



Australian
18-May-2011
Page: 9
General News
Market: Australia
Circulation: 129166
Type: Australian National
Size: 68.50 sq.cms
MTWTF

Applause for detention operator

TONY BARRASS

SERCO, the operator of Australia's troubled detention facilities, has received a glowing report into its management of Western Australia's largest, and only private, jail, Acacia Prison.

The Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services yesterday found that while there were issues needing attention — such as rooftop protests — the jail on the outskirts of Perth was well run and well managed.

And despite the prison functioning well above its design capacity of 750 inmates, Serco was still “delivering high-quality services” to prisoners.

“At Acacia, corporate profits and savings to the state/taxpayer are not being achieved at the cost of service delivery,” custodial inspector Neil Morgan wrote.

He said West Australians “could be confident that Acacia Prison was providing value for money. In terms of service standards, it is without doubt one of the best performing prisons in Western Australia, if not the best”.

The practice of climbing on roofs continued to pose “potential risks to prisoners and staff and also disrupt prison routines”, Mr Morgan found.

But he suggested “target hardening measures” could be put in place to alleviate the problem.