Tongariro Prison

Inspection

April 2018

IN-TP-01



Inspection team

Sticial Information Act 1987 **Principal Inspector** Trevor Riddle

Brenden Makinson Inspector Don Govender Inspector

Regional Clinical Director Health Fiona Irving

Steven Bell Inspector

September 2019

Office of the Inspectorate Department of Corrections Private Box 1206 Wellington 6140

04 460 3000 Telephone:

Email: inspectorate@corrections.govt.nz

Contents

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTORATE Te Tari Tirohia	Foreword	2
	Overview	4
	Introduction	7
	Transport and reception	9
	Residential units	11
	Facilities	11
	Environment and basic needs	11
	First days in custody	13
	Safety and humane treatment	13
	Rehabilitation	16
	Health and other services	21
	Health	21
	Mental health and self-harm	22
	Prisoners with disabilities	23
	Spiritual support	23
	Reintegration_	24
	Appendix – Images	26
20/63	sed under the	

Foreword

This is one in a series of public reports on scheduled inspections of New Zealand prisons.

The inspections are intended to provide a 'window into prisons', giving early warning of emerging risks and challenges, and highlighting areas of innovation and good practice that other prisons might wish to follow.

Inspections are carried out against a set of healthy prison standards derived from United Nations guidelines for the treatment of people in detention. Prison performance is assessed under four principles:

- **Safety:** Prisoners are held safely.
- **Respect:** Prisoners are treated with respect for human dignity.
- **Rehabilitation:** Prisoners are able, and expect, to engage in activity that is likely to benefit them.
- **Reintegration:** Prisoners are prepared for release into the community, and helped to reduce their likelihood of re-offending.

The purpose of the prison system is to protect society from crime, both during imprisonment and after release.² The four principles reflect that purpose, and also highlight the potentially competing demands that are often placed on prison staff and management.

In an ideal world, prisons would be able to deliver on all four principles on all occasions. In practice, safety, humane treatment, and rehabilitation and reintegration needs are sometimes balanced against one another, and short-term requirements sometimes take precedence over longer-term needs.

I encourage prison directors, managers and staff to use these principles as a guide to decision-making, and to foster continual improvement that, as much as possible, sees their prisons deliver on all four principles.

In general, Tongariro Prison kept prisoners safe and staff treated prisoners in a humane and respectful manner.

There were no significant issues with the quality and quantity of clothing, bedding or food, but prisoners were unhappy about transport conditions. Levels of violence and intimidation were low, access to contraband was limited and staff-prisoner interactions were generally positive.

Prisoners had good access to telephones and family visits, with a range of activities, rehabilitation programmes, work experience and education programmes. Waiting times for programmes could be long. Prisoners' health and mental health needs were generally well met.

¹ As well as considering the four principles, the healthy prison standards require inspectors to consider nine specific areas of prison life: reception and admission, first days in custody, good order, duty of care, environment, health, escorts and transfers, rehabilitation, and reintegration.

² United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (The Nelson Mandela Rules), rule 4. Also see Corrections Act 2004, ss 5, 6.

As well as conducting our scheduled programme of prison inspections, the Office of the Inspectorate will be providing ongoing monitoring through the work of its Regional Inspectors. In addition to their general responsibilities, they will be reporting to me on matters specifically identified in this report.

My oversight of these activities will provide a significant ongoing and critical insight into prisons. I am confident this will provide assurance that any shortcomings will be identified and addressed at pace, and that examples of good practice will be shared so that other prisons can follow.

Released under the Official Information of the Continue of the I acknowledge the cooperation of Tongariro Prison's management and staff, both during the inspection and since, and I look forward to working with them as I continue to monitor

Overview

- 1. Tongariro Prison is in central North Island, near Turangi. It was established in 1922 on a site of more than 8,000 hectares, much of which was farmed and forested. In the 1940s, it was used as a camp for conscientious objectors.
- 2. The prison was known as Tongariro/Rangipo until 2015 when the Department restructured and downsized, closing the Rangipo side.
- 3. In 2015, Tūwharetoa iwi purchased more than 8,000 hectares of land, including where the prison is located, as part of the Central North Island Treaty Settlement process.
- 4. The site has four residential units. There are plans to build another unit, with double-bunked cells, except for two cells designed for disabled prisoners.
- 5. Inspectors visited the prison from 7 April to 13 April 2018.³

Our findings

Transport and reception

- Finding 1 Prisoners were kept safe during transport to and from the prison.
- Finding 2 Most prisoners interviewed were unhappy about their transport conditions, reporting inadequate food, water and breaks, and having no toilet.
- Finding 3 There were pressures on the transit station, which did not have the capacity to hold all the prisoners received. As a result, some prisoners were held in cells that did not have toilets or running water and were unsuitable for this purpose.
- Finding 4 All prisoners travelling in the Prisoner Escort Vehicles were observed to be placed in high security handcuffs.
- Finding 5 During reception and admission, prisoners were kept safe and staff generally treated prisoners in a humane and respectful manner. The Reception Risk Assessments may not fully reflect the risks of self-harm.

Environment and basic needs

- Finding 6 In general, the prison provided a safe and healthy environment in which prisoners' needs were met.
- Finding 7 There were no significant issues with the quality and quantity of clothing, bedding or food.

³ A scheduled inspection involves a 12-week programme of work. The Tongariro Prison inspection commenced its 12 week programme on 26 March 2018.

- Finding 8 Having unit laundries, instead of a central laundry, worked well, and this example of good practice could be considered at other prisons.
- Finding 9 Some areas of Te Hikoinga, including the health room, the external yard in the separates area and the kitchen, which was unhygienic, needed attention.

First days in custody

Finding 10 Most prisoners received informative inductions and were provided with initial telephone calls during their first days in custody.

Safety and humane treatment

- Finding 11 The prison generally provided a safe environment for prisoners in which levels of violence and intimidation were low, access to contraband was limited, and staff-prisoner interactions were generally positive.
- Finding 12 Most searches of individuals were conducted appropriately. Te Hikoinga's search area was unsuitable.
- Finding 13 No individual prisoner plans were in place for transgender prisoners, which is not in accordance with Corrections' Transgender Policy.

Rehabilitation

- Finding 14 Prisoners had access to a wide range of activities to keep them engaged and support positive change, including rehabilitation programmes, work experience, and education programmes.
- Finding 15 Regular visits were available for family and friends at weekends and telephone access was good.
- Finding 16 Te Hikoinga is the only unit nationally where Te Tirohanga is available to voluntarily segregated prisoners. Because of the increased prison population, a few prisoners were housed in the unit who were not part of the programme and had little understanding of its kaupapa. It would have been preferable to fill these beds with prisoners who were willing to be housed there.

Health, Mental Health and other services

- Finding 17 Prisoners' health needs were generally well met. Unfilled nursing vacancies were placing some pressure on staff. There were gaps in equipment checks. Aged-care initiatives were excellent. Some medication rounds were completed before the required times due to units being locked early.
- Finding 18 Prisoners' mental health needs were generally well met. The prison was taking all reasonable steps to identify prisoners at risk of self-harm. There was no At Risk Unit, so these prisoners were transferred to another prison. Multi-disciplinary meetings were held regularly to discuss cases of concern.
- Finding 19 The needs of prisoners with disabilities were generally well met.
- Finding 20 Prisoners' spiritual needs were generally well met.

Reintegration

Finding 21 Many prisoners interviewed did not think they were ready for release or their NZPB hearing. Some had not received treatment and some lacked suitable accommodation.

Introduction

Tongariro Prison

- Tongariro Prison is one of 17 public prisons in New Zealand. Together with one prison run as a public private partnership, these prisons operate under the direction of the National Commissioner Corrections Services.
- 7. The prisons operate in four regions Northern, Central, Lower North and Southern each led by a Regional Commissioner. Tongariro Prison is one of three prisons in the Central Region.

Prisoners and staffing numbers

- 8. The prison has a maximum on-site capacity of 300 prisoners. At 28 February 2018, the prison housed 296 male prisoners.
- 9. The prison only holds voluntary segregated prisoners, and prisoners had a mix of minimum to low-medium security classifications.
- 10. The site has four residential units, all with single cell accommodation:
 - » Hautu, a low security unit with beds for 120 prisoners
 - » Te Tirohanga o Te Hikoinga, a low security rehabilitative unit with a kaupapa Māori programme and beds for 60
 - » two low-medium security units named Cedar 1 and 2, with beds for 60 in each
- 11. There are plans in place to build another residential unit, which will increase the prison's population by 122 to a new maximum of 422. This unit will feature double-bunked cells, except for two cells designed for disabled prisoners.
- 12. The prison employed 171 full-time equivalent staff at 28 February 2018, including 140 custodial staff. At that time there were two vacancies.
- 13. The prison was in the process of recruiting additional staff for the new unit.

Inspection criteria

- 14. We assessed Tongariro Prison against a set of healthy prison standards derived from United Nations principles for the treatment of people in detention:
 - » Safety: Prisoners are held safely.
 - » Respect: Prisoners are treated with respect for human dignity.
 - » **Rehabilitation:** Prisoners are able, and expect, to engage in activity that is likely to benefit them.
 - » **Reintegration:** Prisoners are prepared for release into the community, and helped to reduce their likelihood of re-offending.⁴

These four principles (or close variations) are used by prison inspectorates in the United Kingdom and Australian states, among others. They are also consistent with the basic principles (rules 1-5) in the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), though those principles also emphasise the importance of equitable treatment, and the importance of not taking steps that reduce prisoners' personal responsibility. The principles are consistent with the purpose and principles of the Corrections Act 2004. The Office of the Inspectorate's methodology for scheduled inspections is under review. Changes may be made in coming months.

- 15. A prison's success at achieving these goals depends on a range of factors, including:
 - » an environment and routines that are safe and secure without being unduly restrictive
 - » effective supervision, management and discipline to minimise risks of violence and disorder and encourage constructive use of time
 - » positive and respectful staff-prisoner relationships to encourage voluntary compliance with prison rules and procedures
 - » opportunities for prisoners to take part in constructive activities that support positive change, including physical activity, treatment and rehabilitation programmes, education and training opportunities, work experience, and time to associate with others
 - » a clear and consistent pathway towards rehabilitation, release and successful reintegration

Inspection process

- 16. The inspection team visited the site from 7 April to 13 April 2018.
- 17. During our inspection, we
 - » interviewed 27 prisoners about life in prison and readiness for release back into the community
 - » interviewed prison managers, custodial staff and other staff, such as health professionals, case managers and prison chaplains
 - » visited the prison's residential units to assess their physical condition and to observe prison operations, including staff-prisoner interactions and prisoners' activities, and spoke with prisoners and staff informally
 - » visited industry and rehabilitation programme facilities, the prison's health centre and other prison facilities
 - » inspected the prison's perimeter and entrances
 - » attended prison meetings where prison staff discussed prisoners' progress and considered applications for temporary release
- 18. On 9 November 2018, we provided the Department of Corrections' National Commissioner Corrections Services with a draft of this report. The National Commissioner responded to the draft on 19 June 2019, and summaries of the responses have been incorporated into this report. We acknowledge the work being carried out at the prison in response to this inspection.

Report structure

- 19. The following sections describe what we found during our inspection, with a particular focus on risks or barriers to safety, humane treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration, and on innovations that support those principles.
- 20. The report's structure follows the prisoner's experience from reception into prison, through life in the prison's residential units, to health and other services, through to release and reintegration.

Transport and reception

Transport

- 21. Prisoners are transported to and from prisons for a range of reasons, including temporary removal for medical treatment, to assist with reintegration and for other purposes.
- 22. The prison has a purpose-built transit station to manage prisoner transfers between the upper North Island and the rest of the country. This allows prisoners and the vehicle crews to have a break from their journey.
- 23. Regional Prisoner Escort Vehicles (PEVs) meet the main escort vehicle at the transit station. Prisoners at the transit station may be transferred to or from other relatively nearby prisons such as Hawkes Bay Regional Prison, Manawatu Prison and Whanganui Prison. The staffing of the transit station is over and above that of the residential units and other activities on site.
- 24. During our inspection, we observed that the transit station was well run and effective. On the day of our observations, 40 prisoners were processed through the station. We were advised that, sometimes, as many as 60 prisoners were processed in a day.
- 25. The transit station is operating beyond its design capacity. Originally, it would deal with one 22-seat PEV and some site-based PEVs on one day. Now, however, two 22-seat PEVs, along with other site-based PEVs, meet at the site on Wednesdays. This puts pressure on available resources, as the station's six holding cells do not have enough capacity to hold all the prisoners received.
- 26. As a result, some prisoners are held in the Receiving Office and dedicated collection unit cells. These do not have toilets or running water and are unsuitable for this purpose.
- 27. A risk identified by the prison was that the names on the expected prisoner list for the transit station could change without notice. This caused added strain, as any prisoner not on the expected list needed their risk to be assessed before they could be placed in cells with other prisoners.
- 28. For example, on the day of our inspection, we were told that three prisoners on the Hawkes Bay Regional Prison escort vehicle were not on the expected list and had to be accommodated in cells separately from other prisoners until any risks could be identified.
- 29. We observed that one prisoner on the 22-seat PEV from Rimutaka Prison had slipped off one of his handcuffs. Staff reacted well and secured the prisoner. However, the incident was not reported by escort staff until an Inspector raised this omission with management.
- 30. All prisoners in the PEVs were placed in high security handcuffs. 5
- 31. Of the 27 prisoners interviewed, 16 were unhappy about their transport to the prison. Complaints included that they were placed in small single cells, they were handcuffed and that the journeys were too long without a break. Prisoners commented about the lack of a toilet (each PEV cubicle has a floor drain, which are not intended as toilets but prisoners sometimes use them for that purpose).
- 32. The prison has no audio visual link suites available for court hearings, which means prisoners due in court must be transported. The audio visual link is used for parole board, probation and visitors only.

⁵ Corrections' policy states that minimum and low security prisoners are not to be placed in any mechanical restraint.

- 33. After the inspection, the National Commissioner advised that a review of PEV specifications was under way. Prison inspection findings related to escort conditions will inform the review.
- 34. Additionally, improvements to escort schedules had been made, which ensured that only one 22-seat PEV arrived at any one time. This had reduced the pressure on the facility, with smaller numbers of prisoners being housed in the Transit Station.
- 35. Regarding the use of handcuffs, an inconsistency in guidance had been resolved with advice updated and disseminated to staff in late 2018.

Reception

- 36. When prisoners arrive at the prison's Receiving Office, custodial and health staff conduct there an immediate needs assessment (covering matters such as health, mental health and childcare) and a risk assessment (covering risks to safety including risks of self-harm).
- 37. Twenty-nine out of 30 Reception Risk Assessments sampled were found to have information partially copied and pasted, which may not fully reflect the information gathered.
- 38. Case managers usually meet prisoners in the Receiving Office to go over their offender plans.
- 39. Receiving Office staff performed these tasks thoroughly and in a manner that was sensitive to prisoners' needs.
- 40. Health staff were observed to be welcoming to the new prisoners, introducing themselves and informing them about the reception interview process.
- 41. Staff reviewed and clarified with each prisoner their medical history and health needs, as well as offering appropriate health screening and informing them about the health services provided and how to access them.
- 42. We observed good engagement and clinical enquiry during consultations and discussion between the nurse and custodial officer regarding the outcome of some at risk assessments.
- 43. Most prisoners we interviewed and spoke with informally commented favourably about their experiences in the Receiving Office.
- 44. Following the inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the practice of copying and pasting had ceased through remedial action including staff education. The Security Manager and regional Custodial Practice Manager provided ongoing oversight.

Findings

- Finding 1 Prisoners were kept safe during transport to and from the prison.
- Finding 2 Most prisoners interviewed were unhappy about their transport conditions, reporting inadequate food, water and breaks, and having no toilet.
- Finding 3 There were pressures on the transit station, which did not have the capacity to hold all the prisoners received. As a result, some prisoners were held in cells that did not have toilets or running water and were unsuitable for this purpose.
- Finding 4 All prisoners travelling in the Prisoner Escort Vehicles were observed to be placed in high security handcuffs.
- Finding 5 During reception and admission, prisoners were kept safe and staff generally treated prisoners in a humane and respectful manner. The Reception Risk Assessments may not fully reflect the risks of self-harm.

Residential units

Facilities

- 45. Tongariro Prison is comprised of administration buildings, trade training and four residential units behind a secure perimeter fence.
- 46. As at 28 February 2018, the four residential units all had single cells with:
 - » 119 men in Hautu
 - » 59 men in Te Tirohanga o Te Hikoinga⁶
 - » 59 men in low-medium security unit Cedar 1
 - » 59 men in low-medium security unit Cedar 2⁷
- 47. All prisoners at Tongariro Prison are in voluntary segregation.
- 48. We interviewed 27 prisoners about life in prison and readiness for release back into the community. This included seven in Hautu Unit, nine in Te Hikoinga and 11 in the two Cedars.

Environment and basic needs

Physical environment

- 49. Overall, the prison's buildings and grounds were clean and well maintained. There were areas where maintenance or repair was needed. In particular, the showers and toilets in the residential units required painting and maintenance attention and some cells required painting in the near future. Some communal toilets in the Cedars had missing lids and seats.
- 50. A prisoner work party worked with the contracted maintenance company Spotless to carry out painting in some areas. All residential units and cells were clean and well maintained, with no graffiti evident. Prisoners informed us that cells were heated to an adequate temperature in winter (see Image 1).
- 51. In Te Hikoinga's separates area, the floor of the external yard was flooded with water and moss was on the floor and walls (see Image 2). The drainage system appeared to be blocked.
- 52. The health room in Te Hikoinga was inadequate. The examination bed was pushed against the sink/bench space. Equipment cluttered the room. Storage space was insufficient and the second entry/exit door (into the compound) was blocked, creating a potential risk in an emergency. We were advised that a second room used for health consultations was no longer available.
- 53. Further, the conditions in Te Hikoinga's kitchen were unhygienic. We observed flies, maggots, stagnant water and an uncovered rubbish bin (see Image 3). The dishwasher (sanitiser) had been broken for more than three months and other kitchen equipment needed extensive repairs. Staff advised that the unit kitchen had not been fully functional since late 2017. All meals were prepared by the main kitchen and delivered to the unit's kitchen, where they were then issued to prisoners to eat in the dining room.

⁶ The unit is referred to as Te Hikoinga throughout the remainder of the report.

⁷ One prisoner was held off site on this date.

- 54. Following the inspection, the National Commissioner advised that Te Hikoinga now had an improved area for health service delivery (including emergency equipment having its own storage trolley, shelving installed, and the fire exit door cleared).
- 55. Immediately following the inspection, the work party started addressing maintenance, refurbishment and repair work. Weekly facility checks were now routine. This had provided additional training and work opportunities for the prisoners. Progress had been made on upgrades of shower blocks and Hautu cells. Te Hikoinga kitchen had been maintained, and now had a daily cleaning process in place.

Clothing and bedding

- 56. Prisoners commented favourably about the quality and quantity of clothing and bedding. We observed enough good quality bedding. Of the 27 prisoners interviewed, one prisoner in Te Hikoinga complained about his mattress and another complained about his pillow.
- 57. There were no issues with the unit laundries, in contrast to other prisons, which run a central laundry system (see Image 4).

Food

- The food complied with Corrections' national menus, aimed at providing each prisoner with a diet that meets Ministry of Health food and nutrition guidelines. Prisons are expected to cater for prisoners' health and medical needs based on recommendations from the prison's Health Centre Manager. We asked 27 prisoners about the quality of the food they received. Of those, 24 said they had no problem with meals, but some sought more healthy options.
- 59. All prisoners had access to drinking water and hot water during unlock hours. Prisoners commented that they were happy to be able to make a hot drink throughout the day.

Findings

- Finding 6 In general, the prison provided a safe and healthy environment in which prisoners' needs were met.
- Finding 7 There were no significant issues with the quality and quantity of clothing, bedding or food.
- Finding 8 Having unit laundries, instead of a central laundry, worked well, and this example of good practice could be considered at other prisons.
- Finding 9 Some areas of Te Hikoinga, including the health room, the external yard in the separates area and the kitchen, which was unhygienic, needed attention.

First days in custody

- 60. When a prisoner arrives in a unit, he should receive an induction to determine any immediate needs (such as health needs or safety risks) and have unit rules and routines explained to him. He should also be given access to a self-service kiosk, allowing him to access information and request support. If prisoners do not receive inductions, they may not know what is expected of them in terms of rules and routines, and may not know what support is available.
- 61. New prisoners should be allowed to make telephone calls to family or friends. Of all prisoners interviewed, only one from Te Hikoinga said he did not receive an induction by unit staff members and did not receive an initial phone call.

Finding

Finding 10 Most prisoners received induction information and were provided with initial telephone calls during their first days in custody.

Safety and humane treatment

Access to unauthorised items

- 62. Contraband such as drugs, alcohol or weapons can create risks to safety and good order. Staff and prisoners advised that there were generally low levels of contraband in the prison.
- 63. Between 1 September 2017 and 28 February 2018, a total of 23 items of contraband were discovered in the prison. This included tattoo equipment (17%), drugs (13%), weapons (9%), and other items (61%).
- 64. The last time a mobile phone was seized was in January 2017.

Gang influence

- 65. On 28 February 2018, the prison had 296 prisoners, of whom 55 identified as members of gangs (19% of the prison's prisoner population). The most common gangs were Mongrel Mob (23 prisoners), Black Power (8), and Head Hunters (4).
- 66. During our inspection, we did not observe any gang-related graffiti, or hear gang signs or names used. There was little gang activity or influence identified in Hautu or Cedar. In Te Hikoinga, one prisoner said he had been stood over for his hot meals for more than a week. Staff had interviewed the prisoner and acted on the issue. At the time of inspection, staff were providing him with ongoing support. Staff said younger prisoners often tried to display gang culture when they first arrived in the unit.

Conduct of searches

- 67. Prisoners told us that most cell searches were conducted regularly and appropriately.
- 68. We assessed the processes of two strip searches and found them to be well conducted.

Prisoners can use the kiosks to access a range of information including legislation and policies, prison rules, and key dates in their sentences. They can also order food and other items from prison canteens, ask for meetings with their case manager or their unit's principal corrections officer, and check the balance of their prison Trust Account.

- 69. During our inspection in Cedar, we observed a number of rubdown searches. Although prisoners' heads and feet were not checked, the searches were sufficiently thorough to detect any items of contraband concealed in clothing.
- 70. During our interviews with prisoners, we were advised that prisoners always get strip searched following visits. However, prisoners told us that strip searches do not happen after graduation ceremonies in Te Hikoinga, which are attended by family members.
- 71. Te Hikoinga does not have a designated area to conduct strip searches and staff indicated that the staff toilet had been used. We observed a sign on the back of the toilet door stating: "Under the Corrections Act 2004/Sec 98 You are subject to a routine strip/rubdown search, do you understand." Prisoners should not be routinely strip-searched without reasonable cause.
- 72. Following the inspection, the National Commissioner advised that staff had been reminded that prisoners must not be all strip-searched following visits. Strip-searching must be justified according to policy and procedure. This message was being reinforced on site. Non-compliant posters had been removed. Also, training would be provided to ensure that searches were of a high standard. A role had been established to carry out training in custodial practices, including searches.

Active management and supervision

- 73. We observed staff in all residential units and noted that, whenever prisoners were unlocked, staff interacted with prisoners in the compound. Prisoners informed us that this was normal and that staff were approachable and responsive to questions or concerns.
- 74. The majority of staff were professional and committed to the work they did and proud of the prison's achievements.
- 75. We observed a prisoner in one of the Cedar Units making a telephone call to a legal representative from an office, with a corrections officer sitting with him. This did not give sufficient privacy for such a call.
- 76. Some prisoners told us they did not have access to complaint forms, and complaints were not always entered into IOMS when submitted, compromising accurate reporting of prisoners' complaints.
- 77. Staff and prisoners in Te Hikoinga confirmed that prisoners were encouraged to approach roopu members with concerns before approaching staff. The roopu is a group of six prisoners who act as representatives for the unit. Roopu members are intended to be role models for other prisoners, so good behaviour is expected of them.

Transgender prisoners

- 78. During the inspection, a focus group discussion was held with transgender prisoners. All six transgender prisoners who took part stated they had experienced discrimination and staff needed more education to better understand their needs. They said there had been an improvement in staff attitudes since the Department's Transgender Policy was implemented.
- 79. Transgender prisoners did not all receive the same canteen form, meaning some could order makeup but others could not.

⁹ Transgender prisoners are allowed to purchase items from the women's canteen form in accordance with their identified gender.

- 80. No individual prisoner plans were in place, which contravenes the Transgender Policy. Inspectors spoke about this to each principal corrections officer in units that housed transgender prisoners.
- 81. Following the inspection, the National Commissioner advised that individual plans were immediately developed for the transgender prisoners. The prison had set up a support group for transgender prisoners which would focus on community support and health issues, and be supported by volunteers from the community. A canteen order form developed at a women's prison was now available to all transgender prisoners. A review had confirmed that all plans had been completed and had provided valuable feedback.

Violence, standovers and intimidation

- 82. Prisoners and staff said violence was rare in the units. It was noted that prisoners would be removed if their behaviour was not good enough.
- 83. Between 1 September 2017 and 28 February 2018, there were 21 cases of threats or abuse. During that time, eight assaults on prisoners were reported, one of which was serious. Five no-injury assaults on staff were reported.
- 84. Reported standovers and intimidation were rare. Only one of the prisoners interviewed in Te Hikoinga said he had been stood over.
- 85. This was supported by observations of the property prisoners had in their cells. No stockpiling of items or prisoners obviously possessing other prisoners' property was in evidence.

Safety in segregation

- 86. All prisoners at the prison are considered to be on voluntary segregation.
- 87. Hautu Unit has four cells for "separates", prisoners who have been confined to their cell following a disciplinary hearing.
- 88. This includes one dry cell (which has no toilet or running water and is used for prisoners who are suspected of concealing contraband within their bodies). There is also one cell for prisoners at risk of self-harm.
- 89. There were no prisoners in the Te Hikoinga separates area (two cells) at the time of the inspection. Similarly, there were no prisoners in the Cedar separates area (two cells) at the time of the inspection.
- 90. There was no At Risk Unit at the prison. 10
- 91. During our inspection, a prisoner was deemed to be at risk of self-harm. The prison managed his welfare and transferred him to a prison with a dedicated At Risk Unit. However, the directed segregation paperwork was not completed in the required timeframe.

The prison's response to incidents

92. There were very few incidents on site. Cedar staff spoken to could explain their roles in an emergency and the response they should receive from, or provide to, other units.

¹⁰ At Risk Units are now known as Intervention and Support Units, and have a more therapeutic approach for prisoners vulnerable to suicide and self-harm.

93. The prison issued 99 misconduct charges over the review period. Of these 10 were dismissed. Of the 10 dismissed charges, one, where a prisoner did not produce a urine sample and was charged with misconduct, is a cause for concern. This misconduct charge was withdrawn when the prisoner later produced a sample. This is against Corrections policy.

Findings

- Finding 11 The prison generally provided a safe environment for prisoners in which levels of violence and intimidation were low, access to contraband was limited and staff-prisoner interactions were generally positive.
- Finding 12 Most searches of individuals were conducted appropriately. Te Hikoinga's search area was unsuitable.
- Finding 13 No individual prisoner plans were in place for transgender prisoners, which is not in accordance with Corrections' Transgender Policy.

Rehabilitation

- 94. As well as detaining prisoners in a safe and humane manner, prisons are expected to support prisoners to make positive changes in their lives.
- 95. All prisons offer programmes aimed at supporting prisoners to address the causes of their offending and acquire skills to help them after release. Case managers work with prisoners to create plans for rehabilitation and reintegration, and case officers work with prisoners in their units to keep track of progress.
- 96. Successful rehabilitation depends on a prisoner's motivation and on access to support and opportunities to make positive changes.
- 97. During their sentences, prisoners are supported under a process called Right Track, which aims to help prisoners to make positive changes. Custodial staff, health and education staff, case managers, and others (such as psychologists and chaplains) work together to support the prisoner's journey towards rehabilitation.
- 98. At the time of our inspection, the prison was not conducting the standard Right Track meetings. Prison managers felt the meetings could be enhanced to give better outcomes for the prisoners and had created their own version of Right Track. Staff said the Department was interested in introducing the system to other prisons.
- 99. The prison had five fully trained case managers for about 300 prisoners. Two case managers were going through training, so were not operational with full caseloads. This had affected the backlog of cases. Some prisoners reported not knowing who their case manager was. At the time of inspection, 94 prisoners, nearly one-third of the total number of prisoners at the prison, had not been allocated a case manager.
- 100. Case managers prioritise prisoners for rehabilitation programmes. However, the high risk programmes for child sex offenders, violent offenders and adult sex offenders are all prioritised by a national waitlist according to demand.
- 101. Five Cedar prisoners said they had been told they were too early in their sentence to begin their treatment.

Time out of cell

- 102. Prisoners commented favourably about the prison's unlock hours, which were significantly longer than at other prisons.
- 103. In Hautu Unit, the unlock hours were 6.30am to 8.30pm. Prisoners stated their unlock time was better than at other prisons and allowed them the opportunity to take part in activities, attend work and keep in contact with family
- 104. In Te Hikoinga, prisoners were unlocked about 6.30am each day and relocked about 7.30pm.
- 105. In the Cedar units, prisoners were unlocked about 6.30am each day and relocked about 7.40pm. Prisoners involved in work, such as in the kitchens, were unlocked just after 6am.
- 106. Prisoners were sometimes locked up on Fridays, for up to two hours during the day, to allow for staff training or similar. Only one prisoner could remember being locked down to allow staff to respond to an incident.

Treatment and rehabilitation programmes

- 107. The prison offered a variety of treatment and rehabilitation programmes, including tikanga Māori programmes using Māori values and practices to motivate prisoners to address offending and short intensity rehabilitation programmes aimed at addressing causes of offending.
- 108. Eligibility for rehabilitation programmes depends on a range of factors, including age, security classification, risk of reoffending and reimprisonment, and the nature of the prisoner's offending and sentence. If prisoners are eligible, opportunities depend on programme availability. Priority is given to prisoners who are closest to their scheduled release date or parole eligibility.
- 109. Long waiting times were reported for some courses. Some prisoners with long sentences told us they would not start to address their offending until near or after the date of their New Zealand Parole Board (NZPB) hearing or their release.
- 110. Tongariro Prison houses a high number of child sex offenders, some of whom had asked for a child sex offender treatment programme to be run at the prison. Since the inspection, we understand the Short Intervention Programme for lower risk child sex offenders is being rolled out at the prison as a 12-month pilot to help meet demand.

Work experience and training

- 111. Working in prison industries gives prisoners opportunities to gain skills and qualifications that may be useful after release.
- The prison had 12 industries for prisoners, with 224 places a year, and training was delivered to an average of 110 prisoners in the last calendar year. Work and training opportunities included horticulture, grounds and maintenance, apiculture, forestry, engineering, the bike shop, hospitality, the kitchen, an internal farm and an external farm. Some prisoners regularly worked outside the wire. Industry qualifications were available in some areas.
- 113. The internal farm has capacity for up to 20 prisoners who work towards a National Certificate in agriculture. At the time of inspection, 13 prisoners were working on the farm.

¹¹ Risk of conviction and reimprisonment is measured using an index known as Roc*RoI (Risk of conviction x risk of imprisonment).

- 114. The external farm has capacity for up to 20 prisoners. This work includes fencing, shearing, docking, lambing, calving and drenching. At the time of our inspection, only four prisoners met the criteria and were working on the external farm.
- 115. In forestry, prisoners receive theory and practical training in introductory forest unit standards and the use of chainsaws. Ten prisoners were working in this area at the time of inspection, with one prisoner, who had already completed the training, assisting as a mentor.
- 116. The prison was not delivering planned training in carpentry or painting. The national contract for carpentry with the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) had not been finalised at the time of the inspection, and this had held up the carpentry course on site for more than 18 months. The contract for painting with BCITO had been finalised and instructors were awaiting approval to start formal training.
- 117. Eight prisoners were working in hospitality. On completion of the course they gained a NZ Certificate in Hospitality (food preparation). They could also progress to the main kitchen when vacancies became available. All meals for the prisoners were prepared in the main kitchen. There were 24 prisoners working in the kitchen, including two drivers.

Education

- 118. Every prisoner received an education assessment to determine their literacy and numeracy learning needs. This was followed by a learning pathway discussion to identify recommended programmes to help the prisoner meet his learning needs and goals.
- 119. There were 33 learning opportunities offered at Tongariro Prison. These included:
 - » intensive literacy and numeracy programmes
 - » Secure Online Learning¹²
 - » self-directed learning study towards high school or tertiary qualifications through distance learning
- 120. Many of the prisoners we interviewed had education identified on their offender plans.
- 121. One of the prisoners interviewed in Cedar said he enjoyed studying te reo Māori and looked forward to going to Te Hikoinga when his classification was reduced to low or minimum.

Te Tirohanga o Te Hikoinga

- 122. Tongariro is one of five North Island prisons that offer Te Tirohanga, a rehabilitation pathway founded on a kaupapa Māori therapeutic community. Tongariro's Te Tirohanga unit is the only unit in the country available to voluntarily segregated prisoners.
- 123. Te Tirohanga has three phases, each lasting three months:
 - » Phase 1 (compulsory) Te Waharoa: Prisoners complete an NZQA level 2 course in Māori Studies, which includes te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, and literacy and numeracy credits. Prisoners are also supported to strengthen relationships with whānau.
 - » Phase 2 (compulsory) Mauri Tu Pae: This is a group-based therapy and rehabilitation programme aimed at addressing causes of offending among medium-risk prisoners.

¹² Every prison has a Secure Online Learning suite with computers which prisoners can use to gain digital literacy skills and complete learning assignments. Prisoners have access to a limited range of pre-approved websites and apps, and can email their education tutor.

- » Phase 3 is a drug and alcohol treatment programme (if needed). Phase 3 is delivered at Whanganui Prison.
- 124. The programme is intended to provide a pathway for prisoners to make a series of positive changes in their lives, which reconnects them with their culture and whānau, addresses causes of offending, fosters pro-social attitudes and behaviour, and prepares them for reintegration to the community. Te Tirohanga is available to all prisoners, although priority is given to prisoners who identify as Māori, are of Māori descent or those who are motivated to engage in a Māori cultural programme.
- 125. At the time of our inspection, because of the increased prison population, Te Hikoinga housed some prisoners who were not part of Te Tirohanga pathway programme. Some were unhappy they were required to take part in daily Māori cultural practices such as whakatau (welcome), karakia (prayer) and daily community hui (meetings). Unit staff confirmed it was compulsory for all prisoners in the unit to attend all daily unit routines and activities and they were supported by staff and other prisoners to develop their understanding of Māori cultural practices. At the time of our inspection, staff identified that more cultural support was needed. Older prisoners often inducted new prisoners to the unit, supported by custodial staff.
- 126. The unit does not accept prisoners who are classified low medium. We were told of low medium prisoners in other units who wanted to take part in the programme but were unable to due to their security classification.
- 127. Following the inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the whakatau was an important component of the induction for all. It was considered one of the kaupapa values embedded at the prison, which was working to provide a clear explanation to arriving prisoners about expectations and protocol.
- 128. Additionally, prisoners who were not engaged in Te Tirohanga would continue to be placed in the unit because of the need to utilise accommodation across the network. Where possible, those who identified as Māori and engaged in the kaupapa of the site would be placed in the unit to support its mahi and values.

Physical exercise

- 129. The units all have gyms or exercise areas, which were very popular with prisoners. However, some of the equipment was poorly maintained and in poor condition (see Image 5).
- 130. Hautu Unit has a gym and a sports hall with a large grass area, a volleyball court and tennis court. The prisoners have created their own garden and an area of the recreation field has been developed to play bowls (see Image 6).
- Prisoners in Te Hikoinga have a range of sporting equipment (tennis racquets, cricket bats, baseball bats, rugby ball) and board games available to them. They are allowed to leave the unit under supervision to use an adjacent ground to run or play touch rugby.
- 132. Prisoners are not allowed to run on the large lawn in the centre of the unit as it gets muddy easily.
- 133. Cedars have a gym and grass area with courts where inter-unit games, such as cricket and football, are played. Some gym equipment required attention.
- 134. There were no activity officers to provide support, motivation and develop fitness plans.

Other constructive activity

- As well as unit libraries, a prison library with a variety of books, including some talking books, catered for a wide range of readers. A volunteer ran a monthly book club for prisoners.
- 136. When prisoners were out of their cells, various activities were available to them in each unit. These included gym, sports, pool and snooker, hobbies, unit libraries, music, carving, sewing and quilting, and general interaction between prisoners.

Contact with family and friends

- 137. Contact with family/whānau and friends is important for prisoners' wellbeing and eventual reintegration into the community.
- 138. Visits by family and friends take place on Saturday and Sunday with morning and afternoon sessions. Some visits are for adults only and other visits are set aside for children and adults.
- 139. Child visits are carefully managed. Two visits were observed and staff provided a good standard of searching, with respect and good communication.
- 140. Staff showed a good balance between allowing interaction between prisoners and visitors while maintaining security. Staff gave elderly visitors better quality chairs.
- 141. After two visit sessions, we spoke to visitors who were very complimentary about the staff and visit process.
- 142. Prisoners had ready access to telephones in the units to keep in contact with their families, assisted by longer unlock hours than at other prisons, where reduced hours can mean telephone time is at a premium.
- 143. Whānau hui can be held through the audio visual link suites, or in person (during the Guided Release process) if the prisoner meets the eligibility criteria.

Findings

- Finding 14 Prisoners had access to a wide range of activities to keep them engaged and support positive change, including rehabilitation programmes, work experience and education programmes.
- Finding 15 Regular visits were available for family and friends at weekends and telephone access was good.
- Finding 16 Te Hikoinga is the only unit nationally where Te Tirohanga is available to voluntarily segregated prisoners. Because of the increased prison population, a few prisoners were housed in the unit who were not part of the programme and had little understanding of its kaupapa. It would have been preferable to fill these beds with prisoners who were willing to be housed there.

Health and other services

Health

- 144. Corrections' Health Service is a primary health care service that is required by Section 75 of the Corrections Act 2004 to provide health care that is "reasonably necessary" and "reasonably equivalent to the standard of health care available to the public".
- 145. The prison has a main health unit and each residential unit has a health clinic attached where nurses can treat prisoners. There is a dental clinic on site. While the health units were fit for purpose, the one attached to Te Hikoinga was too small and cluttered, with the examination bed pushed up against a bench and equipment obstructing the second exit door.
- 146. Two nursing shifts run at Tongariro Prison (from 7am to 3.30pm and from noon to 8pm), with a nurse on call outside these hours and able to be on site within about 15 minutes.
- 147. Nursing staff had been affected by vacancies for some time, with the Health Centre Manager required to cover many shifts. The nursing team had 7.7 fulltime equivalent staff (FTE) budgeted for but, at the time of inspection, had only four FTE staff, including one nurse on secondment from another prison.
- 148. Team members spoken to seemed genuinely engaged and motivated to provide a high standard of care to prisoners, despite having been working under capacity for some time. All health staff had either completed their core training or had core training scheduled. Two nurses were completing postgraduate papers towards registered nurse prescribing or Masters qualifications. Nurses had also attended vaccinator training.
- 149. A medical officer is contracted for five hours a week. On days with no medical officer on site, urgent cases can be seen at a Turangi medical centre. At the time of inspection, the waiting time to see the medical officer was within a week. Secondary service referrals are sent to Lakes, Bay of Plenty or Waikato District Health Boards, depending what service is required.
- 150. The local Turangi pharmacy provided pharmacy services. However, the prison was unable to access urgent prescriptions on Sundays, when the pharmacy was shut. Prisoners requiring acute or emergency care travelled by ambulance or rescue helicopter to Taupo Hospital or Rotorua Hospital. Response times for ambulances from Taupo could be up to 45 minutes.
- 151. The dentist contracted to provide clinical services on site saw 13–17 prisoners a fortnight. The waiting time was under two weeks. Prisoners needing urgent dental care go to an external dentist. Other providers on site include an improving mental health clinician, ACC sensitive claim counsellors, support services for victims of abuse, diabetes nurse specialists and a Forensic Service. Physiotherapy, podiatry, optometry and audiology services are available off site.
- 152. The lack of dedicated or rostered custodial support attached to health sometimes made it difficult to get prisoners to the health unit for appointments.
- 153. The assessed health needs of the prison's population were not recorded in a formal document, but the Health Centre Manager understood well the make-up of the population, and services and interventions provided to support the health and wellbeing of prisoners.

¹³ Nurses refer to prisoners as patients.

- 154. The prison uses the MedTech recall system to manage the regular review and management of prisoners with long-term conditions, as well as follow-up tests and interventions. We found several outstanding or overdue health recalls in the system, including blood tests and planned vaccinations. We found gaps in the emergency equipment weekly checks. Some medical equipment did not have the required up-to-date annual testing/calibrating record.
- 155. Prisoners had few complaints about the Health Service. Those we spoke to commented favourably on the work of health staff.
- 156. During the three months to 31 March 2018, six health services incident reports were completed. Three related to medication management, two to transfers and one to an emergency response. At the time of our inspection, all incidents had been investigated, managed by the Health Centre Manager and reviewed and reports closed off by the regional Clinical Quality Assurance Advisor.
- 157. Health promotion, including prostate education, gout education, and education about the benefits of oral care and hand hygiene, was evident at the prison. Screening for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, HIV, sexual health and diabetes was offered.
- 158. Aged-care initiatives were excellent. At the time of our inspection, 32 prisoners were over the age of 65 years. Twelve of these were over 70 and one was over 80. Aged care was a special focus, with all older prisoners offered influenza and shingles vaccines. A macular degeneration screening programme for those over 65 was planned.
- 159. Examples of individualised care included a bed being modified to accommodate a prisoner who was unable to lie flat, and dietary supplements provided to more adequately meet an elderly prisoner's nutritional needs.
- 160. Some evening medication rounds were completed before the required times, on occasions when units needed to be locked early. This does not support medication efficacy, and the sedating nature of some medication administered in the late afternoon is a concern.
- 161. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the site continued to recruit to fill nursing vacancies. The Health Centre Manager continued to best utilise the limited resources to address prisoners' needs in conjunction with the medical officer and support staff. Once fully staffed, medication rounds could be delivered more efficiently.

Mental health and self-harm

Mental health services

- 162. As part of the reception process, all prisoners are screened for mental health needs and risk of self-harm. They may be referred for further assessment or treatment as needed. Prisoners may also be assessed for mental health needs or risk of self-harm at other times as needed.
- 163. As there is no At Risk Unit at the prison, any prisoner who has been assessed and determined to be at risk of self-harm is transferred to either Waikeria Prison or Spring Hill Corrections Facility. Forensic staff advised that, due to the distance, it would be unlikely that the psychiatrist would come on site outside their normal scheduled clinics.
- 164. The site has one improving mental health clinician who works full-time supporting prisoners with mild to moderate mental health needs. A Waikato District Health Board forensic nurse and doctor travel from Hamilton to attend clinics. The nurse usually attends once a week and the doctor once a month. At the time of inspection, the caseload was 11 patients.
- 165. The forensic nurse saw patients in unit interview rooms, but found this difficult at times as she did not have access to a computer to review notes. The forensic nurse completed the

- required monitoring observations of patients on their caseload, such as checking blood pressure and weight, which is good practice.
- 166. We saw evidence of multi-disciplinary meetings to discuss prisoners who presented with complex mental health issues. A group had been recently set up to support these prisoners with mental health care and identify the best services for them. The group comprised representatives from health, a psychologist, the improving mental health clinician, case management, the assistant prison director, a principal case officer, programme facilitator and ACC counsellor, with monthly meetings scheduled to discuss cases of concern.

Prisoners with disabilities

- 167. Through the district health board, specific equipment required by a patient to cope with their physical disability, such as crutches or mobility frames, is available on loan to the prison.
- 168. The Health Centre Manager advised that each unit had a shower stool for those prisoners with mobility concerns or at risk of falls.

Spiritual support

- 169. Spiritual support was provided on site from a chaplain who was readily available, offering services, counselling and regular Bible groups.
- 170. The chaplain had served the prison over the last 20 years and had a positive relationship with prison management and staff.
- 171. Eleven volunteers were approved to deliver religious or spiritual support to the prisoners on site. At the time of our inspection, an additional four volunteers were waiting for approval to deliver these services at the prison.
- 172. The prison had no dedicated chapel or religious facility. Sessions were held in the residential units
- 173. With the support of management, the chaplain holds a combined church service for prisoners from different units once a month. Around 60 prisoners attend the service.
- 174. The chaplain has contacted representatives from the Hindu and Muslim faiths about how their services could be obtained. However, the prison's remote location was a barrier to representatives of the faiths visiting the site. Support for Jehovah's Witnesses was available.
- 175. Tikanga Māori spiritual support was offered at Te Hikoinga.

Findings

- Finding 17 Prisoners' health needs were generally well met. Unfilled nursing vacancies were placing some pressure on health staff. There were gaps in equipment checks. Aged-care initiatives were excellent. Some medication rounds were completed before the required times, due to units being locked early.
- Finding 18 Prisoners' mental health needs were generally well met. The prison was taking all reasonable steps to identify prisoners at risk of self-harm. There was no At Risk Unit, so these prisoners were transferred to another prison. Multi-disciplinary meetings were held regularly to discuss cases of concern.
- Finding 19 The needs of prisoners with disabilities were generally well met.
- Finding 20 Prisoners' spiritual needs were generally well met.

Reintegration

176. Case managers begin working with prisoners to develop an offender plan (including a release plan) from their initial reception into custody, and continue to develop and confirm this plan during their sentence. Proposed release plans for long-serving prisoners are outlined and confirmed in Parole Assessment Reports provided to the NZPB before the prisoner's scheduled hearing. Planning is based on a prisoner's risk of re-offending and the support needed to manage those risks.

Temporary release

- 177. The Department of Corrections offers a range of programmes aimed at helping eligible and suitable prisoners to reintegrate into the community through temporary release. 14
- 178. Those opportunities include:
 - » Release to Work, in which prisoners can work in industries outside the prison
 - » Guided Release, in which prisoners are accompanied on visits to local communities and to services such as accommodation providers and banks
 - " 'outside the wire' work, in which prisoners take part in prison work opportunities outside their unit or outside the prison perimeter
- 179. The Prison Director made decisions about temporary release with support from an advisory panel made up of Corrections staff, Police and community representatives. We noted that the advisory panel could be risk averse. For example, the reintegration needs of two prisoners were discussed at the one advisory panel meeting we observed and the outcome was that the panel would wait for the outcome of the NZPB hearing before deciding what to do next.
- 180. None of the prisoners in Cedar had been considered for temporary release.
- 181. Of 16 temporary releases for 11 prisoners during the review period, three were for Release to Work. In October 2014, 80 prisoners took part in work parties 'outside the wire'.
- 182. Following our inspection, the National Commissioner advised that a revised approach to parole-specific advisory panels was being piloted at three sites, including Tongariro Prison

Guided Release

- 183. The Guided Release programme is aimed at long-serving prisoners who need help reintegrating into the community. Guided Release coordinators work with prisoners to gradually reintroduce them to the community, and help them deal with immediate needs such as finding accommodation, opening bank accounts, looking for work or applying for benefits. The programme is available only to eligible prisoners suitable for temporary release. ¹⁶ It is particularly important for prisoners who have little or no support on release.
- 184. The prison had 99 prisoners eligible for Guided Release, with 35 assessed as suitable, 18 still under assessment and 46 deemed currently unsuitable for a variety of reasons.
- 185. The prison provided other opportunities such as assistance with obtaining driver's licences, ID cards, birth certificates and bank accounts, preparing CVs and job applications.

¹⁴ Temporary release purposes and criteria are set out in Corrections Act 2004, ss 62-64. Also see Corrections Regulations 2005, regulations 26-29; Department of Corrections Prison Operations Manual, M04.06.

¹⁵ Other temporary release opportunities include external self care in which prisoners live in self-care accommodation outside the prison perimeter; and visits to children under child protection protocols.

¹⁶ Temporary release criteria are set out in Corrections Act 2004, ss 62-64. The programme is available only to minimum security prisoners.

- 186. At the time of our inspection, the Guided Release staff member had been seconded into a case manager's role and was covering both positions.
- 187. At times, prisoners who had completed their programmes and outside-the-wire work were not being allowed Guided Release as identified in their NZPB reintegration pathway. In one case, the Advisory Panel was concerned the prisoner, a gang member, might meet other gang members while on Guided Release.

Reintegration services

- 188. The prison partners with a number of external providers, such as Kiwibank in Taupo, AA Taupo, Te Whare O Manaaki Taupo and PARS Turangi through Guided Release activities, as well as the Police (child sex offender case managers) and Community Corrections, to provide released prisoners with support to reintegrate.
- 189. Support staff work to ensure that all prisoners are released to accommodation. Community Corrections supports anyone without suitable accommodation on release (reported as four prisoners in the last four months) until suitable accommodation can be found.
- 190. Finding release addresses for prisoners, particularly child sex offenders, for their parole hearings was problematic.
 - Prisoners' readiness for parole or release
- 191. Many prisoners interviewed (including three out of seven in Hautu Unit and six out of 11 in Cedar) said they were not ready for their first parole hearing.
- 192. The main reason for not being ready was not having completed rehabilitation programmes. Some prisoners had been on remand for a long time and had no time to complete programmes before coming up for parole. Some said they were waitlisted for programmes but had not been able to get placements. One prisoner said segregation made it more difficult to get a place on a programme.
- 193. All Hautu Unit and Cedar prisoners interviewed stated they had an offender plan in place.
- 194. Many prisoners interviewed said they felt they were not ready to be released. Reasons for not being ready included having no address or not having been able to complete programmes or take part in a temporary release opportunity.
- 195. We interviewed one prisoner due for release who said he had been put in contact with Out of Gate, a reintegration service that provides support for prisoners on release. He stated that he had accommodation and three job interviews had been arranged.
- 196. Five of the 11 Cedar prisoners interviewed were ready to be released, with accommodation and work available.
- 197. After the inspection, the National Commissioner advised that the national High Impact Innovation Programme is leading a parole-ready scheme aimed at increasing prisoners' access to and uptake of meaningful reintegration activities and ensuring they are ready for NZPB hearings and release. In partnership with other agencies, national initiatives will increase access to housing and support services, including for prisoners with high and complex needs.

Finding

Finding 21 Many prisoners interviewed did not think they were ready for release or their NZPB hearing. Some had not received treatment and some lacked suitable accommodation.

Appendix – Images



Image 1. Bed in Hautu Unit cell



Image 2. Yard in Te Hikoinga separates area



Image 3. Kitchen in Te Hikoinga



Image 4. Laundry in Te Hikoinga



Image 5. Hautu Unit gym



Image 6. Bowling green made by prisoners in Hautu Unit