



16 July 2024

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fyi-request-27085-8484fe05@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your request of 31 May 2024 to the Department of Corrections – Ara Poutama Aotearoa, requesting information about prison demographics and recidivism rates. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Corrections is committed to delivering improved outcomes with and for Māori, to reduce reoffending and address the overrepresentation of Māori in the corrections system.

Our organisational strategy, Hōkai Rangi 2019-2024, expresses our commitment to delivering better outcomes for Māori and their whānau so that we can begin to address the significant overrepresentation of Māori in the corrections system. This strategy remains in place, and we are working on the next iteration of Hōkai Rangi, which will retain the six outcomes of the original strategy and reaffirm our commitment to this work.

Through Hōkai Rangi we have established a number of initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for Māori in the corrections system.

Building meaningful and purposeful relationships with Māori providers, iwi, and hapū has been a critical part of Hōkai Rangi and remains essential to our work. Across Corrections, we have a number of partnership and service agreements with iwi, hapū and Māori providers to support the delivery of programmes and services in prisons and the community.

Corrections provides offence-focused programmes, educational opportunities, vocational and employment training, health services, mental health and addiction programmes, cultural support services, motivational sessions, wrap-around whānau support, reintegration services, intensive residential programmes, and transitional accommodation support to people serving sentences in prison and in the community. These rehabilitation and reintegration services support people to address the causes of their offending and provide a strong foundation from which they can establish a positive future.

I will address your requests in turn. Please note that where questions can be responded to together, these questions have been combined for ease of reply. You requested:

The demographic breakdown of the New Zealand prison population over the past five years, including the percentage of Maori inmates.

This part of your request is refused in accordance with section 18(d) of the OIA, on the grounds that it is publicly available information. This information is published quarterly on Corrections' *Prison Statistics* page and are available to view on our website here: https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/statistics/quarterly_prison_statistics.

Additionally, Corrections publishes further information on the Māori prison population in our Annual Reports which are available to view here: https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/strategic_reports/annual-reports.

For example, the 2022/23 Annual Report, pages 36 to 38 contain further statistics on Māori prisoners: https://www.corrections.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/50578/Annual_Report_2023_v20.pdf.

Corrections' 2023/24 Annual Report will be published in due course.

Reports and evaluations on the factors contributing to recidivism among Māori prisoners.

Please note, we can answer this part of your request as it relates to information created or held by Corrections. However, you may wish to consider that reports on this topic are also likely to have been created by other agencies or research institutes.

The overrepresentation of Māori in the justice system is well recognised and we acknowledge that it is one of the most significant challenges we need to address. While Corrections has not created specific reports and evaluations in recent years solely focused on the 'factors contributing to recidivism among Maori prisoners', previous research documents that may be of interest to you are available on our website at the following link: <https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/research>.

Corrections' organisational strategy, Hōkai Rangi may also be of interest to you, and is available on our website at the following link: https://www.corrections.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/38244/Hokai_Rangi_Strategy.pdf.

Please also note that while developing Hōkai Rangi, Corrections considered the findings of the Waitangi Tribunal's report, *Tū Mai te Rangi! Report on the Crown and Disproportionate Reoffending Rates* (2017). This report is publicly available, at:

https://forms.justice.govt.nz/search/Documents/WT/wt_DOC_121273708/Tu%20Mai%20Te%20Rangi%20W.pdf.

Annual recidivism rates over the past five years, broken down by ethnicity, age group, and gender.

Corrections uses the Recidivism Indices to calculate recidivism rates among the prison population and those sentenced to community-based sentences. The Recidivism Indices are the percentage of people in our management in any given cohort who are reconvicted within a set period of time (the follow-up period), and who receive either a prison sentence (reimprisoned) or any Corrections-administered sentence (resentenced). These statistics are broken down by ethnicity, age group and gender.

Recidivism Indices statistics, as well as information on how to interpret this information, are published in our Annual Reports, linked to above. For information on the most recent Recidivism Indices statistics, please refer to pages 203 to 207 of the 2022/23 Annual Report.

Information on any specific rehabilitation or intervention programs targeted at Maori prisoners and their success rates.

Corrections uses the Rehabilitation Quotient (RQ) to measure the impact that our interventions have on reoffending. Reoffending is measured in terms of reimprisonment rates and rates of resentencing to a Corrections-managed sentence. The RQ compares the reimprisonment and resentencing rates of people who have participated in an intervention, with the reoffending rates of similar people (matched through a range of factors) who have not participated in either that specific intervention or a similar type of intervention. RQ results are limited to core rehabilitation programmes with sufficient volumes of participants to enable reliable statistical analysis.

As with Recidivism Indices, RQ rates are published each year via Corrections' Annual Reports which are available on our website as linked to above. For information on the most recent RQ rates, please refer to pages 201 and 202 of the 2022/23 Annual Report.

While Māori can participate in all rehabilitation interventions in prisons and Corrections is continuing in our efforts to incorporate Te Ao Māori approaches to existing programmes, the only programme focused on Māori for which we can currently measure the RQ is Mauri Tū Pae. Mauri Tū Pae (formerly known as the Māori therapeutic programme) is a group-based programme for people assessed as medium risk and is delivered in special focus units. Mauri Tū Pae is for men in prison with a range of offending needs and teaches them skills to alter the thoughts, attitudes and behaviours that led to their offending.

Corrections additionally delivers a high-intensity programme for women, Kimihia, which was co-designed with a Māori psychologist, incorporating feedback from those with lived-

experience and their whānau. The programme weaves Te Ao Māori and Western psychological approaches to rehabilitation.

Further information on Māori focused interventions is also outlined on pages 76 to 77 and page 82 of Corrections' 2022/23 Annual Report.

Data on the average length of sentences served by prisoners, broken down by ethnicity and age group.

Corrections manages people on sentences and orders at the direction of the Courts and the New Zealand Parole Board. Corrections does not determine whether a person is sentenced to prison or the length of their sentence.

Please see the attached Appendix One, which provides the average number of days served by prisoners, at the time of their release, broken down by ethnicity and age group. Please note that this information has been provided for the past five years, in order to align with your above requests.

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

I hope this information is helpful. I encourage you to raise any concerns about this response with Corrections. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alice Sciascia', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alice Sciascia
Deputy Chief Executive
Strategy and Corporate Services

Appendix One: Average number of days served by prisoners, at the time of their release, broken down by ethnicity and age group for the last five financial years.

Average number of days served by prisoners at the time of release, by ethnicity					
Ethnicity	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24*
European	452.0	533.9	563.3	486.5	452.3
Māori	370.3	405.0	450.4	405.1	362.6
Pacific	544.6	587.8	654.0	753.8	476.4
Other (incl. Asian)	561.1	692.2	842.8	682.9	578.2
Unknown	391.8	480.0	463.7	468.0	193.6
Average for all ethnicities	416.5	467.0	512.2	464.0	402.5

Average number of days served by prisoners at the time of release, by age group					
Age group	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24*
Under 20	246.8	298.0	353.9	283.3	344.3
20 - 24	339.5	364.2	398.2	348.1	337.6
25 - 29	330.0	381.2	436.7	391.2	339.8
30 - 39	368.1	398.4	434.2	366.2	344.2
40 - 49	473.0	518.6	516.5	468.7	397.7
50 - 59	708.6	744.6	887.7	774.8	642.6
60 and over	1179.6	1529.3	1373.3	1702.0	1028.3
Not recorded	-	-	49.0	-	85.0
Average for all ages	416.5	467.0	512.2	464.0	402.5

Notes for tables:

- *Data for the 2023/24 financial year is current as of 31 May 2024.
- A person would be counted each time they were released, by what age they were at the day of release, and by how many days they had served at release.
- A person who was released from a sentence of imprisonment twice within the same year would therefore be counted twice.

- Data is only included for those people who were released in the years provided. Those still serving sentences are not included in this data.
- Days served includes remand days credited to the sentence.
- All ethnicity information is self-reported by prisoners upon their reception at prison and we do not attempt to verify or confirm a person's ethnicity. Furthermore, prisoners are able to identify with multiple ethnicities. The information provided is therefore based on their primary ethnicity.
- Corrections manages people on sentences and orders at the direction of the Courts and the New Zealand Parole Board. Corrections does not determine whether a person is sentenced to prison or the length of their sentence.