community organisations gave information on the development of Community Service in Toowoomba, Townsville, Brisbane, and Woodridge. Ten representatives of the Probation and Parole Service and seven Community Service Supervisors from Toowoomba, Townsville, Brisbane, Woodridge, Ayr, Southport, Rockhampton and Ipswich, were interviewed. Discussions were also held with three judges and three magistrates in Toowoomba, Townsville and Brisbane.

Two areas were selected for detailed case studies- Toowoomba and Woodridge. The selection of these two centres was made firstly, to study Toowoomba which had the most developed Community Service Scheme in the State and where the first order had been made in February 1981. Secondly, to have a contrasting centre where there were differences in the socio economic status of residents and a different voluntary structure.

Woodridge was chosen as a contrast to Toowoomba in both these characteristics.

An evaluation model was used in the study to provide a basis for the assessment of both quantitative and qualitative data. While statistical information can be easily assessed, subjective responses to the Community Service Order Scheme required some analytical framework so that the findings could be replicated, if necessary.

Six key indicators of the impact of Community Service in Queensland were developed for the study:

1. Community Response
2. Response of the Probation and Parole Service
3. Growth in the Community Service Order Scheme
4. Response by Offenders
5. Cost Effectiveness of the Community Service Order Scheme
6. Response by the Judiciary

These indicators and the use of an evaluation model are described in greater detail in Appendix A, 'An Evaluation Model for Community Service'.

The findings and recommendations from the evaluation of the Community Service Scheme are presented in Chapter I. In Chapter 2 there is a history of the development of Community Service in other States of Australia, New Zealand, England, the United States of America and Canada. Chapter 3 provides an overview of Community Service in Queensland. Chapter 4 contains case studies of Toowoomba and Woodridge. The bibliography is indexed to present the literature on Community Service for each country.

There are limitations to the study. Firstly, the findings are limited to the data that could be gathered within the three month period. The 39 people interviewed who participated in the Scheme represent only a small proportion of the total number of people, from the community and the Probation and Parole Service, who are involved with Community Service.

Secondly, the subject areas chosen in the study are limited. Consideration has not been given to the characteristics of offenders given Community Service Orders in Queensland or any rates of recidivism. The

question of the development of special projects for aboriginal reserves has also not been answered. Only one reserve, Palm Island was considered in this study and information is needed on all the reserves in Queensland alongside detailed consultations with aboriginal representatives. Another subject that has not been included is a comparative study of Community Service legislation in the different States of Australia. Information has not been readily available on the operation of Community Service in other States but this study is one of four currently funded by the Criminology Research Council and these details will soon be available. A further gap in this study is the response by the solicitors and barristers to Community Service.

The third limitation which is the most serious one to affect the present study is the statistical analysis of the first two years data from Queensland. The numbers of offenders on Community Service are small compared to the total number of offenders appearing before the Courts. Trends in the numbers of people on Community Service can only be viewed as indications. Where possible comparative information has been drawn from England where annual numbers of Orders for Community Service are over 20,000.

CHAPTER 1: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings and recommendations of the study are presented under six headings:

1. Community Response
2. Response of the Probation and Parole Service
3. Growth in the Community Service Order Scheme
4. Response by Offenders
5. Cost Effectiveness of the Community Service Order Scheme
6. Response by the Judiciary

These headings represent six indicators of the impact of the Community Service Order Scheme in Queensland. The findings and recommendations under each heading provide a basis for further development of the Scheme by the Queensland Probation and Parole Service.

1. COMMUNITY RESPONSE

The main finding of the study is that the Community Service Order Scheme has, within the first two years, been successful and has contributed significantly to community projects. This finding is based on the response of community organisations to the scheme. Through community service, offenders have been introduced to many aspects of voluntary work. Assistance has been given to aged persons homes, institutions for the handicapped, service organisations, and individual pensioner households. In return, the individuals and organisations who have participated, have expressed an enthusiasm for the scheme, and, a commitment to assisting the offender to successfully complete his community service sentence.

In a period of 23 months, up to 24th January, 1983, a total of 170,878 hours of community service had been ordered by the courts against 1453 offenders. This represented an average sentence of 118 hours per offender and contributed an estimated \$854,390 in casual labour to the community.

The second finding is that charitable organisations with full-time staff who can supervise the offender, appear to be the most successful placement.

The third finding is that the Probation and Parole Service is developing some projects where Community Service Supervisors, employed by the Service provide full-time supervision rather than the voluntary agencies. This is in part responsible for a low failure rate

by offenders while working in organisations. In total, there have been 81 offenders in 23 months who have failed to comply with the conditions of their Community Service Order. This represents 6% of all offenders on the scheme. However the community organisations report only 1-2% of offenders working on projects proved to be a problem. On a few projects full time on site supervision is provided by the Community Service Supervisors. This helps to establish the suitability of offenders for particular types of community work. Occasionally these projects are used for offenders who could prove difficult for voluntary Supervisors.

Two examples of this type of project, are, supervised work in pensioner households and the clearing of a cemetery.

A similar development with the Community Service Order Scheme has been observed in most areas of England where the scheme has been operating since 1972.

Discussions with the voluntary agencies and the Probation and Parole Service, including the Community Service Supervisors, during the three months of the study, have led to several recommendations for further developments in the Scheme to assist the voluntary agencies:

1. It is recommended that the voluntary agencies be invited to attend Regional Seminars with the Probation and Parole Service and Community Service Supervisors on one or two occasions a year.

This would assist new agencies coming into the Scheme and provide opportunities for discussion for those agencies that have been involved over a period. New agencies can experience difficulties with initial fears by staff on the effects of having offenders on the premises. There are occasionally concerns about offenders, the security of premises, and the security of residents. Agencies where the Scheme is well developed want to know how to provide additional assistance to offenders, to discuss some of the types of excuses they are given, and to know whether they can provide assistance in the form of references.

2. It is recommended that the Queensland Probation and Parole Service consider the development of a half yearly newsletter with items of interest from all regions to give community organisations information on the operation of the Scheme elsewhere. There is considerable interest in the 'success stories' where some offenders contribute more time to organisations or find work as a result of their Service. It is recommended that the Community Service Newsletter contain a Queensland Report by the Principal Community Programs Officer and Reports from the Regional

Offices. The Queensland Report is of particular interest for the judiciary as it can show statistics on the offenders placed on Community Service in each region, types of offences, sex of offenders, numbers of hours and combined Orders (where Probation and Community Service are combined in the Order).

The Regional Reports are an opportunity for the Senior Probation Officers to comment on the operations of the scheme in their Regions. Details on activities can be contributed by the full time Regional Community Service Coordinator (when these positions are finalised) and also by the charitable agencies. The Community Service Coordinator can describe the types of project that he has been working with over the previous six months, the numbers of offenders involved, and details of successes where employment or other rewards have come to the offenders through the Scheme. In addition the charitable agencies can be asked to include their comments on projects. Over the last two years there have been projects throughout Queensland where Community Service workers have participated in voluntary work that has led to public recognition for the supervising agency. A newsletter provides an opportunity for recognition to be given to the contributions by Community Service workers to the community and the willing assistance by charitable agencies.

3. It is recommended that the Probation and Parole Service continue to develop projects, with emphasis on the Charitable organisations who have full time staff. It is however, necessary to continue the present trend in some regions, where work is offered to voluntary organisations who only need occasional work. This is more difficult to organise but meets the community's need for voluntary assistance. In addition, the further development of projects where work is undertaken on weekdays, as well as weekends, would assist some organisations. Where organisations are relying on full time paid staff to supervise offenders it is sometimes more convenient to have work undertaken during the week. Another development within agencies that can be established as the Scheme grows, is, the identification of agencies where special skills can be used. These projects are particularly rewarding to individual offenders.

2. RESPONSE OF THE PROBATION AND PAROLE SERVICE

COMMUNITY SERVICE SUPERVISORS

Community Service Supervisors appear to find considerable work satisfaction from their service to the community

organisations and from contact with offenders to assist them through their sentences.

A finding of the study is that in some instances supervisors appear to concentrate initially on services to pensioners in the community. After a time, other projects are developed which extend the range of placements for offenders. This history of development in some areas suggests that there is a gap in voluntary services to pensioners which is now being covered by the new Scheme. The Community Service Supervisors, while operating the services to pensioners, are, in effect, creating a new voluntary service. A similar development has been noted in England though the larger numbers appearing in the Community Service Order Scheme in England have caused a much greater community development of projects.

A number of recommendations have emerged from observations during the study and discussions with representatives of the Community Service Supervisors, voluntary organisations and Probation and Parole Officers:

1: It is recommended that each region have a full time Community Service Coordinator working from within the Probation and Parole Service. The current caseload on a State level for Probationers in December 1982 was 4006 and 605 for Community Service workers. This shows that community service is now 15% of the Probation caseload and of growing importance as part of the Probation and Parole Service Work. A study of community service in Tasmania found that high work loads left little time for development or administration of community service, caused low breaching rates and led to numbers of offenders being absent without leave. A reason for a full time Coordinator is that the Senior Probation and Parole Officers have been carrying the burden of community development work. While the Senior Probation Officer is vital to the commencement of a scheme in a region because of his strong community contacts this role could be handed over to a full time Coordinator and monitored.

Toowoomba has developed an administrative role for one of the Supervisors due to the considerable pressures of work. In this centre a hundred offenders could be working in voluntary agencies each week and this requires considerable administration. Work schedules of organisations, and of offenders, for each supervisor need to be worked out weekly. There is considerable liaison regularly with each voluntary organisation on the placement and progress of offenders. The liaison with offenders includes the weekly excuses for non attendance and special requests for projects or times of work. In addition, there is the matching of each new offender to an appropriate position. Staffing also provides some work where a number of part time people may have particular requests or suggestions in relation to

their involvement. After all these tasks are finished, there remains the constant liaison with the Senior Probation Officer and other probation officers in relation to the Scheme and individual offenders. The Co-ordinator's role is essentially non-professional as it covers clerical tasks in the Office of the Probation and Parole Service and practical tasks in the community under professional supervision of Probation and Parole Officers. The basic elements of the role can be described as follows:

- i) Clerical - Duty rosters of part time supervisors
Records of all new admissions of offenders
Allocation of offenders to projects
Weekly records on offender's performance and attendance on projects
- ii) Liaison - Contacts with offenders in relation to briefings on project work, attendance and procedures to be followed for any absences
Contacts with part time supervisors on the progress of their offenders and information on the voluntary agencies
Contacts with the voluntary agencies on the progress of projects and development of new projects
Regular meetings with the supervising officer within the Probation and Parole Service and discussions on progress of offenders, discussion of problems of compliance with the order by offenders, and information on the voluntary agencies
- iii) Field Work - In Regions where caseloads of Community Service Workers are low, the full time Co-ordinator can undertake some direct supervision of offenders in association with part time supervisors. Full responsibility for maintenance of all equipment being used by part time supervisors.

2. It is recommended that selection within a Region for part time supervisors or full time Co-ordinators should include individuals with strong community service backgrounds. These are individuals who have a history of voluntary service or training in community work. This is not an all embracing recommendation but is a recommendation for balance in the staffing of community service positions. The Community Service Scheme is expanding throughout Queensland and successful development of voluntary agency co-operation with the scheme will require an ability to work closely with voluntary agencies, helping them to work with offenders, and opening up new positions for the growing numbers of community service workers. Within the first two years the Probation and Parole Service has obtained willing co-operation from charitable agencies who have understood

their role in supervising the offender. This has been a 'creaming off' effect where the most suitable agencies have been involved in the Scheme's early development. As the Scheme expands agencies may require significantly more liaison time from supervisors to obtain successful placements for offenders.

The Community Service Supervisors appear to have two functions. The main function is to be a practical person who can obtain co-operation from offenders of all ages. The community development function is secondary but needs to be considered within each region. As community service expands it may be possible to allocate the opening of new projects and close liaison with the agencies to one person on the team.

3. Recommendations have come from Supervisors for more information on the Scheme to be given to the community. This means an increase in a public relations role by the Probation and Parole Service. An earlier recommendation for a half yearly newsletter could be a vehicle for community information with excerpts being made available to the media.

4. It is recommended that an in service training scheme be introduced for Supervisors. There are now 80 part time Supervisors in the State. There have been similar recommendations in England in the late 1970's for training for Community Service Supervisors. It has been found in England that when unqualified persons were made Supervisors and given training and experience, they were extremely able in their work. As well as extending individual abilities, training provides continuity across the State in the implementation of policies. Training could be developed either at State or Regional levels. A suggested curriculum is as follows: Supervisors and Co-ordinators to be involved in lectures and discussions covering:

- i. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBATION AND PAROLE SERVICE by members of the Probation Service, describing the roles of Officers and the structure and administration of the Service. Liaison between Probation Officers and Supervisors.
- ii. INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY SERVICE by the Principal Community Programs Officer to describe the history of its development in Queensland, other States of Australia and overseas. Information on this subject appears as Chapter 2 of the Report. Description of the Legislation.
- iii. ADMINISTRATION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE IN QUEENSLAND by the Principal Community Programs Officer and Senior Probation Officers on the Community Service

Scheme. Administrative procedures, e.g. weekly reports and introduction to offenders to be included.

- iv. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT by the Principal Community Programs Officer and Senior Probation Officers on the role of the Supervisors and Co-ordinators in developing Community Service within agencies, and liaison with agencies. Identification of specific programs within agencies on: personal fear of offenders; management of difficult behaviour; reoffending within the agency; attempts to have visits by friends while working in the agency; and irregular attendance.
- v. COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS OF THE ORDER by the Principal Community Programs Officer and Probation Officers on dealing with non attendance and absconding, use of records and liaison with Probation Officers.
- vi. METHODS OF INCREASING OFFENDER PARTICIPATION by the Principal Community Programs Officer and experienced Community Service Supervisors giving examples of difficulties in obtaining high attendance rates and management of difficult individual offenders.

Suggested Reading for Participants :

Richards, N. and Maull, G., 'Making Community Service into Service for the Community', Probation Journal, 29:3, September 1982, 103-106

Young, W., 'Community Service Orders', Heinemann, London 1979 - Chapter 4: Administration and Practice

Chapter 4 of this report (describing the case studies of Toowoomba and Woodridge).

PROBATION OFFICERS

It has been found in the study, that the role of the Probation Officer remains to be developed in relation to Community Service. This problem is not new in Community Service. In England, three years after the Scheme started, the Home Office Research Unit was commenting on the conflict for the Probation Officer, of his therapeutic role with the more punitive aspects of community service. Six years after the Scheme started there were still problems with reports of 'considerable ambivalence' amongst Probation Officers about the Scheme.

However, Community Service has brought the Probation Services, in the countries where it is practised, into close contact with the community. There is the added pressure of direct accountability to the community and failures where offenders cause concern in an agency. The advantages for the Probation and Parole Services have proven wider than just contacts with the community for Community Service purposes. In England and the United States it has opened community agencies to direct contact with the Service and facilities have become available for other Service needs. In Australia, Community Service may be the beginning of a move into the field of Community Corrections where community agencies are given a direct responsibility for services which previously were totally a government responsibility.

Community Service is growing with increasing monthly referrals for the State and in the next year the implementation of a Fine Option Scheme will add to the numbers of offenders who can become eligible for Community Service.

There are a number of recommendations for the Probation Service :

1. It is recommended that consideration be given to the use of forward estimates of growth in the regions so that there are not strains on staff from a fast growing caseload of probationers and community service workers.
2. It is recommended that the Probation Officers be involved directly in any training of Community Supervisors and Co-ordinators, as suggested in the previous section in the outlined training curriculum.
3. It is recommended that Probation Officers accept direct professional responsibility for supervision and monitoring of Community Service Supervisors and Co-ordinators. In England, there was serious disassociation from the Scheme by Probation Officers and three solutions were tried and all found successful. These involved placing Community Supervisors in one office directly under the supervision of the Senior Probation Officer; attaching Supervisors to field teams of Probation Officers responsible to one field officer; and dividing Supervisors between individual Probation Officers.

There could be some difficulty in attempting the last solution in Queensland as the Supervisors usually have a flexible system whereby they do not permanently supervise individual offenders. Therefore, it is recommended that Supervisors start with direct responsibility to the Senior Probation Officer. Once there is reasonable growth in the Scheme, one Probation and Parole Officer could be given all offenders on Community Service on his caseload. This is being tried in Townsville and can be monitored to see whether there is a successful communication between

the Probation Officer and the Supervisors.

The Regional Co-ordinator would be responsible for the day to day activities of the supervisors and would provide direct liaison with the Probation Officer in the team.

It is also recommended that the Probation Officer or Officers develop a regular meeting time with all Supervisors and the Co-ordinator. One purpose of this meeting is an assessment of each offender's progress in the Scheme. This allows early problems to be discussed and the Probation Officer to offer advice on increasing offender co-operation. A second reason is for a regular assessment of the liaison between the Co-ordinator, Supervisors and organisations. A third reason is for the development of new projects using the experience of the Supervisors and Co-ordinator and the Probation Officer. A fourth reason is for close communication between all members of the team when an offender is failing to comply with his Order.

4. It is recommended that the Queensland Probation and Parole Service develop a procedure to determine how much supervision an individual offender on Community Service will require and decide on a suitable placement.

All initial interviews of offenders, could be undertaken by a Probation Officer who is part of the team working on Community Service.

A Tasmanian study of offenders on Community Service (Rook 1978) describes four variables in the offender's history that were independently related to failure to comply with the conditions of the Order. (i) irregular family relationships (ii) unstable work record (iii) prior Children's Court record (iv) prior Prison record. When all four of these variables occurred in combination the defaulting rate was 92%. An assessment of supervision needs for the offender could be based on the intake interview by the Probation Officer. The Tasmanian evidence of relevant variables is a basis for an initial trial in one Region for screening the Community Service Workers. The trial method for screening could be based on assigning the offender to close supervision when two of the four variables occur in combination. Close supervision would mean direct placement on a project under the part time Community Service Supervisor or a special placement in an agency where the voluntary supervisor could provide a suitable work environment. An evaluation of the trial method in the one Region after six months would show whether screening was assisting offenders in completing their Orders and protecting the community organisations from disruption.

5. It is recommended that Probation Officers give consideration to the development of special placements where these become available in the community. In England, one project that recognised special needs of

offenders was a Job Creation Program, established by the Probation and Parole Service. This was open to the community for unemployed persons as well as for offenders on Community Service. A similar need has been recognised in Ipswich in Queensland where Community Service offenders are integrated with a Young Unemployed Persons organisation.

6. It is recommended that Probation Officers also give attention to special groups in the community who are given Community Service by the Courts. In Queensland and other States of Australia there is evidence of a significant over-representation of people of aboriginal descent in jails. A study by Walton (1980) found this group to represent 25-30% of the total male prison population and 50% of the female prison population in Queensland. Thirty one percent of these prisoners were from reserves.

The Queensland Probation and Parole Service is currently undertaking a State wide investigation into Community Service for aboriginals with visits and consultations on all reserves. This approach to the development of Community Service as a successful option for the aboriginal population is to be commended. In the present study the difficulties of establishing a program on Palm Island were discussed but information was not gathered on other reserves. The situation appears to be one where placement of aboriginal people who are living in urban areas on Community Service, does not create any special demand on the Community Service Program. Townsville and Rockhampton centres report no difference between aboriginal and other offenders. However, in Palm Island there has been difficulty in obtaining on site supervision and in creating community interest in projects. The Queensland Probation and Parole Service has taken action to identify the difficulties on Palm Island and re-organise the supervision. The situation will be monitored and the lessons from Palm Island may provide assistance in the further development of the Scheme on other reserves.

The Western Australian experience suggests that on reserves it is necessary to involve the tribal elders in the supervision of offenders and identification of worthwhile projects that will protect the individual offender's dignity. A further recommendation is for the employment of supervisors by the Queensland Probation and Parole Service who are of aboriginal descent and who can be paid to provide full time on site supervision on reserves.

7. It is recommended that Probation and Parole Officers follow a consistent policy across the State on dealing with any failure to comply with Community Service Orders. Over the past 23 months failures to comply with conditions of the Community Service Orders have totalled 6%. This figure is based on the number of breaches and warrants issued over the 23 months in relation to the total number of offenders under supervision over this time. In England breaches of Orders have been recorded at 19%, five years after the Scheme began, when the annual number of offenders on Community Service was over 6,000.

An English study in 1980 identified four types of offender who breached: the 'non starter'; the 'good beginner' who attended but stops; the 'spasmodic attender'; and the 'disappeared offender'. In one area poor attendance rates were dramatically increased once the breaching policy was established. Offenders were informed that they would be summonsed to appear before a magistrate a few days after failing to appear for work except where a medical certificate was produced; permission had been given to be excused; or there was an adequate excuse given on the Monday morning.

The Queensland Probation and Parole Service does not regard breaching action as a total failure of a Community Service Order. Breaching can be used as part of the discipline for the offender and can be successful in motivating offenders to participate successfully and complete their hours of work. In some cases the Orders do fail and the offenders have to be dealt with by the Court for the original offence.

A consistent policy on action to be taken by all Probation Officers on any failure to comply with the condition of Community Service ensures a fair application of the rules to offenders throughout the State. It also clarifies the behaviour that is expected from offenders and will help the Community Service Supervisors.

8. It is recommended that Senior Probation and Parole Officers develop a supervisory role of the functioning of the team of Supervisors and Probation Officers once the Scheme is established in a region. The appointment of a permanent Co-ordinator would reduce the workload.

It has been found that these officers have carried a considerable workload in community development to establish Community Service in Queensland. This has included: liaison with Community Supervisors; initiation of projects through contacts with voluntary agencies and continuing these contacts to maintain community involvement; liaison with the judiciary to provide information on the functioning of the Scheme in the community; liaison with the media; and contacts with offenders.

3. GROWTH IN THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER SCHEME

The study of growth in Community Service over the twenty three months of operation has identified trends in the growth of the Scheme in Queensland as a whole, and within established centres over a period of time. Early growth rates have been disregarded and growth was studied for the period January - December 1982.

Community Service has grown considerably over the twenty three months of operation, March 1981 - January 1983 with 1453 offenders being given orders amounting to 170,878 hours, by the Courts.

An analysis of caseload growth for the period January - December 1982 has found a growth of 292 community service workers and 949 probationers on the monthly caseload. This shows that the probation growth is larger, representing 76% of the total growth in the Service for the year. The Community Service growth is 24% of the total growth and as such is a significant part of the workload of the Probation and Parole Service. An assessment of the relative rates of growth shows, that in the year, Community Service had a 93% gain whereas Probation had a 31% gain so Community Service is growing at a much faster rate. With the addition of the Fine Option Scheme within this next year Community Service could account for an even more significant proportion of the Probation and Parole Service expansion.

It is recommended that with these high growth rates consideration be given to using forward estimates for staffing. Between Probation and Community Service the staff of the Probation and Parole Service were carrying an additional 1241 cases on their monthly cases - an average of 136 for each Region for the year.

4. OFFENDER RESPONSE

Information on offender response has come from several sources: breaches and warrants, community service supervisors, voluntary agencies, and a questionnaire administered by the Probation and Parole Office at Rockhampton to offenders who had completed their community service.

A study of the records has found that over the twenty three months, 81 of the 1453 offenders in Queensland had failed to comply with their orders. There were 66 breaches and 15 absconders representing 6% of the total number to be given Community Service. A Tasmanian study in 1975 after three years of operation found the failure rate to be 7%. In England the failure rate was 19% after five years of operation.

Supervisors and voluntary agencies described some of the problems that were encountered in the administration of the Scheme. Supervisors described poor attendance rates at times which created problems in meeting commitments to the voluntary agencies. In the Tasmanian study in 1975 attendance rates were on average 63% of whom 24% were absent with permission and 12% without permission. Another problem was absence with excuses that were difficult to question. These excuses included illness and employment interviews or work.

The voluntary agencies in Queensland reported concern about occasional cheeky behaviour or non co-operation by offenders when directed to work. Visits to the workplace by friends of the offender were also a problem.

The problems with offenders were only reported in about 2% of cases by the agencies so that the remaining group were satisfactory in their performance of work. Another 2% of offenders were described by the agencies as contributing additional hours of work to the projects, making social calls, sometimes with family when their order was completed, or obtaining work as a direct result of their excellent performance while serving their order.

It was found from a questionnaire administered to 27 offenders who had completed their orders in Rockhampton, 1981 - 1982, that the offenders saw the Scheme as not being a 'let off' by the court, they had a fair chance to use skills and had gained personally from the scheme. However, the positive replies came from only 16 of the 27 offenders issued with the questionnaire. There are two problems with this type of information. Firstly, that questionnaires administered by the Probation and Parole Service could find a high degree of conformity in answers from a 'captive audience', and secondly information is needed on people who did not respond as there may be highly critical replies from this group. It is recommended that the Probation and Parole Service consider administering a shorter version of the current questionnaire for a six month period to all completions of community service throughout the State. A second questionnaire of a home visit may succeed in obtaining information about the group who do not respond.

5. COST EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER SCHEME

A comparison was made of the costs of the Community Service Order Scheme and the Prison Department in the financial year 1981 - 1982. It was found that the daily cost for a Community Service worker was \$1.52 whereas maintaining a prisoner cost \$49.13.

In countries where community service has been introduced, the economic argument for saving considerable prison costs has been the main factor influencing the Government's decisions.

In Queensland the low figures of 6% show that few fail to complete their community service order. An analysis of one group of 47 offenders who failed to comply with their orders showed that 14 were jailed, 16 fined and 8 given additional hours of community service.

Recidivism rates for community service workers have been studied in Tasmania in 1975 where, 47% were found to reoffend and 19% of these received a prison sentence. This study covered a 6 - 18 month period after completion of the order. A comparison was made with prisoners who had sentences of three months and less, and this group showed a recidivism rate of 62%. The conclusions to the Tasmanian study were that community service did not contribute to any greater recidivism.

In England reconviction rates were reported in a Home Office Research study of a 12 month follow-up of community service offenders. Forty-four percent were reconvicted.

6. RESPONSE BY THE JUDICIARY

Discussions were held with three judges and three magistrates on the development of community service in Queensland. It was commented that community service was a significant contribution to sentencing. It was perceived as a method of reparation to the community, rehabilitation for the offender and economic expediency. Rehabilitation was strongly emphasised as an opportunity for the offender to establish a work habit. The sentence had an application to older offenders as well as younger ones. With younger offenders, the sentence of community service had a more significant impact than a fine, as other people could take responsibility to pay it on their behalf.

In England the community service order scheme was based on the philosophy of punishment of the offender, reparation to the community, expiation of the offence and rehabilitation of the offender. Community Service was to foster a sense of social responsibility, provide a constructive use of leisure time, develop skills and assist with the work habit. These general concepts seem to apply to the development of community service in Australia.

A study of the sentencing patterns for Community Service July 1981 - June 1982 showed that of 784 offences, 41% were for Driving and Traffic offences, and 34% within the category of Theft, Break and enter, Assault was recorded for 6% of the offences. A study of sentencing for community service in Tasmania (1975) found that 47% were for property offences and 34% traffic offences. In England in 1978 where the annual number of offenders given community service was 19,400, 50% were for Theft and Handling stolen goods and 25% for Burglary.

Characteristics of the offenders on community service in Tasmania were: 65% were aged 16 - 20, 75% unskilled, over 50% had unstable work records and 66% were single, divorced or separated. In England where there has been a much more extensive use of community service, the conclusion has been reached that there is no 'typical' offender on the community service scheme.

In Queensland the average length of order over the first 23 months has been 118 hours. Comments have been made in the English literature, on the length of orders. In 1976 the concentration of orders was 100 - 150 hours and concern was expressed for sentences over this figure. Baroness Wootton when reflecting on the first five years of community service in Britain, suggested that it was difficult for the offender and the Probation and After Care Service to complete a 240 hour service in the 12 month period. The original report by the Advisory Council on the Penal System in 1970 had recommended a maximum order of 120 hours.

There has been discussion on whether community service orders are given instead of a prison sentence and there seems to be considerable differences in opinion related to the application of this sentence. In Tasmania, in 1975 it was estimated that 71% of orders were given to offenders who would otherwise have gone to prison. In England, the estimates are for 45-50% of orders being given to offenders who would have been imprisoned.

Recommendations from the Judiciary in Queensland on the operation of the community service order scheme were, firstly, for consideration of an order being made in combination with a short prison sentence. This would allow the offender on release to move into work on the community service scheme. Secondly, it was recommended that information on offenders on the scheme and the projects, be available to the Judiciary. The provision of reports to the Judiciary on completion of orders in Brisbane was commended.

The study of the community service scheme in Queensland suggests that sentencing by the Judiciary is creating an effective selection of the better offenders who are well suited to work with the voluntary agencies. This is providing an economical solution for the State and a humanitarian and, at times, rehabilitative sentence for the individual offender.

CHAPTER 2 : HISTORY OF COMMUNITY SERVICE IN
AUSTRALIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

AUSTRALIA

Tasmania :

Rook (1978) describes the Tasmanian Work Order Scheme, introduced in 1972, as one of the first of its kind in the world. In 1971, Tasmania was experiencing overcrowding of prisons and a shortage of funds. Following a feasibility study, the Work Order Scheme was introduced for a trial period of two years. It closely resembled the recommendations made in the 1970 Wootton Report in Britain.

The Tasmanian Work Order Scheme was to be used as an alternative to a jail sentence with the offender's consent. The Courts could give a sentence of up to 25 Saturdays or eight hours of work. This was later extended to weekdays. Penalties for failure to comply with the order included a fine, an increase in the order up to a maximum of 25 days, or a prison sentence not exceeding three months. A medical certificate was required for any inability to attend work and alcohol was forbidden on projects. (Rook 1978)

A Work Order Review Committee was formed to discuss project proposals from the community. The tasks that proved acceptable to the Committee included geriatric services, pensioner homes, sheltered workshops, and civil projects. The scheme was not to threaten anyone's livelihood and could not apply where an individual could afford to pay for work or had family or friends available to do the work. (Rook 1978)

Three years after the scheme started, Tasmania (population 500,000) had on average 200 offenders working on community service each week. The average weekly cost to the Probation and Parole Service for the Work Order offender was \$3.78, compared to a weekly cost of \$145.34 (1975 figures) for a prisoner. (Rook 1978)

A statistical analysis of sentencing by Rook (1978) found that 39% of offenders on Work Orders would not have received a prison sentence. The scheme was extending beyond being an alternative to jail.

A similar trend has been observed in England where community service was found to rapidly become a sentence in its own right.

Breaching rates in Tasmania were studied over a six month period in 1975 for 451 offenders. Seven offenders were breached (1.6%) and 25 absconded (5.5%) making, in total a failure rate of 7%. On average, the attendance rates by offenders was 63% each week. Twenty four percent were absent with permission and 12% without permission. Forty-three percent of the offenders studied were absent at least once without leave. (Rook 1978)

Rook (1975, 1978) observed a marked difference in performance between the Probation and Parole regions in Tasmania and concluded that the type of regime established in each region was responsible. One method that led to high attendance and performance by offenders was to give remission in sentence for every 10 days of satisfactory performance. Rook criticised strict breaching policy in some regions because offenders needed to be encouraged to complete their sentences. The probation work load was found to affect regional performance. High work loads left little time for the Probation and Parole Service to develop and administer the scheme. This was responsible for low breaching rates in some areas and for high numbers of absences without leave.

The characteristics of offenders on the Work Order Scheme were:

65% aged between 16 - 20 years
75% unskilled
over 50% had unstable work record
66% single, divorced or separated.

The types of offences were :

47% property offences
34% traffic offences
14% crimes against the person

Recidivism rates were also studied by Rook (1978) for a period of 6 - 18 months. Forty-seven percent of offenders reoffended and 19% were given prison sentences. Several variables were found to be statistically related to recidivism :

up to 25 years of age
unstable work record
single
prior Children's Court convictions.

Age was the strongest single variable. When all four variables occurred in combination there was a 71% recidivism rate. A comparison of recidivism rates was also made with prisoners serving short sentences of three months and under, and it was found that there was a 62% recidivism rate for this group compared to a 47% recidivism rate for the Work Order offender. Rook suggests that this shows, when taking in to account, the difference between the two groups, that community service did not contribute to any greater recidivism rate and kept the offender out of prison.

New South Wales

Community Service was introduced in New South Wales by the Community Service Orders Act 1979. This followed recommendations in the Report of the Royal Commission into New South Wales Prisons in 1978. (McAvoy 1982)

The three aims of the New South Wales Scheme were, in order of priority, to act as an alternative to imprisonment, to provide benefits for the community, and benefits for the offender. Offenders were aged 18 and over, the maximum sentence was 300 hours and different classes of offenders were related to lesser maximum hours depending on the maximum term of imprisonment set by law. No commitment was made by the New South Wales Department of Corrections for plant or materials. Staff were appointed to a number of district offices to act as organisers and four Probation and Parole Officers were to set up pilot schemes. After six months it was judged a success and 19 centres were developed by December 1981. (McAvoy 1982)

A description of early progress of the Scheme in the first year of operation (Grapevine 1981) suggests that 70% of the offenders had two or more previous convictions and that orders were being largely used for people who would otherwise have had custodial sentences. Some examples of the work undertaken include: assisting with Meals on Wheels, working with Bushfire Brigades, creating a Recreation area in a wildlife reserve, cooking in a welfare restaurant, joining a night patrol to help vagrants, working in institutions for children and the handicapped. The benefits to the offender from the scheme were described as the development of self esteem and feelings of achievement: Grapevine 1981:10 '... the offender himself had gained the confidence to begin looking for work again, and to present himself sufficiently well to obtain employment.'

By December 1981, 581 offenders had been given community service, 363 had completed and 14 had failed. Over 300,000 hours of unpaid work was performed for the community. The average offender on community service was described as male, aged 18 - 30 with offences related to driving or property. Sixty percent of offenders had more than two previous convictions and 12% had offended over 11 times. (McAvoy 1982)

In February 1983, Community Service had extended to over 30 areas of the State with a total of 1926 offenders and the completion of 889 orders. Ninety-one percent were successful and 9% had been breached or had their orders revoked. (Gorta et al 1983)

Western Australia

The Community Service Order Scheme became operational in Western Australia on February 1st, 1977. The objectives were for the scheme to be a worthwhile experience for the offender, to offer tangible benefits to the community, and to offer the opportunity for the offender to continue service after completion of the Order: (Probation and Parole Service of Western Australia 1978: 3)

'Community Service Orders will enable offenders to live with their families in the community whilst depriving them of some of their leisure time for a constructive purpose.'

In Western Australia Community Service is seen as being most relevant to the following groups:

- Men and women aged 17 - 30
- Isolated and withdrawn individuals
- Individuals lacking in social training
- Socially disadvantaged, particularly those without leisure interests
- Individuals with a 'chip on their shoulder', low self esteem and purposeless lives
- For offenders in the Superior Courts as well as in the Magistrates Courts where the background is more stable and there is good basic intelligence
- Offenders suffering from domestic isolation

Persons who are considered not suitable for Community Service include :
 extremely violent offenders
 severely mentally ill
 serious drug or alcohol offenders
 sexual offenders
 offenders who are unable to give their energies to tasks because of social or personal crises

(Probation and Parole Service of Western Australia 1978)

Community Service has been given to offenders when there have been family considerations, for youth or patterns of re-offending that make it seem appropriate, where a short non-parole period is being considered or a Probation Order has been breached, where it may break patterns of institutionalisation in young offenders, and where mandatory penalties for second and subsequent road traffic offences stipulate imprisonment from three months to two years. (Eichfuss 1978)

In the year ending March 1st, 1978, 102 orders were made, mostly for offences against property.

Western Australia has set up Area Supervisors to liaise with volunteer supervisors because of geographical distances and the diverse nature of the scheme. A community service co-ordinator administers the scheme with the assistance of the Probation Service staff. The entire caseload for the State is reviewed by the co-ordinator once a week. Major group projects have been avoided because the smaller projects involve personal contact between the offender, the supervisor and the recipient. The aim is to match skills. (Eichfuss 1978)

The application of the scheme in aboriginal cases has utilised tribal advisory bodies and tribal elders to work out and supervise appropriate forms of community service. This enhances the welfare of tribal communities and maintains the dignity of the aboriginal offender. (Eichfuss 1978)

At the completion of the sentence an assessment is made of each offender by an interview with the offender, the volunteer supervisor, the community service supervisor and the probation officer. This is forwarded to the original sentencing Judge or Magistrate. An assessment of the first 16 months of community service in Western Australia by the Probation and Parole Service, (1978:13) concluded that:

' Experience so far indicates that a wide range of offenders can be assimilated without danger or damage to the community.'

Resistance to the scheme in Western Australia was expressed in the Alternative Criminology Journal. Hills (1976) claimed that it was an example of increased punitiveness and a desire for control. It would not reduce the prison population but would act as an additional penalty to current probation orders.

The Probation and Parole Service of Western Australia considers that there have been benefits to the offender giving him the opportunity to reconsider dependancy and aimlessness by finding personal social acceptance. The offender can see that the community is prepared to offer participation and an opportunity for intensely satisfying experiences in helping others rather than being the object of assistance.

South Australia

The community service order scheme commenced in South Australia, July 1982. The objectives for community service are: that it is a substantial punitive measure; a cheaper alternative to imprisonment; a means of reparation by offenders; and a potential source for rehabilitation.

The aim of the scheme is to emphasise the positive reparative and rehabilitative aspects rather than the punitive element although it is intended to expect offender accountability. The scheme is designed to be a worthwhile educational experience for the offender and maximise involvement of community volunteers and agencies. Supervision is aimed at ensuring a high standard of attendance and performance and the offender's involvement

is to be within a 'positive service environment'.
(Oxley 1982)

Victoria

In Victoria, some limited use of unpaid work as a method of serving a sentence of imprisonment without incarceration was introduced in 1976 by Section 476(e) of the Crimes Act, 1958 and Division 6, of Part V of the Community Welfare Services Act, 1970. In 1979, the Sentencing Alternatives Committee, recommended that legislation be enacted to empower the courts to make community service orders as an alternative to offences punishable by imprisonment. (Victoria, Sentencing Alternatives Committee, 1978).

Community Service was introduced in the Penalties and Sentences Act 1981, Part II - Community Service Orders. The provisions in the legislation included orders to be 20-360 hours. The regulations allow for an order to be made where a person who may be imprisoned for non payment of a fine, makes an application. The offender is required to refrain from drinking alcohol whilst performing work, leaving the place of work, permit an officer to visit his residence, notify an officer of inability to report to work, and in respect to illness to produce a medical certificate. Travelling time is credited as part of work and if the offender fails to perform specified hours or work in an unsatisfactory manner, he is given no credit for travelling time. (Victoria, Department of Community Welfare Services, 1982)

The Community Service Order Scheme is a sub-program of the Correctional Field Services Program and administered through the Regional Services Division. There are Regional Superintendents in 18 regions accountable through a Deputy Director (Operations) to the Director, Regional Services. The Co-ordinator, Correctional Field Services has responsibility for the development of policies procedures and standards of service and monitoring the scheme. There is an annual program review in relation to its impact on the Correctional Service System and on the community, and the operation of the program. (Victoria, Department of Community Welfare Services, 1982)

The Victorian Department of Community Welfare Services (1982) has also developed a program policy regarding responses to breaches and legal requirements.

Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory

Legislation was introduced into Parliament in September 1981 to allow Australian Capital Territory judges and magistrates to sentence offenders to community service as an alternative to a jail sentence. The legislation was perceived as filling a gap in sentencing between the fine, probation, or suspended sentence, and the sentence of jail. (Canberra Times 7.9.1981)

In the Northern Territory, community service was introduced by Criminal Law (Conditional Release of Offenders) Ordinance, 1978.

NEW ZEALAND

Community Service was introduced by the Criminal Justice Amendment Bill (No. 2), 1980. The sentence replaced that of Probation with Community Work. This had been considered as an abuse of Probation, as offenders on this sentence had their probation supervision cancelled once the community work was completed. (Lee 1981)

Community Service was considered to be better than imprisonment in terms of cost. It was estimated that the annual cost of a prisoner was \$10,000. Community Service was of benefit to the community and the sponsor group. It allowed the offender to put something back into the community, punished him but not his family, and gave him a chance to meet new people and develop constructive interests. Community service also encouraged the community to participate in an interesting penal experiment. (Department of Justice, 1980)

Community Service provisions of the Act came into force on February 1st, 1981. The hours served were to be between 8 - 120, for any person convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment, providing

the person consents. Community Service also covered liability to imprisonment for non payment of fines imposed by the High Court. Suitable projects for community service included hospitals, educational, cultural, or recreational institutions, or institutions for the old, infirm, or handicapped, or on any land owned or occupied by Crown or public bodies. (Criminal Justice Amendment Act 1980 - Summary)

There are 34 Probation Districts each with a Community Service Supervisor with responsibility to match the abilities and skills of the offenders, to the community. The Penal Policy Review Committee (1981) stated that there had been some criticism of delays in imposing this sentence because of the time taken to match offenders with agencies. However, Community Service was rapidly accepted as a sentence in its own right. It was found to be different from periodic detention and ranking below it in severity.

The Probation Service exercises a general oversight but no direct supervision. There were 1035 people in the sentence February - October 1981. It is used relatively more in small centres and disproportionately for women. Approximately 30% of offenders on this sentence are women who only represent 10% of convictions. This is seen to reflect the lack of periodic detention centres in small towns and the fact that they did not cater for women. The conclusions of the Penal Policy Review Committee (1981:II2) on Community Service were as follows:

'It has a content of general reparation to the community and in some instances may benefit the victim. It costs little to administer and is also inexpensive in terms of human and social costs. It is flexible and can take advantage of the benefits offered by diverse cultural and ethnic groups. Because of the offender's direct involvement with community agencies, he or she may be influenced by the good example and work involving a rehabilitative element in the sentence in some cases. It has no incapacitative effect.'

ENGLAND

In England, there was a growing desire to divert offenders from custodial sentences. Young (1979) describes four separate influences : humanitarianism; skepticism about the effectiveness of prison for treatment or deterrence; overcrowding in prisons; and economic stringencies. Economic considerations were the main force behind the change: Young (1979:)

'Although community control and community care were in themselves becoming more and more costly, they nevertheless appeared to compare favourably with the financial costs of imprisonment. Predictably, therefore, community-based measures came to be seen as the panacea for the ills of prison overcrowding.'

The Home Secretary asked the Advisory Council on the Penal System, in November 1966, to consider changes and additions to the range of non-custodial penalties, disabilities, and other requirements that might be imposed on offenders. (Home Office 1970)

Community Service was a recommendation in a report known as the Wootton Report (1970). Voluntary tasks were considered suitable for offenders and provided opportunities for constructive activity and a changed outlook. There could be a reformatory value for the offender from the performance of community service in association with non-offenders.

The history of voluntary service by offenders in England preceded World War II, when prisons and later Borstals, Approved Schools, and Detention Centres were involved in voluntary service. This development had focused particularly on the application to youth to channel energies for constructive ends.

Following the Wootton Report, a Home Office Working Group studied means for implementing the changes and there were some major differences in the final legislation. Some of the issues considered at this time are still important in the development of Community Service Schemes in other countries.

One recommendation in the original report was for the use of the Scheme for non imprisonable offences

and as an alternative to a fine: (Home Office 1970:14)

'While in general we would hope that an obligation to perform community service would be felt by the courts to constitute an adequate alternative to a short custodial sentence, we would not wish to preclude its use, in, for example, certain types of traffic offence which do not involve liability to imprisonment. Community Service, should, moreover, be a welcome alternative in cases which at present a court imposes a fine for want of any better sanction, or again in situations where it is desired to stiffen probation by the imposition on the offender of an additional obligation other than a fine. It might also be appropriate as an alternative to imprisonment in certain cases of fine default. We do not, however, think that it should be possible to combine a requirement to perform community service with a fine in respect of the same offence. Community service and fines should be alternatives.'

This recommendation was not followed and the Criminal Justice Act, 1972 which was largely superseded by the 1973 Powers of Criminal Courts Act; provided that a Community Service Order was made in respect to an offender convicted of an offence punishable with imprisonment; provided he was aged 17 and over and consented. The number of hours was to be not less than 40 and not more than 240, to be completed in a year. Community Service was not to conflict with the offender's work, education or religious commitments. A Probation Officer's report was required to show that the offender was suitable for work and that provision could be made for him to do so in his area. (Pease, Durkin et al 1975, West 1976)

Another deviation from the original report was to change a recommendation for a maximum number of hours of 120 to 240. Baroness Wootton (1977) criticised this move when assessing the Scheme five years later, as there were difficulties in completing the 240 hours within the 12 months. These were caused by holidays, domestic crises and job emergencies. The Home Office Working Group had chosen to emphasise the penal context of the sentence in order to make it a viable alternative to short custodial sentences. (Young 1979)

Chief Probation Officers in six areas of England were involved in establishing experimental schemes for the first two years. The Chief Probation Officer (except in Inner London) was appointed to oversee the Scheme, make preliminary contacts with agencies and establish a Community Service Committee. Both statutory and voluntary agencies were involved in the Scheme. The first Order was made in January 1972 in Nottingham. Each experimental scheme developed a distinctly different approach. In one area a member of the Council of Social Service was appointed to work with the Chief Probation Officer to provide contacts, another area emphasised the offender and a third area placed emphasis on manual impersonal tasks. (Young 1979, Pease and McWilliams 1980)

Community Response

Both statutory and voluntary agencies were approached by Chief Probation Officers for assistance with Community Service when it started. In Nottingham, one of the experimental areas, the early experience was that the voluntary agencies were more accessible as they took less time to decide to participate. Statutory agencies had more procedures to follow. There was a lot of exposure to the Scheme in the media coverage and meetings, and the community response was described as one of interest and courtesy. However, it took nine months for the informal referral system in the agencies to lead to requests to the Probation and After Care Service for Community Service Workers. (Harding 1974)

Another early comment on community response was made by the Inner London Probation and Aftercare Service (1975) on the need to build confidence in the community service offenders so that there was reassurance to the community of no additional danger.

It was generally found in England that the longer Community Service was available the more projects became available. Seven years after commencement of the Scheme, Ralphs (1979 : 235) comments:

'Community service has become known throughout the country by the various voluntary and statutory agencies as a source of reliable and effective work, despite the inevitable breakdown from time to time.'

Breakdowns in the Scheme for the community were caused by irregular attendance and mismatching of offenders with the agencies. Other problems included finding the right type of work for offenders in the agencies, work on a Sunday, work in the offender's own area, and work where personal relationships were possible between the recipient and the offender. (Harding 1974, Pease and McWilliams 1980)

Most areas in England use a combination of group projects where offenders are under direct supervision of paid Supervisors, and individual projects supervised by members of voluntary or statutory agencies. (Ralphs 1979)

In Devon, the procedure for establishing an offender with an agency is for him to have a meeting with the agency supervisor and for both to agree to the placement. Sessional Supervisors are funded to oversee practical work on projects for offenders whose performance and attendance does not meet agency demands. It is also recognised in Devon that some supervisors in agencies provide counselling and attention is given to matching offenders to these positions. (Pease and McWilliams 1980)

There has been a problem caused by the economic recession in England with competition for voluntary work by other groups in the community, especially the young unemployed. Richards and Maull (1982) state that the 'recession has bred a thriving growth industry.' The reaction from the Community Service organisers has been to develop autonomous projects with long term stability and those that give direct contact between offender and individual beneficiary. Some of the schemes included: assisting mentally handicapped children, a wheelchair shopping service, a Saturday Day Centre for the isolated and elderly. In another area the reaction was to obtain funding for a Job Creation

Program which provided work for Community Service Workers and the unemployed. (Pease and McWilliams 1980)

The community response in England appears to be providing a growing number of placements for Community Service workers and an extension within the voluntary agencies to assist the Scheme. Sussex (1974) comments that agencies have shown a willingness to adjust their normal pattern of work to include community service and that this is achieved at considerable inconvenience which is never mentioned.

Response by Offenders

A study of breaching rates from April 1976 to March 1977 showed that 81% of 6,397 Orders in England and Wales were completed and the remainder were breached. (McWilliams and Murphy 1980)

Breaching practice has varied widely between regions in England and Home Office guidance is for it to be used as a last resort. The Probation Service is to do everything to get the offender through the Order while maintaining the confidence of the Court that Orders are not being deliberately flouted. Four different types of offender have been identified in breaches: the 'non-starter'; the 'good beginner' who attends at first then stops; the 'spasmodic attender' who is irregular but continues with supervision for a period; and the 'disappeared offender'. (McWilliams and Murphy 1980, Young 1979)

The pressure of high caseloads within the Probation and After Care Service has been one of the factors influencing breaching practice. Young (1979) gives an example of an area where the Probation Officers' first consideration was to arrange placements for cooperative offenders and to give attention to absentees when time allowed.

In practice, breaching appears to follow more than 2-3 unacceptable absences from work by the offender. There is flexibility in acceptance of some excuses by the Probation Service. For example, certified illness and emergency work were accepted but hangovers or oversleeping were not. Decisions on breaching are also influenced by the nature of

the sentence the Order was replacing, the length of the order and the number of hours remaining. (McWilliams and Murphy 1980)

One experiment was quite successful in reducing poor attendance rates. The Probation and After Care Service decided to take immediate court action within a few days of an unacceptable absence from work and to request that the Order be terminated on the second summons. This raised attendance rates from 45% and 65% within a month and seven months later attendance was still high at 75%. (McWilliams and Murphy 1980)

Reconviction rates for community service offenders have been assessed at 44% in a study of all offenders on Community Service in the first year of the Scheme. The variables related to reconviction in this study, were age and number of previous convictions.

Response by the Judiciary

The credibility of Community Service has continued to grow and this has been fundamental to its success in the courts. In 1974 the numbers on Community Service were 1000 whereas in 1978 the annual figure was 19,400. The majority (66%) of offenders were under 25. Fifty percent of offences were for theft and handling stolen goods, 25% for burglary, and 5-10% for violence against the person. The length of Orders has created some concern. Most Orders are between 100-150 hours and higher sentences are thought to affect the morale of the offenders. Measures of displacement from prison suggest that the English Scheme is working with 45-50% of workers having offences that would have led to a prison sentence. (Pease et al 1976, Ralphs 1979, Griffiths 1976)

When Community Service was introduced in England it was based on the goals of punishment, reparation, expiation and rehabilitation. As a punishment it is a deprivation of leisure and the Courts have expressed the hope that the work will not be 'too soft'. Reparation is to fulfil a general obligation for the offender to recompense society. Expiation is acknowledging the offender's need to make some tangible amends for irresponsible behaviour. Rehabilitation is the goal that has received the most attention and it is believed to be successful because of:

(Young 1979:39):

'the fostering of social responsibility; contact with other workers; the constructive use of leisure time; the development of long-term interests and skills; and even new employment prospects (termed 'New Careers'); and the resumption of a work habit by the unemployed and the unemployable.'

West (1976) suggests that rehabilitation has occurred through Community Service because of a change in the offender's self identity. The Scheme activates the potential for enhanced self esteem from social recognition and his new status. The change in identity effects relationships beyond just the time of the order.

Community Service is described as being applicable to any offender unless manifestly unsuitable, for example, from mental disturbance, extremely low intelligence, addiction to alcohol or drugs, lack of regular accommodation, chronically bad work records, serious sexual offences or crimes of violence. Although more younger offenders are on the Scheme this merely reflects the proportion of persons in the different age categories to appear before the courts, rather than a philosophical choice. (Griffiths 1976)

Response by the Probation and After Care Service

There has been a significant problem for the Probation and After Care Service from the conflict between the therapeutic role of Probation and the punitive function of Community Service. Probation Officers have had a difficult task in balancing therapeutic goals with the sentencing wishes of the courts. Considerable ambivalence has been observed in Probation Officers and one of the causes of reservation about the Scheme has been the use of manual tasks. (Pease et al 1975, Haxby 1978)

In Kent, Probation Officers were reluctant to see Community Service as part of their work and disassociated themselves from the Scheme. However, the Assistant Chief Probation Officer and Senior Probation Officers could see the advantages and three different schemes were tried to integrate Community Service with the Probation Service. Kent is a large County which includes rural areas. The experiment was to try three different types

of liaison. One centre had Community Service staff in one office liaising with a senior officer, a second had Supervisors attached to Probation Teams and responsible to a Field Probation Officer, and a third had the Supervisors divided between individual members of the Probation team. Each solution was found to work successfully. (Ralphs 1980)

One of the effects of Community Service has been to widen the contacts of the Probation Service with the community. This has brought an impetus for changes beyond community Service. Resources have become available for employment, accommodation, support and voluntary help from the agencies. The larger caseloads are also creating a need for the goodwill and cooperation of the community. (Haxby 1978, Mathieson 1977)

Two articles in the late 1970's have mentioned training within the Service for Community Service Supervisors. Murphy (1979) describes the experience in South Yorkshire where the Probation Service has to recognise Community Service as a specialist job, training people and giving them a career structure. Ralphs (1979) has commented that Supervisors who were unqualified persons became extremely able in their work when trained and given experience

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A national assessment of community service programs found 29 existed across the United States and a further 16 programs combined Community Service with monetary restitution. They are administered by local corrections agencies and 28% are operated by private agencies outside the justice system. Probation is used alongside Community Service in 75% of projects. Community Service is generally used for less serious offences and the average project intake is 250 offenders a year. (Smykla 1981)

Britain has been the major stimulus for the development of Community Service in the United States. The programs are likely to grow rapidly as there is an infusion of large federal funds to support programs, and it has been endorsed by the American Bar Association. (Umbreit 1981, Harland 1980)

Harland (1980:482) comments:

'Overwhelmingly, the basis for current interest in the concept of service penalties has been that it is an alternative to incarceration that may help to relieve present overcrowding and substandard conditions of confinement.'

One case study of a project in the United States shows the operation of Community Service by a private agency, Prisoner and Community Together (PACT). The agency links offenders with work projects in Porter County, Indiana. It monitors compliance and offenders are given three chances of failing to appear, after which the original jail sentence is imposed. It was assessed that 50% of the offenders on this program would have received a jail sentence. Fifty percent of the offenders are juveniles 16 - 17 years old. (Umbreit 1981)

In another project, in Alameda County, California, Community Service is used for traffic offenders with hours ranging from under 40 to over 400. Over 50% of the sentences were for under 40 hours. Six hundred agencies were involved for the 13,000 offenders on the Scheme in a three year study period. Most of the placements were for maintenance or clerical work and 80% of offenders completed their sentence. (Smykla 1981)

A suggested development in the United States is for the use of Community Service for corporate offenders. This approach is based on a suggestion originating from the Australian Criminal Law Reform Committee. In one case, the United States vs Allied Chemical Corporation, a company was fined for pollution and the sentence reduced after the company endowed an environmental research corporation. Fisse (1981) suggests that this should be extended so that companies actually perform a program of community service.

The Community Service Schemes in the United States are described by Beha (1977:2) as being successful innovations:

' Anecdotal evidence also suggests that both offenders and the agencies in which they are placed can benefit from the positive psychological effects of working together in a constructive effort to provide service to the community. '

CANADA

Two studies of Community Service projects in Canada suggest that it is functioning well in this country. In 1977 the Department of Justice in Quebec undertook a feasibility study in six pilot areas and extended it to all judicial districts when it was found to be an economic and promising measure. The Community Service is part of a Probation Order and administered by the Probation Directorate. There is a pre sentence report and the Court can prescribe between 20 - 120 hours for 5-8 hours a week in leisure time. The sentence is perceived as one where the offender repairs the harm he has done to the community and can develop a feeling of responsibility. Only voluntary non profit organisations are involved. It was assessed that 60% of the offenders would have gone to prison. (Gallant 1980)

The second study was in Ontario and focused on the responses by the offenders. Ontario introduced pilot projects in 1979 with probationers undertaking community service. Polonski (1980) concluded that the program was successful as an alternative to sentencing and was a positive experience for offenders. The majority of the 192 interviewed enjoyed their placement and thought they were not treated differently to other personnel in the agencies. A large proportion said families and friends had shown interest and their main benefit was from the personal satisfaction from the work.

CHAPTER 3 : COMMUNITY SERVICE IN QUEENSLAND : AN OVERVIEW

Community Service Orders were introduced in Queensland by the Offender's Probation and Parole Act 1980 - Part V. Community Service is to have the offender's consent and expressed willingness to comply with the conditions of the Order. The number of hours are 40-240 and community service is not to conflict in any way with the offender's religious beliefs, work or education. An Order has to be completed within 12 months though provision is made for an extension of this time. The Order is to be made on the basis of a report from a Probation Officer that the offender is suitable to perform Community Service and that a suitable project can be found within the offender's area. A breach of the Order could result in a fine not exceeding \$500, increased hours of work up to a total of 240 hours, an extension of the 12 month time limit, or the Court dealing with the original offence. A Community Service Order could be combined with a Probation Order.

The Scheme is administered by the Queensland Probation and Parole Service. A Principal Community Programs Officer was appointed to oversee the development of the Scheme throughout the State with the assistance of Probation Officers who have responsibility for the Community Service Worker.

In the first 23 months of operation (March 1981 - January 1983) 1453 offenders were given Community Service Orders by the Courts. The Orders totalled 170,878 hours of voluntary work for the community. Eighty part time supervisors had been appointed to the Scheme and it was operating in 39 centres in the State. Senior Probation and Parole Officers in each of the nine regions had devoted considerable efforts to developing contacts with voluntary agencies. Community Service Advisory Committees were established in the regions with representation from the unions and voluntary agencies to assist in the assessment of suitable projects.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

Throughout Queensland representatives from almost all sectors of voluntary service have become involved in the Community Service Scheme. Statutory welfare

services, and local government bodies have also contributed. Some examples of the extent to which Community Service has become part of the voluntary service effort in Queensland are as follows :

Scouts, Blue Nursing Services, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Queensland Playground and Recreation Association, Apex, Lions and Rotary Service Clubs, hospitals, homes for the aged, remedial playgrounds, individual pensioner homes, Cemetery Trusts, homes education facilities and workshops for intellectually or physically handicapped children and adults, Show Societies, pony clubs, Senior Citizens Clubs, historic, cultural and progress associations, hostels and neighbourhood information and activity centres, nursing homes and churches.

Interviews were held with representatives of 12 community organisations in four centres - Toowoomba, Woodridge, Townsville and Brisbane. The questions focused on several aspects of each agency's involvement with the scheme.

I. History of Involvement

Most of the organisations interviewed had over a year of experience with Community Service. They were enthusiastic about the voluntary work by offenders and more willing to talk about the successes where offenders had been integrated through their work, than failures. It appeared that in each centre, an estimated 2% of offenders had proved difficult to manage and 2% had been exceptionally successful. Some workers who had shown interest and worked hard had been found full time work opportunities, either directly with the agency or through contacts with the community. Some offenders had also contributed additional voluntary work to agencies and had continued social contacts after their Orders were completed.

2. Initial Staff Response

At the time of the study, any initial fears by staff or residents of institutions had been resolved. The voluntary supervisors stated that these fears arose when a project was first suggested and disappeared after the first couple of weeks contact with the offenders. Support was given to agencies at this time

by the Senior Probation Officers.

3. Work Role for the Offenders in Agencies

Tasks undertaken by workers appeared to be generally unskilled though one centre concentrated on skilled placements. These were found in the maintenance needs of pensioners and in the voluntary agencies. There were certain benefits for the offenders from their tasks in the agencies : the opportunity to obtain the work habit; regular attendance and learning the discipline of full employment; integration and acceptance as a volunteer valued by the agency; increased self image from the tasks and acceptance within the agency.

4. Contributions by the Scheme to the Agencies

When calculated in terms of casual wage labour, the total hours ordered in Community Service over the 23 months contributed \$854,390 in voluntary service.

The voluntary agencies were consistent in their comments on the contributions of the Scheme to their progress. On occasions, contributions to particular agencies were also seen as benefiting the wider community, for example, work on prize winning garden in an aged persons home, a prize winning public park and creek beautification scheme, work on an historic woolshed. In addition, there was a regular contribution of work to individual pensioner homes where visits were made, if possible at fortnightly intervals to cut lawns and do any maintenance.

RESPONSE OF THE PROBATION AND PAROLE SERVICE

Community Service Supervisors

Interviews were held with seven Supervisors from four centres - Toowoomba, Townsville, Woodridge and Ayr. These supervisors, with one exception, had been involved with the Scheme from the time of its inception.

I. Supervisors' Impressions of the Scheme

The Supervisors' impressions of the Scheme were that it generally was working well. In interviews they said they were happy about the progress of offenders and identified small adjustments that could be made to the Scheme. They appeared to be

taking full responsibility for their roles and developing Community Service through common sense solutions. These solutions were based in their own past experience and were used to get offenders to cooperate and to organise their workload.

Toowoomba, which is the largest centre for Community Service in Queensland had produced the most developed system of administration for the Scheme. The large numbers of offenders have created the need for some full time administrative work by supervisors and one supervisor has been working part time from within the Probation and Parole Service office. This has centralised all administration and established a constant communication between the supervisors and the Probation Officers. Offenders are able to meet the supervisor when being interviewed by the Probation Service and there is a good liaison for allocation to projects suitable to each offender. The administrative work also involves close attention to attendance by the offenders and maintaining records of absences, so that action can be quickly taken if there are not acceptable excuses.

In each of the four centres there has also been the development of an additional need for on site supervision by the Community Service Supervisors as well as relying on the voluntary agencies. In Toowoomba a project is planned for the development of a public flora and fauna reserve. In Townsville some offenders are working under direct supervision at a cemetery and in Woodridge some direct supervision is given to teams working in pensioner households. These projects have grown to meet identifiable gaps in voluntary service within each community and to provide stable projects for the Scheme. This creates a flexibility in the numbers that can be accommodated in centres, and assists with offenders who have problems in working closely with agencies.

2. Relationships with Offenders

The development of a working relationship with offenders has also been managed on a common sense trial and error basis. One centre, for example, initially allocated each offender to a supervisor then changed to making all supervisors responsible, when offenders became dependant on individuals. This opened the opportunity for manipulation when there were staff changes and the supervisors found a team approach more comfortable.

Supervisors reported some initial difficulties in establishing a reasonable relationship with offenders. One supervisor commented on an initial tension when new to the position which was reflected in the offenders' reactions. There was a change once the initial tension went. Another supervisor who was working in isolation in a rural area found difficulties with managing attendance problems. All supervisors appeared to appreciate the requirement for firmness and the use of discipline to create clear boundaries. This meant clear instructions on attendance and on tasks. Certain techniques were used to assist with work, for example, the separation of offenders who had jointly committed offences, separation of difficult offenders who influenced others, and checking up on excuses such as illness and multiple bereavements in the family.

Attendance was a particular problem which was resolved in different ways. One centre had instituted a home visit to pick up each offender and contacts with parents. Another centre undertook checks at the offender's home either by the Probation Officer or a Supervisor when there was non attendance. Another response had been to get co-operation with the local magistrate for an immediate summons.

The Supervisors' relationships with offenders appeared to be one where there was no therapeutic involvement but it was similar to the expectations of firm parents or employers. There was encouragement for the offenders to have general conversations and an emphasis on flexibility to accommodate any personal difficulties the offender had in attending.

The centres differed in their use of offender skills. The largest centre, Toowoomba had made provision for this within the wide range of community activities available. Woodridge did not have the same development and commented on the difficulties from poverty in the area.

The Supervisors made a number of comments on the problems for offenders on the scheme. One was a loss of employment when employers found out about the offence. Another was the difficulty for fully employed offenders to work an extra day of the week. Some offenders suffered from excessive sociability on weekends but this did not give rise to sympathy from the Supervisors. There was also a problem where community service, on a few occasions, had disrupted

an offender's participation in sports on a weekend.

In general the scheme was perceived to be advantageous to the unemployed offender as it gave some assistance in building his self image, experience with working in a full time occupation and developing some work skills which could assist in obtaining employment.

3. Work Satisfaction

The Supervisors all appeared to have enjoyed considerable work satisfaction from the scheme. This was related to interactions with offenders to help them with their sentence and the relations with community organisations to provide community service. The Supervisors discussed their role more in terms of assisting the offender to complete his sentence than in terms of rehabilitation.

4. Relations with Community Organisations

Supervisors appeared to work easily with the volunteer on site supervisors from the charitable organisations. The main difficulties they discussed were: the uncertainty of numbers for projects each week; the problems for agencies that needed a regular number of offenders for a project. These problems were more pronounced in the smaller centres as the larger centres had flexibility in placements.

Probation and Parole Officers

1. Role of the Probation and Parole Officers -

The Probation and Parole Officers are in contact with the offender to provide an initial report to the court on whether he can undertake community service and the provision of projects in his area. The offenders are directed by the Probation Officer to report for community service and at this stage their contact continues with the community service supervisor. When any problems occur, including non attendance, the probation officer may visit the offender's home or arrange an interview with him. If there are conditions for a breach action to be taken, the probation officer undertakes this responsibility.

The effects of the probation officers' workloads in relation to community service was discussed with the representatives of the Probation and Parole Service in the centres visited during the study. It

was observed that the progress of the scheme could be directly affected by competition from high probation caseloads. This could influence the degree of involvement with supervisors and breach actions.

In January, 1982 the numbers of offenders on community service represented 10% of the numbers of probationers on the monthly caseload of probation and parole officers. By December, 1982 this proportion had grown to 15% which indicates that community service will become a significant part of the probation officers monthly work. However, the growth in probation and community service, together shows a significant workload for officers. In the year January - December 1982, the total increase in monthly cases for probation and community service was 1241, representing a growth over the year of 136 offenders on average for each region. (See Figure 1)

2. Role of Senior Probation and Parole Officers

Senior officers in the Service were observed as having considerable involvement in maintaining contacts with the voluntary agencies in their regions. The personal initiative from this group had created a capacity for growth within the State to accommodate the increasing numbers of offenders being given community service orders, by the Courts. It had also led to successful community placements so that breaching rates were low.

There were several aspects to the roles played by Senior Probation Officers:

Liaison with community service supervisors during the work on the development of projects, advice on appropriate placements for new offenders, information on difficulties with offenders.

Initiation of projects which was undertaken through direct contact with key people in the community. Formal presentations were made to organisations and informal contacts pursued, to develop appropriate placements. The Senior Officers felt a considerable public responsibility for the community projects and accepted their direct accountability to the community for the scheme. When problems were reported by organisations offenders were quickly interviewed and decisions made on alternative placements.

Liaison with the judiciary was another important role with responsibility for contact with magistrates and judges, to provide information on the operation of the Scheme.

Liaison with the media was an activity that was pursued in different ways by officers. Some had found no initial response by organisations to requests for placements through the media. However, in the largest centre, Toowoomba, the media was involved in providing regular information to the community on the scheme and local successes.

Officers of the Probation and Parole Service gave considerable support to community service and one comment was made that they had welcomed it as filling a gap in sentencing between fines and jail. It was generally viewed as a worthwhile development not only for the service it gave the community but for the opportunity to keep families together by avoiding jail sentences.

Special Groups

One special group of offenders of concern to the Probation and Parole Service is aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. This group has special needs in relation to the development of suitable projects on reserves.

Discussions were held during the study with Senior Probation Officers from Townsville and Rockhampton on this subject. In both centres, it was found that there was no special difficulty in the administration of community service for aborigines. In March 1983, Townsville had 23 aborigines within a total community service caseload of 69. This comprised 17 aborigines on Palm Island and 6 living in Townsville. Since the inception of community service in Townsville, there had been 20 people of aboriginal and Torres Strait Island descent on community service and no breaches. The situation on Palm Island, however, presents difficulties in establishing appropriate community projects. Attendance was not satisfactory and there were difficulties with on site supervision. A solution was being attempted by providing regular on site supervision from a community service supervisor in Townsville.

In Rockhampton, there is currently (March 1983) one person of aboriginal descent in the 15 offenders on community service. There has not been any noted

difference with this group of offenders in Rockhampton. An experiment had been tried to assist attendance by providing a service to pick up offenders but this was stopped when it drew a backlash from other community service workers. Rockhampton also had experience of supervision on a reserve by direct on site supervision from a community service supervisor.

On the State level, there have been reports on the problems of over-representation of aboriginal offenders in jail. Walton (1981) suggests that the aboriginal population in Queensland present special problems in sentencing. Data from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service Study in 1980 showed that the aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders were between 25-30% of the total male prison population and 50% of the female prison population. Thirty one percent of these people were from reserves. In Queensland, there are 14 reserves and two Shire Councils with 39,878 aborigines and islanders. The offences for imprisonment were rape, serious assaults, break and entry, and unlawful use of motor vehicles. Twenty six percent of the group were serving sentences of under six months. Seventy one percent were not in employment at the time of the offence.

GROWTH IN THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER SCHEME

The study had identified trends in the growth of community service in Queensland and within established centres. Early growth figures for the first 11 months of operation are disregarded and an analysis has been made for growth in the State's monthly caseload of community service workers January - December 1982. This is shown in Figure I, 'Community Service Growth in the State, Monthly Caseloads January - December 1982'. The graph represents the growth of community service with probation and parole figures included for comparison.

In the total 23 months of operation, community service has grown to a total of 1453 offenders having received orders. The monthly caseload figures show the effects of the scheme on the State Probation and Parole Service. In January 1982, there were 313 community service

workers on the monthly caseload. This had risen to 605 in December of the same year. The probation figures show 3057 in January 1983 and a rise to 4006 by December. The parole figures do not represent any large growth, with 473 in January 1982 and 498 in December.

The growth in the Probation Service is larger than that of community service for the year. Seventy six percent of the combined probation and community service growth in monthly caseload statistics was accounted for by probation. However, the fact that community service represents 24% of the growth in the Service shows that it is a significant part of the workload. In addition, new legislation introduced in 1983 will raise the rate of growth with the introduction of a Fine Option Scheme providing for community service work to be offered to offenders who cannot pay their fines. Community Service is also growing at a faster rate than probation with a 93% increase in the year while probation had a 31% increase.

RESPONSE BY OFFENDERS

Failures to comply with orders

An overall assessment of the offenders response to community service has been made by a study of the figures on breaches and absconding. In the 12 month period January - December 1982, there were 27 breaches in a caseload of 991 which represents 3%. The figures for the year in Queensland are highly variable. Toowoomba shows a rate of 1%, Woodridge 8%. For a different 12 month period September 1981 - August 1982, Townsville had a rate of 2%. As there have been so few cases throughout the system these figures only suggest vague trends in differences between regions. The breaching rate for the 23 month period, where there has been 81 breaches and absconders out of 1453 workers, March 1981 - January 1983, represents a rate of 6%.

Administration of Breaches

Breaching rates represent not only a measure of offender co-operation with the scheme, but the administrative practices of Probation and Parole

offices. In the study, it was found that there were markedly different approaches to decisions on initiation of breach proceedings. One centre had an established practice of breaching offenders after three unexcused attendances. Another centre had experienced some difficulty in establishing whether offenders had been absent without leave, because of unclear lines of communication between supervisors and the probation officers. This was remedied by making one probation officer responsible for all community service offenders. In some centres where high probation caseloads were creating difficult work conditions, there was a more flexible interpretation of breaching. The offender was given 12 months to complete the hours and non attendance did not immediately contribute to a breach action.

Agency Views on Offender Response

The low failure rate of offenders with agencies shows that almost all offenders are able to complete their sentence satisfactorily and contribute to the community. The problems caused by the 2% of offenders who were reported by agencies to be unco-operative are as follows:

Cheeky behaviour towards voluntary supervisors or the inhabitants or recipients of the voluntary agency service.

Re-offending which directly affected the agency, such as Theft, or concerns over potential sexual relationships.

Visits to the offender by personal friends while he is working with the agency.

Non co-operation of the offender when given work directions by the voluntary supervisors and deliberate mistakes with some tasks.

Irregular attendance, where offenders when expected to attend for a number of days, did not turn up for work.

In general, these problems were quickly resolved by intervention by the community service supervisors and the Probation and Parole Service. The offenders were usually moved to another project, sometimes with permanent on site supervision by community supervisors. When the problems had constituted a breach of the order, then action had been taken.

The agencies perceived a commitment by the offenders to complete their sentences and contribute community service. Their involvement with the offenders had developed considerable goodwill and some agencies were prepared to offer references to community service workers and to open work opportunities in the agency, or with contacts in the community.

Offenders Response to Questionnaires

In one centre, Rockhampton, offenders receive a postal questionnaire on completion of their sentence. Sixteen of the 27 offenders who completed their service (July 1981 - July 1982) returned their questionnaires. Their perception of the scheme was that it was not a 'let off' by the court. Three of the 16 would have preferred a fine but none would have preferred jail. Fourteen replied they had a fair chance to use skills on the scheme and six experienced personal gains. Four replied that it would open job opportunities from the skills. Seven expressed a willingness to do voluntary work. Three respondents suggested more widely skilled work should be available and two recommended the use of weekday work.

These responses are limited because offenders can still feel obliged to respond positively when administered a questionnaire by the Probation Service. The 'non replies' could represent a significant criticism of the scheme but nothing can be said unless there is an attempt to follow up this group. However, the information does give the reactions of one small group of offenders.

RESPONSE BY THE JUDICIARY

Informal discussions were held with three judges and three magistrates from Townsville, Toowoomba and Brisbane.

Community service was perceived as a method of reparation to the community, rehabilitation for the offender and economic expediency for the State. Reparation was described in terms of the offender doing community service work to 'pay back' to the community for his original crime. Rehabilitation was strongly emphasised in these discussions. Community service gave an opportunity to the offender to establish a work habit. It was perceived as relevant to the young offender who lacked motivation and led a purposeless life. It was also described as suitable to the older offender with a record who could be rehabilitated through the scheme. Community

service, when compared to fines, had a more significant impact on the younger person, particularly where other people would pay the fine on their behalf.

Interest was expressed in the personal success of individual offenders on community service and there was appreciation of the practice in one area of letters describing the offenders' progress and completion of their sentences. There was interest in the operation of community service in the community but the judiciary were dependant on information on this subject from the Probation and Parole Service. Little discussion seemed to occur generally in the community on the scheme so formal information was necessary.

In one centre where community service was used extensively, there had been some experience of young offenders refusing to take the option - following information from their friends on the hard work it involved.

An analysis of sentencing patterns in community service for the year 1981 - 1982 appears as Figure 2. This shows a preponderance of Driving and Traffic offences in the scheme - 41% and Theft, Break and enter - 34%. Assault was recorded for 6% of offences.

The interest in community service observed in the discussions with the judiciary, and the growth in the numbers of offenders being sentenced by the courts to community service, suggest that it has been accepted as a viable alternative to imprisonment.

CHAPTER 4: CASE STUDIES - COMMUNITY SERVICE IN TOOWOOMBA AND WOODRIDGE

TOOWOOMBA

Introduction

Visits of observation and interviews were undertaken in February and March 1983 to assess the impact of the Community Service Scheme on the community. Nine representatives of six community organisations, two members of the judiciary, two community service supervisors, and members of the Probation and Parole Service in Toowoomba participated.

Toowoomba has a population of 66,698. Twenty percent of households have an annual income of under \$6,000 per annum and 46% of the labour force is under the age of 24. The unemployment rate in Toowoomba is 2.5%, slightly under the State average of 2.6%. A comparison of occupational status of the population between Toowoomba and Woodridge (a suburb of Brisbane described in the second case study) shows certain significant differences. Toowoomba has 13.6% of the workforce in the professional category and 4.4% in administration, whereas Woodridge has 5.2% professionals and 2.3% in administration. Woodridge has a higher proportion of people in transport, 8%, and trades 43%, compared to 6% in transport and 29% in trades in Toowoomba. In addition, Woodridge has a higher rate of unemployment at 3.5%. (1981 Census *)

Toowoomba has a strong voluntary structure with well established voluntary agencies and strong informal networks between agency personnel.

Community Response

In the 23 months of community service in Toowoomba (March 1981 - January 1983), 24 agencies in Toowoomba have applied for approval to participate in the scheme. These agencies include homes for children and the aged (6), government hospitals and health services (5), schools (2), organisations representing the arts, clubs for children, returned service men's clubs, service clubs, historical associations and agricultural associations.

* Australian Bureau of Statistics, '1981 Census of Population and Housing'.

Community Service workers have been involved in 26 projects with these organisations. In March 1981, when community service commenced, five organisations were involved and this had grown to 14 by January 1982.

The range of organisations involved in the scheme has given the Toowoomba Probation and Parole Service flexibility as work can continue in wet weather, individual offenders can practise their skills, and any growth in referrals from the courts of community service workers can be accommodated. The outcome after two years experience is a capacity in community service to meet special community needs and a service where offenders are given tasks that are appropriate to their skills.

Pensioner Groups

Offenders have been used extensively in pensioner households in Toowoomba. Pensioners receive priority in the scheme so that regular maintenance and lawn mowing are provided. Pensioner households are referred in various ways, mainly through Community Health and the informal network among pensioners, either living in a neighbourhood where work is done or through contacts in Senior Citizens Clubs.

The community service supervisor applies certain criteria for pensioners to be accepted into the program. These include that they do not have the means to employ labour, and have no close relative who can be involved in the work. The pensioner is visited by the supervisor and placed on the work list for whatever tasks are required. Apart from lawn mowing and painting, work can be done on small carpentry jobs, other repairs and cleaning down walls and ceilings.

Aged Homes and Children's Homes

A home for the aged and a home for intellectually handicapped children were visited during the study. The aged persons' home was the first organisation to use a community service worker in Toowoomba and has, on average, three men once or twice a week, on weekdays. When female workers are placed in the Home they work in the kitchen under direct supervision of the matron. Most of the tasks are gardening work under the maintenance supervisor and a small amount of woodchopping is also done.

Service Clubs

There are several community projects in Toowoomba where service clubs have involved community service workers in helping to beautify the City and to provide community facilities. These include walkways and rock gardens.

Historical Associations

One Historical Association was visited at Jondaryan where an historic woolshed is open to the public. There are, on average, four to five men on community service on this project once a week. The workers are integrated into all activities depending on their experience - assisting with stock, fencing, grinding grain, ploughing, gardening, and kitchen work is given to any female workers. A supervisor brings the workers to the site and they move into whatever work is being done for the day. The workers share all meals and tea breaks with staff.

Schools

A school for mentally handicapped children was visited. This school has boarding facilities. Workers on community service assist in gardening and work with teachers helping the children. Some of the tasks have included carpentry, building a shed, helping with a fete, reading to the children and preparing educational aids.

An education centre was also visited and in this project mainly female workers are involved in clerical work.

New Projects

A new project planned by the Probation and Parole Service in association with the local Council is the preparation of a number of acres of a flora and fauna park area for visits by the public

The response by organisations visited during the study was positive and supportive of the scheme. It appears that the contact with offenders during the projects has led to acceptance of them by the organisation personnel and a commitment to assisting individual offenders. The offenders are working in a supportive environment and are able to make reparation to the community. All the projects visited expressed appreciation towards the offenders for their work. Work had been contributed to the community that otherwise would not have been possible. One organisation stated they were 'privileged

to be involved in the scheme' and others described their dependance on the scheme for direct assistance with their projects.

Response of the Probation and Parole Service

Toowoomba was the first centre to have a community service order made (February 27, 1981). The program started in March with one part time supervisor. The Supervising Probation and Parole Officer liaised with the voluntary organisations and addressed meetings about the scheme. The media were also involved in describing the projects and the Toowoomba people involved in the scheme.

In January 1983, the monthly caseload for the Toowoomba office was 123 community service workers. There are six part time supervisors working during the week and at weekends. In the one month, there were 13 projects assisted by community service workers.

The supervisors have a well developed system of working with the offenders. If a worker does not turn up for work and there is no excuse for scepticism about the excuse, a home visit is made. One of the difficulties with the excuses that are made is in checking illness as a medical certificate cannot be requested, and checking a work excuse. There is a reluctance by Supervisors to make any inquiry that could affect an offender's job. There is also flexibility in placement of offenders and if the offender requests a change this is followed. The main emphasis is on productivity from the order particularly for the unemployed offender who has to get into the workforce.

Growth in the Community Service Scheme

Figure 3 shows the growth in community service in Toowoomba, January 1981 - December 1982. The monthly caseload figures show that Toowoomba is experiencing a larger growth in community service than in probation which is markedly different to the pattern of growth throughout the State. In community service the monthly caseload grew by 60 workers (from January - December 1982) and 44 probationers.

Response by Offenders

The total community service caseload in Toowoomba for the year January - December 1982 was 292. There were 4 breaches of community service in this time representing 1% of the total caseload and lower than the State average of 2% for the year.

The pattern of sentencing was studied for the 12 month period July 1981 - June 1982. Driving and Traffic represented the most significant offence with 67% of the 209 offences for this time. Theft, Break and enter represented 20% of the offences, and 3% of offences were for Assault. This showed a significantly higher proportion of offences for Driving and Traffic were given community service than elsewhere in the State. (See Figure 2) The category of Theft, Break and enter, is significantly lower than the rest of the State which represented 34% of all offences. However, the Toowoomba figures for the 12 months studied can only represent vague trends as the numbers are low. For the same period, the sentencing pattern in Toowoomba showed almost 50% of the community service offences were for under 80 hours.

The offenders on community service in Toowoomba have been well received by the voluntary organisations. An estimated 2% have returned out of hours to contribute extra work, or to finish a project after an order has been completed or to have worked so well that a position was found for them in the agency or through community contacts. One example of the trust shown to offenders was a position of full time work being given to an offender to continue his work in a residential and training home for mentally handicapped adults.

WOODRIDGE

Introduction

Visits were made to Woodridge in February 1983 and interviews and observations were made on the impact of community service on the community. Discussions were held with members of the Probation

and Parole Service, one community service supervisor and one representative of a voluntary agency.

Woodridge has a population of 17,064. Seventeen percent of households have an income of under \$6,000 per annum. The age of the labour force shows a preponderance of people under 24 (29%), and 3.6% are unemployed. (1981 Census)

A paper issued by the Logan City Community Development Officer* describes Logan City as a rapid urban growth area. There is a higher percentage of New Australians (25%) than in the rest of the State (16%). Adolescents pose a problem for the city as there are not facilities for 10-14 year olds and the public transport system is rudimentary. There is a recognised need to extend the Police Citizens Youth Club at Woodridge. Gang warfare has become increasingly common in the low socio-economic developing suburbs.

The trade certificate is the most common educational qualification and those with higher qualifications are significantly under-represented. A high number of residents left school at 15 (36% compared to the State average of 28%). Those on higher incomes are poorly represented. The incomes are related to the industry sector - more are employed in the private sector and there is a reliance on small business in the area. (Logan City 1983)

There is a problem with housing as 7% are housing authority tenants compared to 3% on the State average. Private rents are high compared to the income earning capacity of tenants and home owners have a low income earning capacity to pay mortgages. (Logan City 1983)

Social Welfare activities in Logan City have concentrated on the aged and on youth. Domestic violence has increased along with neighbourhood violence. There are difficulties in placing women and children and also problems for youths who are sleeping rough. The Logan City Report suggests that in areas such as Woodridge, the economic recession has made these problems acute. The lack of solid community minded middle management

* Logan City, "Report by the Community Development Officer", 1983, Unpublished.

is also identified and those citizens who are involved in community work are described as 'overburdened'.

Community Response

Discussions were held with the District Probation and Parole Officer at Woodridge, the community service supervisor and a voluntary agency representative.

The District Probation and Parole Officer had worked with the scheme in another region in Queensland and was able to make some useful comparisons on community response. He found that the difficulty in Woodridge was the lack of resources which made any expansion of community service limited. The poverty of the area was reflected in different ways. Firstly, in the lack of viable organisations for the placement of offenders. Secondly, by the lack of materials and tools to assist in projects. Pensioner households and small voluntary organisations could not afford to pay for materials or tools although projects needed to be done. The community service scheme did provide some equipment such as mowers but it was the general lack of community resources which was identified as the serious problem.

In addition, there was the problem of the lack of weekend transport for community service workers to get to projects and supervisors spent time in providing transport. (This had been identified as a problem in other regions in Queensland, compounded by the frequent loss of the offender's licence as part of his offence).

The difficulty in obtaining resources for organisations was compounded by the reluctance of small organisations to admit need. This is a common problem associated with poverty.

Most of the community service work in Woodridge is work on individual pensioner homes: mowing lawns, cleaning yards, digging gardens, and washing down ceilings and walls. This service is done for all types of pensioners, the aged, supporting mothers, and critically ill people, generally referred through Community Health. Apart from pensioners there were three organisations that received regular work from the

scheme, two Police Citizens Youth Clubs and a child's playground. In total, six organisations had arranged for projects to be undertaken by workers. One of these was a cricket club which had maintenance work done on the grounds.

The children's playground was visited during the study. The Director had been involved with the community service scheme in Woodridge for approximately 12 months.

In total, about 10 offenders had worked at the project. The scheme had been most successful for the organisation and some offenders had been trusted to work on their own without supervision. Most of the work was gardening but some painting was also done. The children had accepted the community service workers who had been integrated as part of the staff. This project had used regular men on the scheme as it was important that the children built a rapport and were able to play alongside the men when they were working.

Some offenders had needed to test the organisation but they soon settled into the work and saw it as a serious project. It was observed that they needed firm limits and after a period would express a wish to talk about themselves.

Response of the Probation and Parole Service

A community service supervisor who had been with the scheme from its inception at Woodridge in September 1981, had found some initial difficulties. There were some problems in getting suitable on site supervision with voluntary agencies and the supervisor found it better to develop on site supervision himself. The difficulties were identified in getting established boundaries for the offenders when they worked. Offenders would work well on pensioner households, if organised. Garden work was usually done by four workers and they took equipment provided through the scheme. In Woodridge, there were approximately 22 pensioner households that were receiving regular help. A team of four could assist nine households in a day and this meant that the pensioners could receive regular assistance approximately once a fortnight.

The supervisor found the work personally satisfying and his relationships with the offenders were described as 'discipline not regimentation'.

One of the problems with offenders was regular attendance. There was also some cheeky behaviour but it was found that this type of offender could work well on his own. It was also commented that the older offender came with developed work skills whereas the younger ones had to be shown items such as working a lawn mower. Young offenders also needed guidance constantly with their work and did not show initiative.

One technique that assisted offenders to work well was the supervisor's record sheet which he showed them at the end of each working day. This held a record of how satisfactory their work had been for the day.

The initial contacts with voluntary agencies were made by the District Probation and Parole Officer at Woodridge. He found that approaches to organisations through the media and formal talks had not been successful but the informal network had led to co-operation with the scheme. The Probation Service had been involved with many community service workers who had been absent from projects and home visits were made when necessary. Truancy was observed as one of the problems where young offenders had left home to go to a project and their parents were unaware that they had not arrived.

Growth of the Community Service Scheme

Community Service has not grown in Woodridge at the same rate as other regions in the State. The monthly caseload was 14 in January 1982 and rose to 24 in December the same year. Probation figures rose in this period from 126 to 247, an increase of 121 probationers. Community service in Woodridge represented only 8% of the combined probation and community service growth in caseload and probation represented 92%. The State figures showed that growth in the two parts of the Service were 24% for community service and 76% for probation. (See Figure 4)

The Senior Probation Officer reported that liaison with the judiciary had led to an increase in the orders being made by the end of 1982.

Offender Response

A study of sentencing patterns in Woodridge in relation to Community Service, for the year July 1981 - June 1982 showed that of 51 offences, 47% were for Driving and Traffic offences and 41% for Theft, Break and enter. However, these numbers are so small that it is not possible to make any realistic comparisons with the sentencing trends at State level for the same period. See Figure 2.

Woodridge showed a high rate of breaching for the 12 months, January - December 1982. There were 5 breaches in the 61 cases for this year, representing 8%. The State figures for the same period were 2%.

The Probation and Parole Service at Woodridge has used a strict rule for breaching and sought the co-operation of the Magistrates in intervening as soon as possible after an offender has not satisfactorily performed his order.

APPENDIX A: AN EVALUATION MODEL FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Evaluation studies, according to Freeman (1977), are an attempt to rationalise social policy and human resource programs. Research on assessment of social programs began in the United States in the 1930's and was developed as a science in World War II. Following the great expansion in social programs after World War II, evaluation research expanded in laboratory studies, field experiments, and organisational studies to provide some feedback on the impact of these programs. In Australia, evaluation research has greatly expanded in the last fifteen years. Sarri (1980) says that systematic program evaluation is one of the major innovations in human services operations. It is, however, also seen as the panacea to all problems and a dire threat to organisations.

The evaluation of community service in Queensland was based on a need to develop a body of data on the state of the program that would identify the impact of the scheme after two years of operation and could be replicated in the future to monitor continuing progress. This called for the development of some social indicators. These are usually statistical measures but Sheldon and Freeman (1970) say that qualitative as well as quantitative data can be used. In social programs the effects are often described in subjective terms by the participants and the difficulty in evaluation research is to present this data in a form that is acceptable and replicable.

Six key indicators were chosen to form the basis of the evaluation model:

1. Community Response
2. Response of the Probation and Parole Service
3. Growth in the Community Service Order Scheme
4. Response by Offenders
5. Cost Effectiveness of the Community Service Order Scheme
6. Response by the Judiciary

Although impact evaluation is usually concerned with the extent to which a program effects changes in relation to its goals (Freeman 1977), the emphasis in this study was on the functioning of the program and not the articulated goals. Programs such as Community

Service have broad aims which can change as the scheme develops, and the influences of the community, the Probation and Parole Service and the Judiciary become more pronounced. Deutscher (1976) suggests that there is an argument for evaluating the processes by which some programs have an impact on the society.

Some of the suggestions for evaluation include the use of the findings as a guide to decision making (Edwards and Guttentag 1975) and the use of weightings for some of the outcomes (Edwards 1971). In community service where there are multiple impacts from the scheme it is essential that administrators or policy makers are able to assess the various impacts of the scheme and to understand the effects of decisions within the scheme. The findings of the six indicators used in this study are of varying degrees of importance depending on the priorities of the Probation and Parole Service.

The lack of objectivity in evaluations is widely described in the literature (Berk and Rossi 1976, Glass and Ellett 1976, Scriven 1976, Weiss 1973, Weiss and Rein 1970, Zinberg 1976). This has to be accepted and acknowledged as part of the process, even in the choice of programs to be evaluated. There have also been criticisms against agency based evaluations in Corrections (Dewdner and Miner 1975). There are also influences of values and suspect motivations within agencies for the initiation of evaluations. This suggests conflict but it is possible for an agency to create an environment where evaluation is initiated as part of a move to upgrade and assist in the development of programs.

The management of bias was considered in the present program and it was decided to use a team of two evaluators, one an external consultant to the Probation and Parole Service and the other the Chief Community Programs Officer with direct responsibility for community service.

Another approach in the study was to incorporate subjective data as well as the available statistical information. Heilman (1980) has supported the use of subjective data suggesting that agencies find this easier to act upon than theoretical approaches

based on statistics. One of the difficulties with new programs such as community service is interpretations of data based on the collection of small numbers and the early influences of the impact of a new sentencing option in different regions of the State. Rossi and Wright (1977) suggest that good internal records are needed but in new programs these may still be in a state of flux. A further difficulty is the question of causality (Patton 1978, Boruch and Gomez 1977). In the interpretation of data there are difficulties in associating certain observed effects with causes. Breaching for example, may appear to be a basis for failure of community service in some areas whereas, high breaching rates may really represent a strict policy in the Probation and Parole Service in some areas. In the data gathering phase there is also the problem of confidentiality (Weiss and Rein 1970). This relates not only to protecting offenders from recognition but the sources of comments on the program being studied. It was found in the data gathering for this project that some voluntary agencies were concerned that they were not known within the community whereas others were not worried about it being known that they participated in community service. The concern by some agencies was based on a wish to protect the offender from being seen as separate from other agency volunteers.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

The study of community service was limited to three months so some selection had to be made of the communities to be visited for data collection. A choice was made of several areas according to certain criteria rather than randomised selection. Centres were visited in a metropolitan area, a rural area, an expanding provincial city and an area where the scheme had just commenced. In addition, information was sought on the scheme in an aboriginal reserve (Palm Island). This type of selection gives some limited basis for generalising findings to the State, but with caution, as each region visited was different in some respects in the operation of the scheme.

Problems of replication with subjective data are described in the evaluation literature (Scriven 1976, Cowen 1978). The interviews with community representatives in Queensland were undertaken with semi structured interview questions asked by the team and notes taken of the replies. This provided some structure to the data and allowed comparison between agencies on some issues. The problem in interpretation of the findings is, however, in knowing which effects are related to a particular cause (Bennett and Lumsdaine 1975), especially when community representatives suggest different reasons.

One of the effects of the study which was observed during interviews was its usefulness in providing some immediate feedback to the agencies and reinforcement for their role in community service. In addition, the media coverage of the project provided an opportunity for the Probation and Parole Service to demonstrate to the community the importance of community participation.

RESPONSE OF THE PROBATION AND PAROLE SERVICE

This indicator described the response to the scheme by representatives of the Probation and Parole Service, including the community service supervisors. Because the scheme had been in operation for only two years, the data of the Probation and Parole Service could only provide early indications of trends. To supplement this information, a source of information was sought in the literature from other countries and other States in Australia where community service had been operating. This provided information on some of the early difficulties for integration of the scheme in the Probation and Parole Services.

One of the problems with data from within the Probation and Parole Service is the effects of variation in administration in regions. This problem has been identified (Parliament of Australia 1979) in other programs where personnel are given broad discretion in service delivery. Another difficulty in evaluation studies is in the choice of data to be studied, particularly where this may

influence the degree of agency involvement in the use of findings (Hackler 1979). With the Queensland Probation and Parole Service the data used involved figures on caseloads that were kept within each region and figures for the State that were kept at Headquarters. However, the team gathered new information in the form of subjective reports on the scheme from the Probation and Parole Officers and Community Service Supervisors in selected centres.

Lewis and Greene (1978) have said that more individuals are now accepting that effective criminal justice programming requires a feedback loop on whether or not projects are working and why. One of the immediately observable effects of the current study was the interest in information from other centres in the State that Probation and Parole Officers demonstrated when interviewed. The search for data also involved staff in analysing their roles, their methods of data analysis and procedures within the community service scheme. The most important aspect of the response to the study was the extensive co-operation.

GROWTH IN THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER SCHEME

The limitations of the data in the present study have already been described in the Introduction. However, after 23 months of operation there were figures on growth which showed some trends in the development of the program in the State. Future projections from this type of data are restricted because of the increases expected from new legislation in 1973, introducing a Fine Option Scheme where people will be able to opt for community service when they do not have the means to pay a fine. Growth within regions in Queensland cannot be estimated with any degree of certainty at this stage because of the small numbers involved and the many influences, for example, in changes in personnel in the courts.

RESPONSE BY OFFENDERS

There are inherent difficulties in measuring the responses of offenders to correctional programs.

Even though Community Service is chosen by the offenders, there is the constraint of an alternative jail sentence or other sanctions if the order is breached. There is considerable argument in the evaluation literature to support the inclusion of the effects of a program from the recipient's viewpoint (Department of Employment and Industrial Relations 1977, Bush and Gordon 1978, Reppuci and Clingempeel 1978). The 'client' is seen as the person who has a wider view of the program than, for example, the Probation and Parole Service, as it has a more extensive impact on him as an individual. An alternative way of assessing the offender's response, as suggested by Ellsworth (1975) is to look at the impact of the program on the client's adjustment in the community. The emphasis in the present study has been to draw on the community agencies' response to the offenders on community service.

There are also unanticipated outcomes which are found in evaluations of social programs (Department of Employment and Industrial Relations 1977, Deutscher 1977, Royal Commission 1975). In the present study attention was paid to these, particularly to the employment opportunities that came to offenders. The statistics of recidivism rates from studies in Tasmania and England suggested that community service was not any more successful in rehabilitation than short term prison sentences so other effects become important in assessing the scheme.

COST EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDER SCHEME

Dewdney and Miner (1975) say that a complete evaluation of any correctional program should include cost effectiveness. Some problems have been encountered in correctional programs because of difficulties in isolating the costs of single programs. However, as community service is new in Queensland, there are separate costings of the scheme. The comparison is made with prison costs as community service was originally intended to replace short term prison sentences. The other measure of effectiveness in relation to cost is the failure rate of the scheme.

The immediate failure rate in terms of breaching and absconding is low and the studies of recidivism rates from Tasmania and England suggest that this measure is no higher for offenders who have served community service instead of a prison term.

RESPONSE BY THE JUDICIARY

This indicator is the least satisfactory as only three judges and three magistrates were involved in the study. A much larger group drawn as a sample from the whole State would provide findings that could be generalised. At a later stage, when, for example, the program has been established for five years a study of State sentencing patterns and differences between the regions would provide useful data on the response by the judiciary to community service as a sentencing option.

In conclusion, the study of community service has identified a number of methodological problems and an approach using social indicators that could have an application to other social programs. Within the limits of the study, information has been made available which could assist in the future development of community service as a significant part of community corrections.

The problem with evaluation findings is their application to the project being studied. This depends on the relevance of the information to the Probation and Parole Service's policy and administration. Freeman and Sherwood (1977) commented that to influence social policy findings must provide for an efficient allocation of financial and human resources. These are the constraints of any Department in the implementation of recommendations and attention has been given in the study, to implementation of findings from within the existing resources of the Probation and Parole Service.

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FIGURE 1: COMMUNITY SERVICE: GROWTH IN STATE
MONTHLY CASE-LOADS JANUARY - DECEMBER 1982

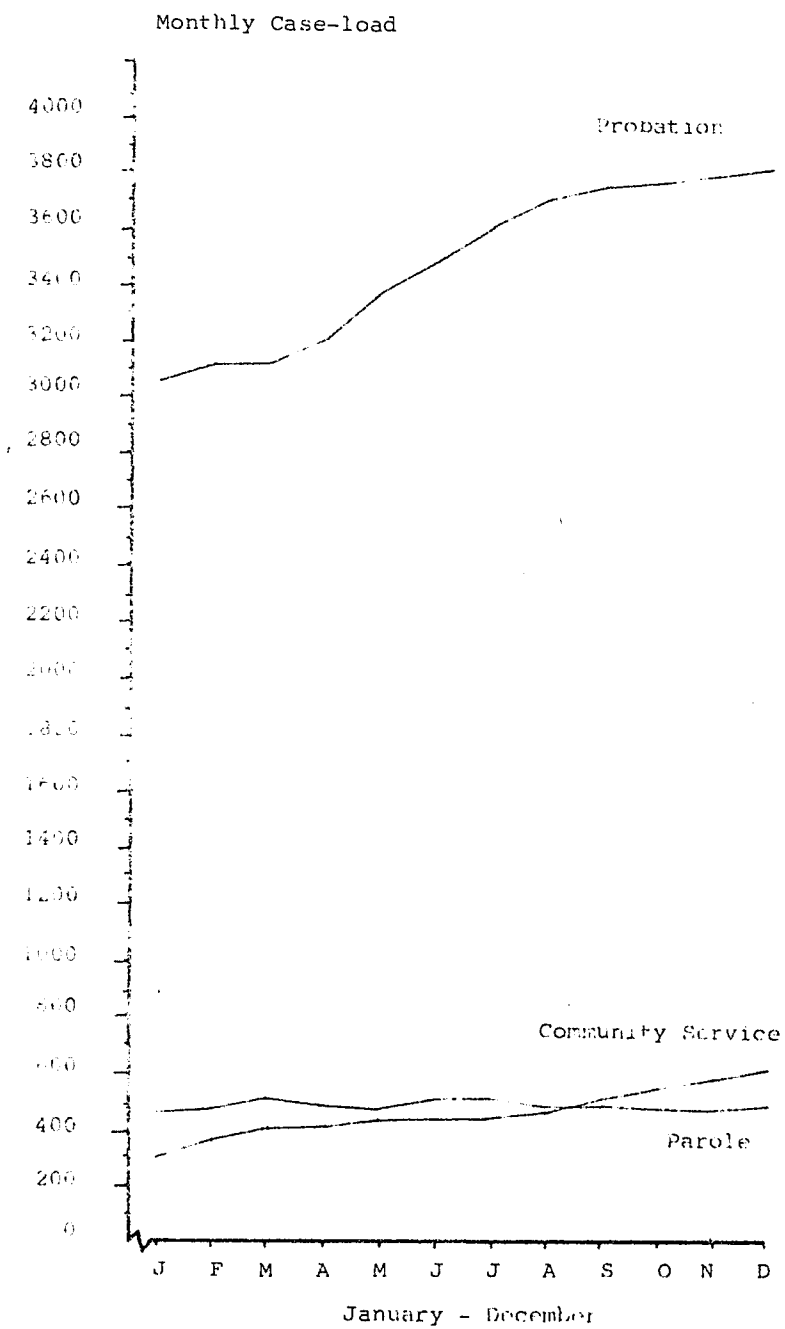


FIGURE 2: SENTENCING PATTERNS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE
FOR THE STATE, TOOWOOMBA, AND WOODRIDGE
JULY 1981 - JUNE 1982

OFFENCE	STATE	TOOWOOMBA	WOODRIDGE
ASSAULT	47 (6%)	7 (3%)	-----
ROBBERY AND EXTORTION	4 (.4%)	-----	-----
FRAUD AND MIS- APPROPRIATION	20 (3%)	8 (3%)	-----
THEFT, BREAK AND ENTER	264 (34%)	43 (20%)	21 (41%)
PROPERTY DAMAGE	55 (7%)	3 (1%)	2 (4%)
DRIVING AND TRAFFIC	322 (41%)	141 (67%)	24 (47%)
OTHER OFFENCES	73 (9%)	7 (3%)	4 (8%)
ALL OFFENCES	784 (100%)	209 (100%)	51 (100%)

FIGURE 3: GROWTH IN COMMUNITY SERVICE IN TOOWOOMBA
JANUARY - DECEMBER 1982

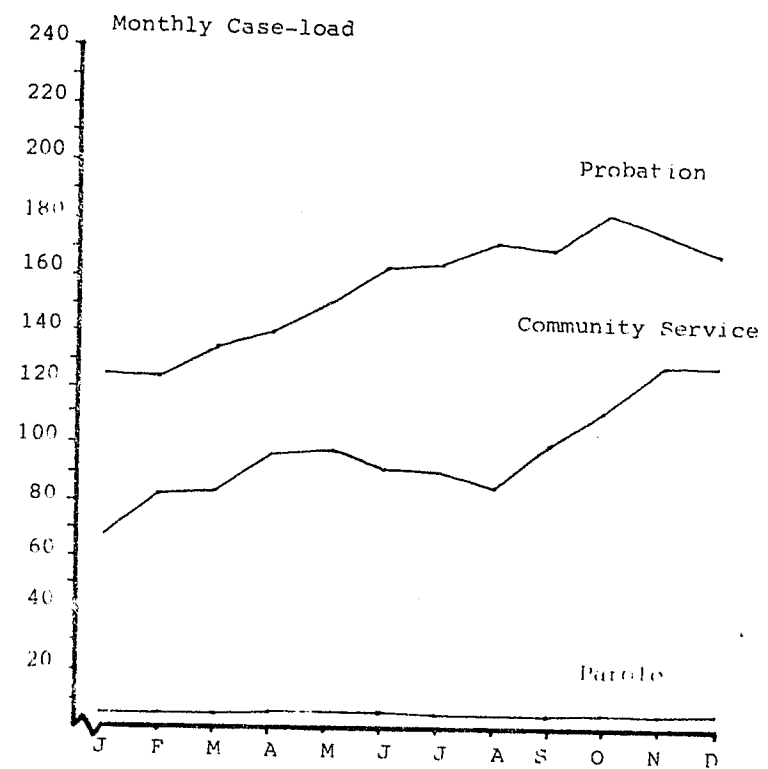
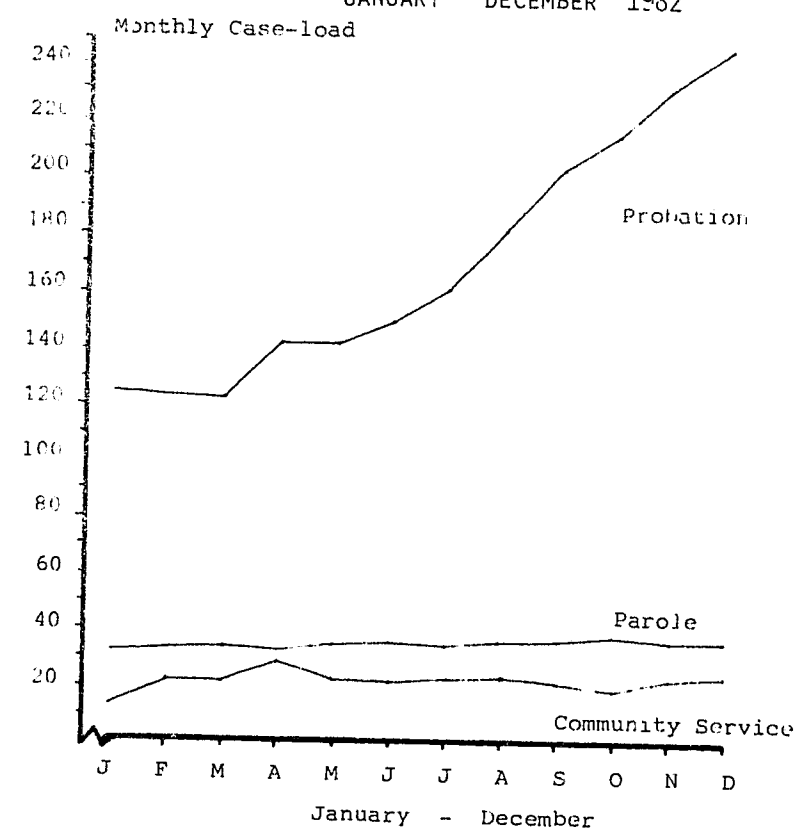


FIGURE 4: GROWTH IN COMMUNITY SERVICE IN WOODRIDGE
JANUARY - DECEMBER 1982



END