Exclude the bean counters from gaol review

Greg Butler
Industrial Officer

Federation has called on Corrective Services NSW management to defer to education experts rather than accountants when it reviews statewide provision of adult education and vocational training services in the next financial year.

Having been informed in May about the review, Federation has asserted the value of education programs that support the management of culturally and linguistically diverse inmates, and of vocational pathways and rehabilitation in correctional environments.

Federation has requested that the education services review be managed by a source with understanding of quality education programs, of education-based outcomes and of sound research bases for recommendations rather than be managed by a source with merely an accounting practices background.

Corrective Services is obliged to consult with relevant employees and Federation during all stages of the review. While consultation is welcomed, decision-making powers rest with the Commissioner.

Although no proposals for change have been put forward, Federation has informed Corrective Services NSW the union will oppose any recommendations that impose additional workload on education staff, erode award conditions or the responsibilities carried by education professionals, or are not based on reliable evidence.

The statewide education review is in addition to local efficiency consultations being conducted by centre general managers. The efficiency consultations, authorised by the Assistant Commissioner, began before Corrective Services NSW informed Federation. The union has requested a briefing on the scope of the local efficiency consultations. Corrective Services NSW is also to conduct a statewide system review to address bed capacity for the increasing number of prisoners (Education, May 19).

Members who have specific workplace concerns about any of the employee consultations are urged to contact an executive member of the Corrective Services TA or their Organiser.