

6 December 2017

C89408

Kate McIntyre
fyi-request-6308-c7ba6eef@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms McIntyre

Thank you for your email of 26 September 2017, in which you request information about deaths and assaults in prisons. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

I note your email is in response to my previous letter, in which I provided you with a range of information on notifiable incidents in prisons. You have asked that I provide you with some of our publicly available information, in the format requested (by number of notifications to the Ombudsman, categorised by the nature of the assault/death) between 2012/13 to 2016/17. I have done so below.

For the purpose of context, when assessing the information provided, please note during 2016/17, 17,651 prisoners spent time in at least one of 18 Corrections facilities.

- *'A prisoner sexually assaulting a staff member.'*
- *'A prisoner seriously assaulting a staff member.'*
- *'A prisoner sexually assaulting other prisoner.'*
- *'A prisoner seriously assaulting another prisoner.'*

As requested, the number of serious assaults by prisoners against staff members and other prisoners, between 2012/13 and 2016/17 has been included in the tables below.

When assessing the information below, it is important to note that data on serious and sexual assaults is based on allegations, rather than proven incidences. All allegations are taken seriously and recorded accordingly. Additionally, sexual assault allegations can be of any form and degree, including inappropriate touching and grabbing.

Sexual/serious assaults against staff					
Financial year	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Sexual assault	0	0	1	5	4
Serious assault	13	6	8	12	18

Sexual/serious assaults against other prisoners					
Financial year	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Sexual assault	4	4	8	3	1
Serious assault	51	38	30	42	24

- *'Deaths in custody of apparent natural causes.'*
- *'Deaths in custody for apparent homicide.'*
- *'Deaths in custody for apparent suicide.'*
- *'Deaths in custody for apparent accidents.'*
- *'Deaths in custody for unknown/unconfirmed incidences.'*

Please find the number of prisoners that have died in prison, between 2012/13 and 2016/17, categorised as requested.

Deaths in prison					
Financial year	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Apparent natural causes	7	10	10	15	14
Apparent homicide	0	0	1	0	0
Apparent suicide	3	3	7	11	1
Apparent accident	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown/unconfirmed	0	0	0	0	0

I trust the information provided is of assistance. Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with the Department. 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

Rachel Leota
National Commissioner