



6 December 2018

C100901

Lance O'Riley
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Dear Mr O'Riley

Thank you for your email of 4 October 2018, requesting information relating to offenders and their previous 'imprisonable' offences. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

You have requested the following information:

1. *How many previous imprisonable offences does the general prison population have on average?*
2. *How many previous imprisonable offences do offenders being convicted of their first strike offence have on average?*
3. *How many previous imprisonable offences do offenders being convicted of their second strike offence have on average?*
4. *How many previous imprisonable offences do offenders being convicted of their third strike offence have on average?*

In our previous response dated 12 September 2018, we provided you with data on previous *convictions* for offences relating to offenders in prison generally, and offenders with strike warnings. In your current request you ask not about previous convictions but about previous "offences". Corrections has data only on the number of convictions; we do not have data on "offences" that have been committed. Therefore, this part of your request is declined under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or cannot be found.

Corrections records only include data relating to convictions that result in a Corrections-managed sentence; we do not hold data on convictions that result in sentences including fines or discharges without conviction. As such, all, or almost all, of the counts of previous convictions were for "imprisonable offences". We therefore have no further information to add to our previous response.

Corrections aims to break the cycle of re-offending by identifying and working with those who are most likely to re-offend. Well-designed and delivered evidence-based programmes can have a real effect on re-offending.

To help people address their offending we assess offenders and provide rehabilitative programmes according to risk, need, and any existing barriers that may affect their ability to effectively engage in programmes.

Corrections has implemented a comprehensive approach to addressing drug and alcohol needs amongst prisoners by:

- ensuring that every prisoner with an identified drug and alcohol need has access to an appropriate treatment, regardless of location, risk, and sentence length
- providing further help for prisoners whose motivation to address their drug and alcohol needs changes over time.

In line with this approach, a range of interventions focusing specifically on alcohol and other drugs are available in prisons, including:

Screening and brief interventions – All prisoners entering prison are screened for alcohol and drug problems. Depending on the results they will receive a brief intervention that will encourage them to engage in further treatment as required, either in prison or the community.

Short Motivational Programme – A programme that incorporates support for prisoners who are ambivalent about changing their patterns of alcohol and drug use. The programme has been specifically designed to be accessible to prisoners on short sentences and those on remand.

Intensive treatment programme – The programme provides participants with the knowledge, attitudes and skills required to support them in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction. The programme builds participant skills in relapse prevention, minimising harm and ability to build networks of support.

Drug treatment units – The aim of the drug treatment unit programme is to reduce re-offending by assisting programme participants to address their dependence on alcohol and other drugs. The units teach prisoners about addiction, change, relapse and the effects of their actions upon others. This is done through group-based programmes in a therapeutic environment.

The remainder of your questions are addressed as follows. These numbers include sentenced offenders who have any current sentence for the specified offence. It is important to note that these offences are not necessarily the **most** serious or **lead** offence. This means these numbers include offenders who were also convicted for more serious offences that resulted in a longer sentence of imprisonment.

5. *Of all offenders currently incarcerated for drug offences, how many are imprisoned for an offence relating to possession of drugs – 527, and how many are imprisoned for sale or trafficking of drugs – 955.*
6. *Of all offenders currently incarcerated for drug offences how many are imprisoned for offences relating to Marijuana/Cannabis possession – 237.*
7. *Of all offenders currently incarcerated for drug offences how many are imprisoned for offences relating to Marijuana/Cannabis sale or trafficking – 297.*
8. *Of all offenders currently incarcerated for drug offences, how many are also convicted of violent offences which were imposed at the same time – 311.*

As stipulated above, these numbers include offenders who were also convicted for more serious offences that resulted in a longer sentence of imprisonment. For context, below are the figures for questions 5, 6 and 7 where these are the lead sentence of imprisonment:

5. *Of all offenders currently incarcerated for drug offences, how many are imprisoned for an offence relating to possession of drugs – 4, and how many are imprisoned for sale or trafficking of drugs – 741.*
6. *Of all offenders currently incarcerated for drug offences how many are imprisoned for offences relating to Marijuana/Cannabis possession – 1.*
7. *Of all offenders currently incarcerated for drug offences how many are imprisoned for offences relating to Marijuana/Cannabis sale or trafficking – 51.*

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.

Yours sincerely



Eamon Coulter
Acting Deputy Chief Executive
Service Development