



Department of Justice

Corrections Victoria

CCS Directorate

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9 July 2008

Mr Ian Gray
Chief Magistrate
Magistrates Court of Victoria
233 William Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Dear Mr Gray

DISRUPTIVE IMPACT OF OFFICE REFURBISHMENT AT BALLARAT CCS

In recent years, the growth of workload at the Ballarat office of CCS has placed pressure on the adequacy of office accommodation. Government's pending response to the final report of the Sentencing Advisory Council (April 2008) on Suspended Sentences and Intermediate Sentencing Orders may also have implications for future staffing growth.

In order to position itself for actual and projected growth, CCS in conjunction with the Sheriff's office agreed on a reconfiguration of the floor plan of both offices to incorporate them into one single enlarged office. For the first time CCS would be able to run offender development or treatment programs on site, and would have at least some capacity to increase staff as and when demand growth requires.

Last week, work commenced on remodelling of the office but it quickly became apparent that arrangements for office work to continue during the refurbishment were not sustainable. With the co-operation of staff at the court complex, most CCOs relocated into temporarily available court space. It is possible that another short-term relocation will be necessary when this space is required for court operations.

The purpose of this letter is to draw to your attention that until building program is stabilised or completed, it will be necessary to adjust the reporting schedules of some offenders. CCS is assessing a number of other options to ensure that as nearly as possible, service delivery interruption will be minimised. Although original estimates were for the majority of work to be completed in the next two weeks, a site inspection yesterday indicates that this deadline will not be met.

I am also aware of reports of occasional sound penetration from the building works into the court complex and apologise for any inconvenience that this may cause to judicial officers and court staff. We are endeavouring to have as much work as possible carried out during evening or weekend hours.

The CCS staff at Ballarat have shown considerable resourcefulness and perseverance in maintaining operations under trying circumstances, and subject to the limitations imposed on them by circumstance, will continue to do so.

I would be happy to address any particular concerns or questions that your fellow magistrates or yourself wish to raise. The Acting General Manager for the western region, Mr Phil Pettingill (0407 313978) will also make himself available to meet at Ballarat if there are particular local issues that the refurbishment presents for the Court there.

Yours sincerely

David Daley
Director Community Correctional Services