

JUDGES' UPDATE

DECEMBER 2005

Information for the Judiciary

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INTERVENTION SERVICES QUALITY FRAMEWORK

Intervention Services - responsible for delivering programmes to motivate and rehabilitate offenders - is developing its own quality framework to ensure programmes are delivered to a high and consistent standard.

The development of the framework was something planned for Intervention Services from its inception in 2003. One year after becoming operational (in July 2004) IS Manager Eve McMahon says the time is right.

"We've had our first year of operations, and this has allowed us to clearly identify what's required from a quality framework, to see what the key elements of our business are that define quality service delivery. This means we can build a framework that provides us with a strong, practical structure to work within."

She adds that it will help ensure that programme participants and their whanau are receiving the most effective treatment possible, and will be a useful shared resource for building consistency of practice with other Services involved in the delivery of programmes.

The framework establishes a clear set of principles, quality management processes, and standards for Intervention Services, driving a higher level of quality service delivery. It has been developed focusing on four key elements recognised as contributing to high-quality programme delivery: facilitation, management, programmes, and a high level of cohesion and synergy within the service. Consultation with staff and managers throughout the design process has been extensive.

One of the key elements of the quality framework is the development of Professional Practice Standards, and a credentialling policy, which sees staff who deliver the programmes being officially recognised once they can show they've achieved and maintained these standards. Eve says this, along with other elements, will provide programme facilitators with the best possible quality feedback, professional support, and resourcing for programme delivery.

Elements of the Quality Framework will be phased in over the next ten or so months, with the first round of credentialling happening mid-2006.

YOUR INPUT

Judges' Update is distributed quarterly to the judiciary, courts, and Parole Board. If you have any comments or suggestions for this publication, please contact:

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DEPARTMENT
OF CORRECTIONS

From the General Manager

Tena koutou katoa

This issue of Judges' Update includes CPS highlights from the Department of Corrections' Annual Report, giving an overview of our work for the past financial year.

While these statistics represent only one aspect of our achievements, it is important to be able to measure our progress from year to year. This way we can see whether we are meeting our targets as planned.

Although the Department has been under pressure as prison musters swell, the number of offenders managed in the community by CPS has remained relatively stable, at around 40,000 new starts for the past year.

One positive trend is the drop in rates of reconviction and imprisonment among offenders released from community-based sentences.

Less than 30 percent (29.2) of offenders who completed community

based sentences in 2003/04 were reconvicted within 12 months. This compares with 34 percent for the previous year.

And the percentage of offenders imprisoned within 12 months of finishing a community-based sentence dropped from 8.6 to 8 percent.

Home Detention reconviction rates were particularly positive.

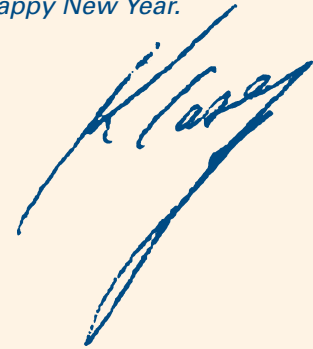
Departmental analysts found that, despite offenders on Home Detention having the same assessed risk of re-offending as those on Supervision sentences, re-offending rates amongst the Home Detainees was three percentage points lower (after 12 months) than those on Supervision (8.5% vs 11.5%)

As you may be aware from earlier coverage of our reintegration initiatives, the department is moving towards a more seamless delivery of reintegrative services to offenders leaving prison to be managed in the community.

Community Probation Service and Public Prisons Service staff are working with government and community agencies such as Work and Income to ensure offenders get the necessary support to return to their homes and families and live crime free lives.

If you'd like to read more from our Annual Report, visit our website www.corrections.govt.nz and click on the What's New link.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your feedback and input over the year, and to wish you a safe and happy New Year.



Katrina Casey, General Manager
Probation and Offender Services

Pre-release process reviewed to enhance reintegration

Corrections is developing a more robust process to prepare prisoners for release into the community.

The Pre-release Process Project involving the Community Probation Service (CPS) and Public Prisons Service (PPS), and Psychological Service (PS) is reviewing the way prisoners are prepared for release, as well as the way reports are presented to the NZ Parole Board.

The collaborative approach should ensure prisoners have appropriate strategies to support their rehabilitative and reintegrative needs before they leave prison.

The revised process will further enhance existing dialogue between staff from PPS and CPS, as well as outside agencies involved in reintegration, such as Work and Income, and housing agencies.

Project team member Rachel Jones says the idea is to minimise the risk of re-offending, and, in part, to give the

NZ Parole Board more confidence that what is planned for offenders can be managed in the community.

"Part of our project is looking at involving all services earlier in the process so that by the prisoner's parole eligibility date all the rehabilitative and reintegration strategies are in place," says Rachel.

The reports will be formatted to make the information easier to glean and make them more user-friendly, says project team member Paul Black.

"We've had feedback from the Parole Board and taken that into account. For instance, some information was being duplicated unnecessarily."

Proposed enhancement to the process will mean more ground work is done before release to improve the likelihood of successful rehabilitation and reintegration.

PROFILE: COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL CENTRES

The percentage of offenders who successfully completed programmes at the Department of Corrections' Community Residential Centres (CRCs) rose by 11 percent in the year ending 30 June 2005.

Statistics from the Annual Report for that period show that 87 percent of offenders successfully completed their CRC orders in the 2004/05 year, up from 76 percent in 2003/04.

The number of offenders directed to attend a CRC in 2004/05 was 68, compared to 64 the previous year.

However, this is still below the budget target of 82 offenders across the three centres, and the Department is keen to increase the number of referrals to its three CRCs - Te Ihi Tu (Taranaki), Salisbury St Foundation (Christchurch), and Montgomery House (Hamilton).

Te Ihi Tu - which offers a 13-week programme providing rehabilitative and reintegrative services to men after prison - has already begun a drive to increase referrals around the country.

The programme is suitable for men who are up for Parole, Supervision, Home Detention, Release on Conditions, or Temporary Release.

Te Ihi Tu has a strong kaupapa Maori focus but non-Maori men are welcome. The programme covers Tikanga Māori,

life skills, and goal setting. Each year there are three intakes of eight men, and suitable candidates may be referred as part of their pre-release process.

Participants must agree to attend Te Ihi Tu and:

- be committed to change
- have an outside support person
- have no sexual convictions or psychological issues
- test negative for drug use.

All referrals are assessed by Te Ihi Tu staff, and the Te Ihi Tu National Coordinator, Probation Officer Kevin Wensor.

"While the majority of referrals to Te Ihi Tu come from PPS it needs to be reiterated that Te Ihi Tu is funded by the Department and is endorsed by both CPS and PPS," says Kevin.

Judge Patrick Toomey of the New Zealand Parole Board says that the New Plymouth Prison Board, and now the New Plymouth, Wanganui and Palmerston North panels of the Parole Board, have referred many offenders to the Te Ihi Tu programme.

"Its strengths are that it takes an holistic view of the offenders' needs; it is residential; it is closely supervised; it has clear goals and rules to ensure those goals are achieved, and the rules are strictly enforced, particularly in

relation to drug use."

Judge Toomey says the tutors are well trained and dedicated.

"Te Ihi Tu has had integrity since its inception. It has never hesitated to return to prison, for drug use or other breaches of rules, those on temporary release, or request CPS to apply for recall of those there on parole, even when it was struggling to build up the number of offenders to make its programmes viable."

Judge Toomey says Te Ihi Tu has good post-release reintegration plans and the anecdotal evidence of successful outcomes is "very encouraging". "The panels which I convene frequently make reference for assessment to the Te Ihi Tu programme."

CPS staff play a vital role in identifying possible candidates at the pre-sentence report stage, particularly for men who are sentenced to prison, as the Sentence Planning Indicator is captured by the PPS sentence planners.

Kevin says CPS staff can also refer men to the Te Ihi Tu programme as part of their pre-release inquiries, which covers the men who are missed at the pre-sentence stage.

For more information on Te Ihi Tu, contact Kevin Wensor on ext 36125 or email kevin.wensor@corrections.govt.nz.

From the Department of Corrections Annual Report

Sentencing Information and Advice to Courts

A 13 percent rise in the number of hours CPS staff spent attending courts is partially attributed to the appointment of additional judges.

The number of written complaints from judges was lower than anticipated, reflecting greater focus by managers on formalising contact with the judiciary, with all complaints significantly resolved.

Performance Measure	2003/04	2004/05	Budget
No. of reports to courts	28,135	29,115	29,000
No of hours in attendance at courts	59,467	63,809	56,500
No. of written complaints from judges	4	6	15

Parole Information to the NZ Parole Board

Last year saw a marginal drop in the demand for pre-release reports. All reports met the quality standard. However, the timeliness was below target (shown by 'budget' in table) reflecting some definition and recording process issues in one Public Prisons Service region. These processes have been reviewed to ensure consistency across all regions.

Performance Measure	2003/04	2004/05	Budget
No. of pre-release reports prepared for prisoners	4096	4217	4400
Timeliness	100%	94%	100%

continued on back page 

◀ From the Department of Corrections Annual Report *continued*

Parole Orders

Compliance with special conditions of parole continued to exceed the target.

Performance Measure	2003/04	2004/05	Budget
No. of prisoners directed to complete a Parole order	1308	1132	1200
% of offenders who comply with the special conditions of their order	72%	75%	65%

Specialist Psychological Treatment

The Psychological Service provides specialist treatment to offenders serving both custodial and community-based sentences.

These services include provision of reports, assessment and treatment of offenders, professional training and supervision relating to the delivery of responsibility/motivational and rehabilitative programmes.

The increase in demand for reports primarily reflects the throughput of offenders in the Young Offenders Units, and the need to provide reports on offenders as they move out of programmes.

Performance Measure	2003/04	2004/05	Budget
No. of psychological consultation hours provided to the:			
Public Prisons Service	9625	9606	9199
Community Probation Service	10,285	10,751	11,288

Performance Measure	2003/04	2004/05	Budget
No. of psychological reports provided to the:			
Public Prisons Service	1117	975	779
Community Probation Service	1084	1089	916

Community Work

This measure is determined by rates of arrest and decisions of the judiciary, and volumes are largely outside the Department's control.

The percentage of offenders who successfully completed a Community Work sentence was above the standard. However, because completion rates are influenced by a range of variables, it is difficult to attribute the impact of any one factor to the overall result.

Performance Measure	2003/04	2004/05	Budget
No. of Community Work sentences	28,043	27,928	29,000
% of offenders who successfully complete their Community Work sentence	76%	75%	70%

Home Detention

There was a general decline in the monthly number of Home Detention new starts throughout the year. The volume of Home Detention reports was also lower than planned. Both results are considered to be due to changes introduced by the Parole (Extended Supervision) Amendment Act 2004.

The slight drop in the percentage of offenders with sentence plans to address their rehabilitative or employment needs reflects a consistent proportion of orders of less than one month, which does not easily allow for these needs to be addressed. In future reports, this measure will be replaced by two new measures relating to absconding and compliance with special conditions.

Performance Measure	2003/04	2004/05	Budget
No. of Home Detention orders	1950	1515	2100
% of offenders on Home Detention with a sentence plan to address their rehabilitative needs	84%	83%	98%

Enforcement

The table below shows levels of enforcement action taken by the Department against offenders on community based sentences and orders.

Anyone serving a sentence or order for an offence is obliged by law to comply with all the conditions of that sentence or order, which are set by either the Court at the time of sentencing, or the New Zealand Parole Board.

Most offenders comply with the conditions for the duration of their sentence or order, but if they breach any of their conditions they may be subject to enforcement action.

Order Type	Total Throughput* 2004/05	Total Breach Applications 2004/05	Total Recall Applications 2004/05
Extended Supervision	N/A**	5	N/A
Home Detention	2076	84	97
Parole	2524	295	237
Post-release on Conditions	6547	1,088	N/A
Supervision	9061	1,125	N/A
Community Work	45,604	10,558	N/A
TOTAL ENFORCEMENT ACTION	65,812	13,155	334

*This represents the number of offenders starting a sentence or order plus the muster as at 30 June 2004.

**As Extended Supervision came into force on 1 July 2004, total throughput for the year 1 July 2004 - 30 June 2005 is not statistically meaningful and therefore not included here.