

Your Ref:

Our Ref: Criminal Law Committee: 21000339/64

12 July 2012

Peter McInnes
President
Queensland Parole Board
GPO Box 1054
BRISBANE QLD 4001

By Post and Email to: [REDACTED]

Dear President

FOLLOW UP FROM MEETING ON 2 JULY 2012 WITH QUEENSLAND LAW SOCIETY

Queensland Law Society would like to thank you for meeting with us on 2 July 2012. The discussion was positive and we look forward to working closely with you to address the issues that were raised. There are some items arising from our discussions that require follow-up action, which we have set out below.

1. Communications with legal practitioners

The issue with legal practitioners not being notified of decisions in a timely manner was discussed. We note that you have agreed to put in place a process which ensures that, within 24 hours after a decision has been communicated to the prisoner, the correspondence will be electronically provided to the lawyer. We understand that in cases where there are large volumes of material that must be forwarded, the correspondence is sent by mail and not electronically. We acknowledge that there may be longer time frames involved in these cases.

We will notify legal practitioners that the best practice when lodging a parole application is to attach a cover letter which states that the practitioner acts for the prisoner, and requests that copies of all correspondence to the prisoner be forwarded to the legal practitioner.

2. Home assessment reports

We discussed whether it would be possible for practitioners to state more than one address on the initial application so as to expedite the process, in the event that the first address has been refused. We consider that this would be a simple step that will improve the delays in the time taken to find an appropriate address.

We will also notify legal practitioners that that they are able to call the Board and inquire about the progress of the application and whether there are any issues with the nominated address that can be remedied. We

acknowledge that this must be done in such a way that the Board does not disclose the location of the victim.

3. Programs for sexual offenders in prison

We note that this issue was discussed and you have advised the Society that the lack of availability of programs is taken into account when making parole decisions. We hope to continue to work with you on this issue to improve the current situation, which we consider to be of concern.

4. Statement of reason

You advised us that Board members receive training on writing statements of reason. We consider that this issue is of the utmost importance and prisoners are being denied the right to respond appropriately when these statements are inadequate. Again, this is an issue that we would be pleased to work with you to address.

Again, let me thank you for meeting with us and I look forward to the Society and Queensland Parole Board having a productive working relationship to address these issues. In this regard, we consider that it would be beneficial for our organisations to meet on a regular basis in order to continue to monitor and address these matters. Our Criminal Law Committee would also be pleased if you would like attend one of our regular monthly meetings.

If you wish to discuss these issues further, please contact our Senior Policy Solicitor, Ms Binny De Saram on [REDACTED] or Ms Raylene D'Cruz on [REDACTED].

Yours faithfully



Annette Bradfield
Deputy President