

05 March 2021

C129715

BAW Russell

[fyi-request-14282-2419b9ba@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-14282-2419b9ba@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Tēnā koe BAW Russell

Thank you for your email of 11 December 2020, requesting information about drug tests conducted by Corrections. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Corrections key priority is the safety of people in prison and on community based-sentences and orders, staff and the public. Alcohol and other drug issues are common among people under Corrections' management. Sixty percent of people on community-based sentences have an identified alcohol or other drug need and 87 percent of people in prison have experienced an alcohol or other drug need over their lifetime

We manage approximately 8,800 people in prison. Some individuals go to extreme lengths to introduce contraband into prison, including alcohol, other drugs, and associated paraphernalia. The use of this type of contraband in prison presents a significant risk to the security of the site, the safety of staff, and the wellbeing of the people who consume or trade it. The use of alcohol and other drugs can also inhibit the success of a person's rehabilitation programmes aimed at reducing their risk of re-offending.

Individuals attempt to introduce contraband in many ways including concealment in vehicles and products, internal concealment on a person's body, concealment in incoming mail and property, items thrown over fences and smuggled by visitors. Corrections carries out a significant amount of work to prevent introduction, and we continue to ensure that new methods of introduction are prevented. Our intelligence staff constantly work to identify and mitigate risk areas in the physical environment, and to stay informed about new methods of concealment.

Drug testing aims to detect and prevent the supply of drugs into prison. An algorithm is used to ensure people in prison who meet eligibility criteria are randomly selected for a drug test correctly.

Every year, approximately 5,000 people serving community-based sentences/orders and around 15,000 bailees have an alcohol and/or drug abstinence imposed upon them. In May 2017, Corrections began a community-based two-year alcohol and other drug testing trial when enabling legislation was enacted by Parliament.

Corrections conducted a two year trial which has been completed and nation-wide random alcohol and drug testing went live on 1 March 2021.

We know that alcohol and drugs are an issue amongst offenders. A recent study found that 47% of New Zealand prisoners had received a diagnosis of a substance use disorder within the last 12 months, and 87% of prisoners had a lifetime diagnosis (Bowman, 2016).

Testing for alcohol and drugs allows us to better intervene with a person according to their identified AOD needs. People often understate their use, believing that honesty will only get them into trouble if they have an abstinence condition. Testing provides an evidence base for treatment and allows us to open dialogue with a person about their AOD use and what support they require. This means we are able to target a person's intervention to their actual need. This aligns to the Risk-Needs-Responsivity model (RNR) adopted by Corrections, which works to ensure the right interventions are being delivered to the right people at the right time.

Where a person who is serving a community-based sentence/order records a positive test for alcohol and/or drugs, we have options available to support the person. The Probation Officer may consider a referral to a community-based intervention. This requires the person in the community agreeing and participate in the intervention. If the person does not agree to an intervention, the Probation Officer can lay a formal charge in court against the person, for non-compliance with any condition.

An update on the community-based two year alcohol and other drug testing trial is available on Corrections website:

[https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/statistics/journal/volume\\_7\\_issue\\_1\\_july\\_2019/update\\_on\\_the\\_community-based\\_two-year\\_alcohol\\_and\\_other\\_drug\\_testing\\_trial](https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/statistics/journal/volume_7_issue_1_july_2019/update_on_the_community-based_two-year_alcohol_and_other_drug_testing_trial)

Also available alongside this update is the Qualitative evaluation of the alcohol and other drug testing in the community trial:

[https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/statistics/journal/volume\\_7\\_issue\\_1\\_july\\_2019/qualitative\\_evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_alcohol\\_and\\_other\\_drug\\_testing\\_in\\_the\\_community\\_trial](https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/statistics/journal/volume_7_issue_1_july_2019/qualitative_evaluation_of_the_alcohol_and_other_drug_testing_in_the_community_trial)

Alcohol and other drugs are often factors in a person's offending and can be detrimental to their overall wellbeing and the wellbeing of their whanau. As a result we provide treatment services in the community and prison. Corrections is offering more support to people with addictions. Recent initiatives include:

- RecoverRing – 0800 alcohol and drug support line for offenders and prisoners. This 24/7 support line offers advice, a brief needs assessment and crisis support. Calls are answered by experienced registered alcohol and drug practitioners.
- Alcohol and other drug aftercare workers – based in our Drug Treatment Units and Intensive Treatment Programmes, aftercare workers offer ongoing maintenance support to prisoners, including when they leave prison.

- Additional beds in residential treatment facilities: Corrections is funding additional beds for community-based offenders with significant alcohol and drug needs.

These initiatives complement Corrections' existing services, including our Drug Treatment Programmes, Intensive Treatment Programmes and the brief interventions offered by our probation officers and case managers.

You have requested the following information:

*Please provide a summary of drug test results for 2019/20, broken down by prison for prisoners and community sentence type for those in the community, including:*

- \* *the total number of tests undertaken*
- \* *the test results (i.e. positive, negative, adulterated etc)*

Please see Appendix One for the number of drug tests and results for people in prison in 2019/20. In the 2019/20 financial year, Corrections conducted 3,396 general random drug tests. Just 4.4 percent of the general random drug tests conducted nationally returned a positive result; compared to 2010/11 when the rate was 6.8 percent.

Unfortunately, we cannot readily extract information on drug tests for people subject to community-based sentences and orders from our electronic records. While Corrections is exploring the development of a reporting system for this information, it is not currently centrally recorded in the same manner as drug test results for people in prison. 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

- \* *the testing method used (i.e. urine, blood, hair etc).*

The testing method used in prison and the community is urine sampling.

*Please also provide any guidance to staff on drug testing and responding to positive tests, including managing the risk of false positives.*

Guidance for prison drug and alcohol testing is available on Corrections' website in the Prison Operations Manual section, *S.07 Drug and alcohol testing*: [https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy\\_and\\_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/Security/S.07-Drug-and-alcohol-testing](https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/Security/S.07-Drug-and-alcohol-testing)

For guidance for Community Corrections staff conducting drug and alcohol tests, please see Appendix Two Alcohol and Other Drug Testing for community-based

offenders. Please note a small amount of information has been withheld in accordance with section 9(2)(a) of the OIA, to protect the privacy of natural persons.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Topia Rameka  
Acting National Commissioner

### Appendix One: drug tests in prisons, 2019/20.

Type	Category	Test Sampled at	Positive	Negative	Total
<b>Manual</b>	<b>Identified Drug User – Voluntary Check</b>	Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility		11	11
		Auckland South Corrections Facility		12	12
		Christchurch Mens Prison		27	27
		Christchurch Womens Prison		1	1
		Hawkes Bay Prison	3	35	38
		Invercargill Prison	3	13	16
		Manawatu Prison	2	34	36
		Northland Region Corrections Facility		8	8
		Otago Corrections Facility	1	7	8
		Rimutaka Prison		28	28
		Rolleston Prison		3	3
		Spring Hill Corrections Facility		16	16
		Tongariro Prison		4	4
		Waikeria Prison	3	8	11
		Whanganui Prison	1	27	28
	<b>Total</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>247</b>
	<b>Reasonable Cause</b>	Arohata Prison	7	15	22
		Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility	3	23	26
		Auckland South Corrections Facility	10	97	107
		Auckland Prison	8	12	20
Christchurch Mens Prison		15	177	192	
Christchurch Womens Prison		6	33	39	
Hawkes Bay Prison		47	70	117	
Invercargill Prison		9	12	21	
Manawatu Prison		17	11	28	
Mt Eden Corrections Facility		35	42	77	
Northland Region Corrections Facility		4	20	24	
Otago Corrections Facility		19	45	64	
Rimutaka Prison		24	66	90	
Rolleston Prison		3	26	29	
Spring Hill Corrections Facility		2	5	7	
Tongariro Prison	4	11	15		
Waikeria Prison	19	11	30		
Whanganui Prison	17	55	72		
<b>Total</b>		<b>249</b>	<b>731</b>	<b>980</b>	

Type	Category	Test Sampled at	Positive	Negative	Total
Manual	Voluntary Participant	Arohata Prison	1	81	82
		Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility		6	6
		Auckland South Corrections Facility		16	16
		Auckland Prison		52	52
		Christchurch Mens Prison		59	59
		Hawkes Bay Prison	11	254	265
		Invercargill Prison		2	2
		Manawatu Prison		2	2
		Mt Eden Corrections Facility	2	159	161
		Northland Region Corrections Facility		2	2
		Otago Corrections Facility	2	34	36
		Rimutaka Prison	2	165	167
		Spring Hill Corrections Facility	2	211	213
		Tongariro Prison		1	1
		Waikeria Prison	3	24	27
		Whanganui Prison	4	23	27
			<b>Total</b>		<b>27</b>
<b>Manual Total</b>			<b>289</b>	<b>2056</b>	<b>2345</b>
Random	General Drug Test	Arohata Prison		36	2
		Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility	5	142	6
		Auckland South Corrections Facility	32	381	64
		Auckland Prison	1	208	14
		Christchurch Mens Prison	6	295	47
		Christchurch Womens Prison	1	20	8
		Hawkes Bay Prison	15	233	71
		Invercargill Prison	11	50	15
		Manawatu Prison	14	70	66
		Mt Eden Corrections Facility	4	177	16
		Northland Region Corrections Facility	6	180	7
		Otago Corrections Facility	5	178	31
		Rimutaka Prison	8	370	64
		Rolleston Prison		147	6
		Spring Hill Corrections Facility	12	308	17
		Tongariro Prison	4	104	6
		Waikeria Prison	8	193	33
Whanganui Prison	18	154	35		
	<b>Total</b>		<b>150</b>	<b>3246</b>	<b>3396</b>

Type	Category	Test Sampled at	Positive	Negative	Total	
Random	Identified Drug User Status Drug Testing	Arohata Prison		2	2	
		Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility		6	6	
		Auckland South Corrections Facility	11	53	64	
		Auckland Prison		14	14	
		Christchurch Mens Prison	1	46	47	
		Christchurch Womens Prison		8	8	
		Hawkes Bay Prison	15	56	71	
		Invercargill Prison	3	12	15	
		Manawatu Prison	19	47	66	
		Mt Eden Corrections Facility	2	14	16	
		Northland Region Corrections Facility		7	7	
		Otago Corrections Facility	4	27	31	
		Rimutaka Prison	6	58	64	
		Rolleston Prison		6	6	
		Spring Hill Corrections Facility		17	17	
		Tongariro Prison		6	6	
		Waikeria Prison	9	24	33	
		Whanganui Prison	10	25	35	
			<b>Total</b>		<b>80</b>	<b>428</b>
	Random	Temporary Release Drug Testing	Arohata Prison		11	11
Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility				11	11	
Auckland Prison				2	2	
Christchurch Mens Prison				9	9	
Hawkes Bay Prison			1	54	55	
Invercargill Prison				12	12	
Manawatu Prison				6	6	
Northland Region Corrections Facility				46	46	
Otago Corrections Facility				4	4	
Rimutaka Prison			2	113	115	
Rolleston Prison				33	33	
Spring Hill Corrections Facility				27	27	
Tongariro Prison				8	8	
Waikeria Prison			1	39	40	
Whanganui Prison		13	13			
	<b>Total</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>392</b>	
<b>Random Total</b>			<b>234</b>	<b>4062</b>	<b>4296</b>	