

Australia

Prisoner Radio Network

The Prisoner Radio Network is an informal network of like-minded people dedicated to broadcasting prisoner voices in Australia. Prisoner radio in Australia is represented by a mixed bag of programmes. This is because the Australian prison system does not operate at a national level - each state and territory has its own system of incarceration, which means different legislation (and government departments) for each of those jurisdictions.

The unifying factor for prisoner radio in Australia is its well-established, nearly-50-year-old, community radio sector and this is where most prisoner radio can be heard. The Prisoner Radio Network operates a website and social media platforms that act as places to promote, network and share prison-related radio and audio production.

The network launched in 2018 at the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia's national conference. We are a volunteer, grassroots organisation and encourage anyone (organisations or individuals) to list their prisoner radio projects with us.

The Prisoner Radio Network does not produce prisoner radio itself but acts as a central networking point for broadcasters across the country.

Prisoner Radio Network is coordinated by Dr Charlotte Bedford and Dr Heather Anderson, who are dedicated to action research projects that further knowledge and understanding of the benefits of prisoner radio, in Australia and internationally.



There are currently seven prisoner radio programmes heard on Australian community radio, produced at six different radio stations across five states:

- 3CR's *Beyond the Bars* is a series of live radio broadcasts for, by and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inmates (held each July). It overcame Covid-19 restrictions in 2020 by recording interviews, stories, poems and cheerios over the phone with inmates across Victoria. In 2021 *Beyond the Bars* celebrates 20 years on air.
- *Jailbreak* – produced at 2SER in Sydney, New South Wales – is available for broadcast nationally via the Community Radio Network.
- Other prisoner radio programmes on Australian community radio include: *Locked In* (4ZZZ, Brisbane); *The Prison Show* (3D Radio, Adelaide); *Radio Seeds* (WOW-FM, Adelaide); *Doin' Time* (3CR, Melbourne); and *WKRP* (6DBY, Derby).
- A new podcast series, *Birds' Eye View*, produced in the women's unit at Darwin Correctional Centre (Northern Territory), was named Podcast of the Year at the 2020 Australian Podcast Awards.
- Podcasting training projects are underway at Malmesbury Youth Justice Centre & Loddon prison, both in Victoria.

