

REDUCING RE-OFFENDING BY 25% EDUCATION, JOB SKILLS, AND WORKING PRISONS

The greatest contribution the Department of Corrections can make to New Zealanders is to reduce re-offending. Breaking the cycle of crime results in fewer victims and safer communities. The Government is committed to achieving a 25% reduction in re-offending by 2017. This will mean 4,600 fewer offenders returning and 18,500 fewer victims.

To achieve this, we will work with our partners in the community and across the justice, public, and private sectors to move people away from a life of crime. Through a combination of interventions such as increased alcohol and drug treatment, greater access to education, skills training, employment programmes, expanded reintegration services, and innovative rehabilitation programmes, we can make a difference to people's lives.

Our plan to reduce re-offending involves developing new and innovative approaches, while expanding and strengthening existing services with proven results. This plan will evolve during the next few years to ensure that we are responsive to offenders' changing needs.

2,950 additional prisoners to receive education and employment training.

We know that people in regular employment are less likely to re-offend. However, for many prisoners with a criminal history and limited education, it can be hard to find a job upon release.

About 71% of prisoners have difficulty reading and writing. We will provide them with essential literacy and numeracy skills and increase the levels of education and training available to prisoners.

We will also provide literacy and numeracy training for groups who until now have had limited access to these opportunities, for example, people on remand, those serving short sentences, and those with special learning or English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) needs.

Rolleston Prison, Tongariro/Rangipo Prison, and Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility are being turned into working prisons to better

prepare prisoners to find a job on release. A working prison is where all prisoners are engaged in a structured 40-hour week. We plan to apply the concept in all New Zealand prisons.

Prisoners in Christchurch will learn the trade skills most needed to help rebuild the city.

Implementing working prisons and increasing participation in education and employment will mean, by 2017:

- > 1,200 additional prisoners a year receiving literacy and numeracy training
- > 800 additional prisoners a year participating in secondary and self-directed tertiary learning
- > 800 additional prisoners a year employed while in prison
- > 150 prisoners a year receiving training in construction skills relevant to the rebuild of Christchurch