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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OVERVIEW

Today 8,600 people are having lunch in a prison cell. This weekend 25,000 people will do community work in New Zealand towns and cities. For a small country, we have a large offender population. But at the Department of Corrections we're committed to bringing down these numbers and giving everyone – offenders, family members and victims – the chance to live in a better, safer community.

I am very proud to present this, the Department of Corrections' Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2013. As you will see in the following pages, our results reflect the impressive work being done by our people and partners around the country.

28,325 offenders received 87,962 rehabilitation and reintegration interventions last year. More offenders than ever have access to programmes that address the underlying causes of their offending, such as drug and alcohol abuse, violence, minimal education and limited life skills. Our probation staff are now directly involved in the on-going rehabilitation needs of community-based offenders. Across all our services, offender education and training has increased, with a determined focus on adult learning and acquiring trade-based skills that will increase people's chances of finding long-term employment.

We have people on community work providing millions of hours' labour in projects that benefit their community. Over 65,000 hours of offender labour have assisted the Canterbury rebuild alone.

This year was the first time in recorded prison history that we have had no escapes from prison. We have contributed further to public safety by ensuring that offenders comply with their sentences and conditions, and holding them to account if they do not. Dedicated teams and GPS monitoring have significantly improved our management of the release of high-risk prisoners.

The Department of Corrections is Trans Tasman's Government Department of the Year for 2013. That's impressive for any organisation – but almost unheard of for one with so many risks to manage as ours. There have been difficult times, such as the riot at Spring Hill Corrections Facility in June. But we had the people and

the resources to manage this dangerous situation well, bringing it to a close the same day it began. Perhaps more than anything it's the way we operate in a time of crisis that makes us worthy of being called Government Department of the Year.

This year saw the closure of two prisons, along with other aging units that were no longer fit for purpose. We now operate 17 prisons (including Mt Eden Corrections Facility, which is run under contract to Serco), with construction of the new public private partnership prison at Wiri on track and scheduled to open in 2015.

A year ago, our people underwent a significant restructure. They've responded well and our services now work more closely together, with our four regions having greater freedom to deliver initiatives specific to their area.

Most importantly, we've reduced re-offending by 10.6 percent. That is nearly 2,000 people who won't return to Corrections. That's significant, and we are well on our way to achieving our target of reducing re-offending by 25 percent by 2017.

Looking back, we can be very proud of what we have achieved, but looking forward there is so much more to come that will make a real difference in the lives of tens of thousands of New Zealanders.



Ray Smith
Chief Executive

WHAT CORRECTIONS DOES

We keep communities safe by ensuring offenders complete the prison and community – based sentences and orders handed down by our justice system, and by working with offenders to reduce re-offending.

Public safety will always be our bottom line; we respond swiftly if sentences and orders are breached, and we manage risks posed by offenders in the community. We keep prisoners in secure facilities that we regularly upgrade and replace to ensure they remain fit-for-purpose. We also make a positive difference in the lives of offenders to help them to move away from criminal activities.

Providing offenders with a safe, secure, and healthy environment helps to encourage and support them to move towards an offence-free lifestyle. We provide them with primary healthcare, and respond to their mental and physical health needs. Where appropriate, we encourage and support contact between offenders and their families, and we acknowledge the significance of offenders' ethnicity, language, and cultural backgrounds.

We also provide reports to the Judiciary and New Zealand Parole Board about an offender's risk to others and likelihood of re-offending. This allows us to inform sentencing decisions, and decisions on whether a prisoner should be released and under what conditions.

In 2012/13, we escalated our Reducing Re-offending work programme, which saw us manage an average of 39,500 offenders each week, comprising of 31,000 people in the community, and 8,500 people in prison. Through this programme we supported:

- > more prisoners to improve their literacy and numeracy skills (up 42 percent from 2,103 prisoners in 2011/12)
- > 1,963 prisoners to gain 3,160 qualifications
- > almost twice as many prisoners to engage in employment-related activities than in 2011/12
- > 1,026 prisoners within Drug Treatment Units (up from 907 in 2011/12)
- > 15,182 offenders in the community through 50,763 interventions delivered by probation staff
- > more than 6,300 community-based offenders to start a rehabilitation programme (up from approximately 5,000 in 2011/12).

We maintained \$2 billion worth of assets¹, including:

- > 17 operational prisons
- > 144 Community Corrections sites².

¹ Comprised of physical and intangible assets; Statement of Financial Position, page 59

² Excludes sites not attended by offenders (e.g. District Office, Psychologists' offices, New Zealand Parole Board Office, regional offices)

CORRECTIONS AND THE JUSTICE SECTOR

Corrections is part of New Zealand's justice sector, which also includes the Ministry of Justice, the New Zealand Police, the Crown Law Office, the Serious Fraud Office, and several Crown entities and agencies. We work together to provide modern, accessible, people-centred justice services, and encourage a safe and just society where people enjoy civil and democratic rights.

Our focus on reducing re-offending while keeping the public safe is an important part of the criminal justice sector activities, which extend from crime prevention, investigation of crime, arrest and prosecutions, through to courts, sentencing, sentence management, rehabilitation and re-integration.

We work towards these goals by providing new and expanded alcohol and drug treatment, rehabilitation interventions, and education and employment opportunities for offenders in prisons and in the community.

Coordination across the sector ensures resources are used effectively, and that future policy, investments and changes to service delivery have the greatest positive impact. The Sector Leadership Board has been established to strengthen the leadership throughout the sector, and is responsible for driving our collective performance across the justice system, coordinating the major change programmes underway, and collectively planning to modernise the sector, reduce costs, improve services, and further enhance public safety.

The Government wants to ensure New Zealanders can rely on Better Public Services, in tight financial times.

For the justice sector, this means reducing the overall crime rate by 15 percent by 2017. To achieve this, the sector is working to reduce the:

- > violent crime rate by 20 percent by 2017
- > youth crime rate by five percent by 2017
- > re-offending rate by 25 percent by 2017.

Closer relationships with our justice sector partners allow us to achieve these goals and contribute to the overall sector performance. In 2012/13, our collaboration with the New Zealand Police and the Ministry of Justice facilitated the development of:

- > a shared services model for delivery of electronic monitored bail
- > a Corrections Remand Facility within the New Plymouth Police Station
- > targeted information sharing and management of child sex offenders
- > supporting a Justice Sector joint initiative in the Hutt Valley that generates new ways of working together to achieve community safety
- > continued implementation of Audio Visual Link (AVL) technology in courts and prisons to reduce the costs and safety risks associated with transporting prisoners to and from courtroom appearances.

MANAGING IN A CHALLENGING AND CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

New Zealand continues to face economic challenges that impact heavily on government debt. As a result, the public sector must be more innovative and results-focused in the delivery of services within current budgets.

The economic and social pressures faced by Corrections prompt us to think differently about how to reduce re-offending while keeping the public safe. We are responding well to these challenges, working more closely with our public and private sector partners, and innovating in our work with offenders. As a result, we are successfully delivering better, smarter public services.

Offender demographics are evolving; the average age of prisoners is increasing because of longer sentences and repeat offenders staying in the prison system for longer. Some of these prisoners have health issues that make it difficult for them to function independently in a prison environment, but are not eligible for release. We are creating facilities that enable these offenders to have their health needs met as they complete their sentences.

We expect to see more violent offenders come into the prison system, particularly gang members and violent female offenders. Gang members have higher rates of re-offending than non-gang members and are more likely to be involved in prison violence. As the number of female prisoners grows, we are anticipating the number of females convicted for serious violent offending to become a greater proportion of the prisoner population. We are developing strategies to address these trends.

Offenders are also becoming more ethnically diverse, reflecting changes in New Zealand's population. Māori and Pasifika offenders remain over-represented, both in the prison population and in the numbers of offenders serving sentences and orders in the community. We make a difference in the lives of these offenders through our Māori Focus Units and the Pacific Focus Unit, which provide intensive rehabilitative interventions in a therapeutic environment that supports the use of Tikanga Māori, and Pacific values and beliefs.

Offenders have skills that can be used to support the Christchurch rebuild. We are taking a cross-service approach with the Ministry of Social Development, employers and the Non-Government Organisation sector to ensure that the labour market advantages across Canterbury are utilised to maximise offender employment.

For security reasons, the rapidly changing nature of technology means new solutions have to be carefully considered before they can be put in place. We have trialed and implemented technology-based solutions to improve the monitoring of offenders in the community and to mitigate the risks associated with transporting prisoners to and from courtrooms.

