

01 April 2021

C131237

Moka Harris

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Tēnā koe Moka

Thank you for your email of 30 January 2021, regarding the availability of Christian Freeview channels at Northland Region Corrections Facility. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

Due to technical constraints, the number of television channels available in prisons is limited by supporting infrastructure. All prison units are connected to the prison site's distributed television network and available television channels do not vary between any Corrections-managed prisons.

There are 12 channels available across prisons, which consist of nine Freeview television channels, one Corrections television channel and two Freeview radio channels. This is currently the maximum number of channels that prison infrastructure can support. Content is selected based on which Freeview channels are appropriate for the intended audience within a prison.

In May 2020 we made changes to the channels available following an assessment carried out to determine which content was best received by people in prison. As a result the following changes were made:

- Removal of Concert FM and Base FM (two radio channels that prisoners can still listen to on their own radio or by purchasing a radio) and HGTV channels (a home improvement channel).
- Addition of Choice TV (documentaries), Bravo (reality and documentaries) and the Edge TV (music TV).

I appreciate your comments about access to religious and spiritual support for people in prison. I would like to assure you that we are committed to providing services to people of all faiths while they are in custody. In order to meet the religious and spiritual needs of prisoners, Corrections contracts the services of Prison Chaplaincy Service of Aotearoa (PCSANZ).

PCSANZ utilises the services of Prison Chaplains and volunteers to provide support to prisoners at every Corrections-managed prison. PCSANZ provide the following services to support prisoners to meet their religious and spiritual needs:

- structured and scheduled religious and spiritual group services
- individual religious and/or spiritual support and
- connecting prisoners with community-based faith organisations in preparation for their release from prison.

Chaplains are on site regularly at Northland Region Corrections Facility to provide religious and spiritual resources upon request, including weekly bible studies and church services where requested. Individual services are also able to be provided on request, for example memorial services. Men at the prison are able to seek the assistance of the chaplaincy service by asking a staff member.

Chaplains are also responsible for coordinating other faith requests; which can mean the provision of those resources, and or the provision of pastoral care from those other faith organisations.

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 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



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