

CORONAVIRUS — PRISONS — HELPING HANDS PROJECT

Statement by Minister for Corrective Services

MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn — Minister for Corrective Services) [9.04 am]: I rise to inform the house of the Helping Hands project, which is a collaboration between the Department of Justice, Department of Corrective Services and the Department of Communities. The Department of Justice and the Department of Communities recently agreed to collaborate to provide services and goods to vulnerable members of the community who may be disadvantaged as a result of the impact of COVID-19. The project, which has been named Helping Hands, provides an excellent opportunity for prisoners to provide a meaningful contribution to the community in lieu of the section 95 community project work that was recently suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions.

A number of initiatives are underway at prisons throughout Western Australia. These include contributions from prisoners at Bandyup Women's Prison, who are designing and manufacturing children's clothing for vulnerable children. Prisoners from Greenough Regional Prison are manufacturing pillowcases, library bags, toiletry bags and small teddy bears. Prisoners from Bunbury Regional Prison and Pardelup Prison Farm have commenced manufacturing more than 100 chairs and furniture to facilitate vulnerable children who are studying from home. Roebourne Regional Prison, Wooroloo Prison Farm, Casuarina Prison and Greenough Regional Prison are expected to commence similar manufacturing in the near future.

With the assistance of the department's education, employment and transitional services team, prisoners from Bandyup Women's Prison, Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women, Bunbury Regional Prison, Banksia Hill Detention Centre, Casuarina Prison, Greenough Regional Prison and Karnet Prison Farm are creating drawings and artwork designs, which prisoners at West Kimberley Regional Prison, Bandyup Women's Prison and Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women will craft into mindfulness colouring books and cards. The intent of those cards is to deliver a message of hope and kindness during these difficult times. Prisoners across WA are preparing care packages for the Department of Communities to be distributed to vulnerable children, women experiencing domestic violence, elders and seniors experiencing hardship and homelessness. The department has negotiated a donation of damaged bikes and scooters, which will be repaired at Wooroloo and Karnet Prison Farms and distributed to vulnerable children between the ages of 10 and 14. This is a positive collaboration between the Department of Justice and the Department of Communities. I am pleased that prisoners will be able to continue to give back to the community during these difficult and uncertain times. I want to thank the Department of Justice for all its efforts in putting this project together so quickly and the Department of Communities for facilitating these initiatives.