

01 October 2020

C126283

Mark Hanna
fyi-request-13680-18f6e25e@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Hanna

Thank you for your emails of 6 and 7 September 2020, requesting various information about individuals incarcerated for violent crimes. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

You requested:

1a. How many prisoners are there in New Zealand?

The total prison population as at 31 August 2020 was 9,142.

1b. What offences does Corrections consider to fall within the category of "violent crimes"?

Corrections considers offences as violent if they fall within any of the following Level 1 classifications:

Classification Code	Offences
01	Homicide and Related Offences
02	Acts Intended to Cause Injury
05	Abduction, Harassment and Other Offences Against the Person
06	Robbery, Extortion and Related Offences

A complete breakdown of all levels of offences included under the above classification codes can be found via the Stats New Zealand website. This information can be found under *Classification – Offence, Complete* under available files at:

<http://archive.stats.govt.nz/methods/classifications-and-standards/classification-related-stats-standards/offence/classification-and-coding-process.aspx#gsc.tab=0>

1c. How many prisoners are serving sentences of imprisonment for violent crimes?

The sentenced prison population as at 18 September 2020 was 5,900. Of those, 41.5% are serving sentences where violence was the lead offence for the sentence currently being served. 58% of individuals in custody have a violent offence within their aggregate sentence and may not necessarily be counted towards the lead offence. 76% of all individuals in custody have prior or current convictions of violent offending.

Please also release the following information, regarding the two RNZ articles I cited above:

2a. What specific representations were made to RNZ regarding the number or proportion of prisoners who had been convicted of or are incarcerated for violent crimes?

2b. What evidence does the Department of Corrections have to substantiate these representations?

In a recent OIA request that was provided to Radio New Zealand, the following information was provided “*over 75 percent of the prison population have convictions for violence in their offending histories*”.

Please note that this response may be published on Corrections’ website. Typically, responses are published monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with Corrections. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Yours sincerely



Robert Jones
Manager Ministerial Services
People and Capability