

14 May 2019

C107066

Kate McIntyre
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Tēnā koe Ms McIntyre

Thank you for your email dated 11 April 2019, requesting information about library facilities in New Zealand prisons. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Public safety and reducing re-offending are Corrections' foremost priorities. Through a combination of interventions such as increased alcohol and drug treatment, greater access to education, skills training, employment programmes, expanded reintegration services and innovative rehabilitation programmes, we will make a difference to people's lives.

Corrections uses a number of different service delivery models for its prison libraries, including the use of paid librarians, external providers, community volunteers and partnerships with local public libraries. There are many examples of good practice in the delivery of library services, particularly where good relationships have been built and maintained with public library services.

The majority of prisoners received into custody have limited education and work experience. Assisting prisoners to improve their level of education has a positive impact on reducing re-offending. The provision of prison library services ensures that prisoners are able to constructively occupy their time by reading books and newspapers. Staff also assist prisoners with using the prison library services so that, on release from prison, they will begin to see community-based library services as a hub of information and resources. We are committed to ensuring that all prisoners have access to these services.

All prisoners are eligible to use the prison libraries and have access to library services in one of the following ways:

- physical or trolley access to books
- ordering books through a catalogue
- units having their own library or donated books, or
- through a mobile library service.

You have asked:

1. *Does every prison have a library?*

Prisons have improved the provision of library services since 2010. All prisons and corrections facilities in New Zealand have a library.

2. *Please provide the total number of libraries in each prison.*

The requested information is provided to you in Appendix One.

3. *Please provide the total number of books in each prison library*

The current library policy and rules state that prison library collections shall not contain any objectionable or offensive material such as:

- pornography
- overtly violent, objectionable, occult material (where access to such material is deemed to be prejudicial to reducing re-offending)
- gang related or other offensive material
- any other material prison staff considers may interfere with the effective management, security and good order of the prison.

Unfortunately, we cannot readily extract the total number of books in each prison library from our electronic records. In order to identify this type of specific information, we would be required to manually review a large number of files.

In accordance with the OIA, we have considered whether to affix a charge or extend the time limit for responding. However, given the scale of the request we do not consider that this would be an appropriate use of our publicly funded resources. Therefore, this part of your request is declined under section 18(f) of the OIA, as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

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.

Ngā mihi nui



Rachel Leota
National Commissioner

Appendix One – Total number of libraries in New Zealand prisons

Prison site	Libraries	Small unit-based libraries
Arohata Prison	2*	
Auckland Prison	1	
Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility	1	
Auckland South Corrections Facility	1	
Christchurch Men's Prison	1	
Christchurch Women's Prison	1	
Hawke's Bay Regional Prison	1	9
Invercargill Prison	1	4
Manawatu Prison	1	
Mt Eden Corrections Facility	1	
Northland Region Corrections Facility	1	
Otago Corrections Facility	1	
Rimutaka Prison	1	1
Rolleston Prison	1	
Spring Hill Corrections Facility	1	
Tongariro Prison	1	4
Waikeria Prison	1	9
Whanganui Prison	1	

**Arohata Prison has a library in Tawa and in the Upper Prison at Rimutaka Prison*