

Rimutaka Prison

Unannounced Follow-up Inspection

October 2019



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Office of Inspectorate *Te Tari Tirohia*

Our whakatauki

Mā te titiro me te whakarongo ka puta mai te māramatanga

By looking and listening, we will gain insight

Our vision

That prisoners and offenders are treated in a fair, safe, secure and humane way.

Our values

Respect – We are considerate of the dignity of others

Integrity – We are ethical and do the right thing

Professionalism – We are competent and focused

Objectivity – We are open-minded and do not take sides

Diversity – We are inclusive and value difference

We also acknowledge the Department of Corrections' values: rangatira (leadership), manaaki (respect), wairua (spirituality), kaitiaki (guardianship) and whānau (relationships).

Released under the Official Information Act 1982



Foreword

The Office of the Inspectorate *Te Tari Tirohia* is a critical part of the independent oversight of the Corrections system and operates under the Corrections Act 2004 and the Corrections Regulations 2005. The Inspectorate, while part of the Department of Corrections, is operationally independent, which is necessary to ensure objectivity and integrity.

This report follows an unannounced follow-up inspection at Rimutaka Prison. It was the Inspectorate's third unannounced inspection, after a programme of scheduled inspections of all 18 New Zealand prisons that began in March 2017. These inspection reports are being progressively published on the Inspectorate website and are made available to prisoners in prison libraries. The inspection reports contain findings rather than recommendations. This means that concerns are identified, and the onus is on the Department and the prison to come up with solutions.

The inspection process provides an ongoing invaluable insight into prisons and provides assurance that shortcomings are identified and addressed in a timely way, and examples of good practice are shared across the prison estate. As the Inspectorate has added health expertise to its team of inspectors, inspections now have a strong clinical focus.

The follow-up inspection links to the work of my regional inspectors, who have close and ongoing contact with sites.

The initial inspection of Rimutaka Prison, in October 2017, identified that the prison generally provided a good environment in which prisoners' needs were met. The increased prisoner population, gang membership and access to contraband created conditions that provided some prisoners the opportunity to engage in violence.

A broad range of rehabilitation activities were available to lower security prisoners. However, high security prisoners had limited access to work experience, rehabilitation, treatment and education programmes. Prisoners on short sentences and remand had limited access to programmes. This lack of access for some prisoners meant they were not suitably prepared for their parole hearing and subsequent release from prison.

The Department responded to my report by developing an action plan and making changes, including appointing a second Health Centre Manager, setting up a satellite health unit, monitoring assessments for appropriate cell sharing, removing graffiti, improving access to bedding and clothing, implementing a new fitness programme and introducing a parole ready initiative to help prisoners get ready for their parole hearings.

Our unannounced inspection took place in October 2019 and focused on areas identified in the initial inspection that required improvement, as well as considering areas covered by new *Inspection Standards*.

An unannounced inspection provides the inspection team a clear picture of what happens routinely in the prison. It gives assurance that the findings of the previous inspection are being addressed by the site and standards are being maintained constantly.

I am pleased to note that the follow-up inspection found that the prison had made improvements in response to the 2017 inspection, including a more consistent induction process, better prisoner access to telephone calls with their lawyer, low contraband levels and improved meals. Rimutaka had a higher number of prisoners accessing Release to Work than any other prison.

The inspection found that Receiving Office staff continued to perform to the same high standard and the prison continued to make good use of the audio-visual link facilities for court cases and legal consultations. In the low security units, the prison continued to provide an environment where prisoners reported they felt safe from bullying, violence and standovers. There continued to be a broad range of education programmes available to engage prisoners in learning.

The inspection also found, however, that violence, gang activity and standovers continued to occur in most of the high security units. The unlock regime brought in to manage this had resulted in prisoners spending limited time out of their cells, although some felt safer.

Prisoners' access to health care appears to be poorer than in 2017, and prisoner access to case managers continued to be raised as an issue.

I visited Rimutaka Prison in July 2020 and received an update from the Prison Director. I was pleased to be able to follow up some of the changes made at the prison in response to this report's findings. I acknowledge the National Commissioner's response to the report, which is included at Appendix B.

I acknowledge the cooperation of Rimutaka Prison's management and staff, both during the inspection and since, and I look forward to working with them as I continue to monitor progress.



Janis Adair
Chief Inspector

Our findings

1. This report sets out observations from our 2017 inspection, along with the response from the National Commissioner at the time (noting that the National Commissioner did not comment on all aspects of the 2017 inspection). The *Inspection Standards* for each section are also noted. Our commentary from the 2019 follow-up unannounced inspection follows and our 2019 findings are listed.

Reception and induction

- Finding 1. The Receiving Office continues to operate to a high standard.
- Finding 2. The prison has made good progress in improving prisoner inductions.

Duty of care

- Finding 3. The prison continues to make good progress on the use of the audio-visual link facilities for court appearances and other legal consultations.
- Finding 4. The prison has made good progress in facilitating prisoner telephone calls with lawyers.
- Finding 5. The prison has made insufficient progress to reduce the opportunities for violence, gang influence, standovers and assaults on prisoners and staff in the high security units.
- Finding 6. The prison is making reasonable progress preventing contraband entering the prison and drug testing prisoners.
- Finding 7. While the introduction of the six landing unlock regime in the high security units allows staff to manage prisoners in smaller numbers, it significantly reduces prisoner time out of cell, increases tension and makes some prisoners difficult to manage.
- Finding 8. More prisoners were observed with tattoos (particularly facial tattoos) since our last inspection.
- Finding 9. In Te Whare Whakaahura and the Special Treatment Unit, prisoners feel safer and the level of prisoner violence and intimidation was low.
- Finding 10. The prison has made good progress increasing the rate and timeliness that Shared Accommodation Cell Risk Assessments are completed.
- Finding 11. The prison should develop more opportunities for Māori prisoners, including those on remand, to learn and practise their language, culture and customs.
- Finding 12. The prison continues to make good progress supporting prisoners who reside outside of the Wellington region, to maintain regular contact with family and whānau.
- Finding 13. The prison has made insufficient progress to address the delays and issues associated with the checking and distribution of prisoner property. Delays with distributing prisoner mail have been addressed.

Health

- Finding 14. The prison has made good progress in health services management, with the additional appointment of a Health Centre Manager for Arohata Prison and Assistant Health Centre Manager and Clinical Team Leader at Rimutaka Prison.
- Finding 15. The prison has made insufficient progress in improving the timeliness of access to health care. Delays have increased and are often due to the unavailability of custodial support to facilitate prisoner movements.
- Finding 16. The prison has made insufficient progress to ensure adequate and suitable health facilities, which impacts the ability of staff to provide appropriate health care.
- Finding 17. The High Dependency Unit does not have the necessary equipment to safely meet the increasing health-related needs of the prisoners.
- Finding 18. The health team at Rimutaka Prison continues to be enthusiastic and well engaged in their work and continuing professional development.
- Finding 19. Some prisoners continued to experience delays in their admission to forensic mental health services, which we acknowledge is out of the direct control of Corrections.
- Finding 20. Staff in the Intervention and Support Unit continued to make good progress with ensuring prisoners held there were treated with compassion and respect.
- Finding 21. The prison has made reasonable progress providing training for some custodial staff to support prisoners with mental health needs, but training opportunities were not available to all staff.
- Finding 22. No meaningful progress has been made to ensure the privacy and dignity requirements are met for prisoners residing in disability cells.

Environment

- Finding 23. The prison has made reasonable progress to ensure prisoners reside in a clean and suitable environment where their needs can be met.
- Finding 24. The prison has made insufficient progress to remove graffiti and gang related items in some cells.
- Finding 25. Prisoners in the high security units have insufficient access to hot drinking water.
- Finding 26. Corrections has made good progress to improve the food available to prisoners.

Good Order

- Finding 27. The prison has made reasonable progress to increase the number of trained adjudicators and prosecutors. However, there are still delays responding promptly to some disciplinary charges.
- Finding 28. The prison has made insufficient progress to improve the quality of prisoner rubdown searches and, in some instances, staff did not undertake necessary prisoner searches at all.

Purposeful activity

- Finding 29. The prison has made insufficient progress to improve prisoner access to the gym in the high security units, despite an increased number of activity officers.
- Finding 30. Low security prisoners have regular access to suitable exercise opportunities.
- Finding 31. The prison has made good progress towards ensuring prisoners can access books.
- Finding 32. The prison has made good progress ensuring that regular Right Track meetings take place to promote appropriate prisoner behaviour in all units.
- Finding 33. The prison has made no meaningful progress to improve prisoner access to case managers.
- Finding 34. The prison has made no meaningful progress to improve prisoner access in the high security units to rehabilitation, work, education or training programmes. Remand prisoners have limited access to work opportunities.
- Finding 35. The prison continues to make reasonable progress to ensure access to rehabilitation, education, training and work opportunities for low security prisoners. Prisoners on voluntary segregation have difficulty accessing training and work opportunities.
- Finding 36. There are too few programme delivery rooms available in the high security facility to meet the needs of prisoners.
- Finding 37. Prisoners often had difficulty maintaining their treatment gains when they were placed back into mainstream units.
- Finding 38. Some prisoners were unable to complete their education or training programme.
- Finding 39. The prison has made reasonable progress to improve prisoner access to chaplains and appropriate faith-based support.

Reintegration

- Finding 40. The prison has made reasonable progress ensuring access to reintegration opportunities, particularly through Release to Work. However, there are a limited number of options for working outside the wire, including for segregated prisoners.
- Finding 41. The prison has difficulty identifying eligible prisoners for reintegration opportunities.

Prison staff

- Finding 42. In the high security units, beyond dealing with urgent matters, staff often had limited opportunities available to positively engage, role model and support prisoners.
- Finding 43. Regular rotations of custodial staff was problematic for staff and prisoners in the dedicated treatment units.
- Finding 44. The prison has made good progress improving staff-prisoner relationships in low security units.

Introduction

2. This report is the third in a programme of follow-up prison inspections carried out by the Office of the Inspectorate *Te Tari Tirohia*.
3. An Inspectorate team visited Rimutaka Prison between 22–24 October 2019 to carry out the unannounced follow-up inspection.
4. Inspectors assessed the treatment and conditions of prisoners at Rimutaka Prison against the *Inspection Standards*, which relate to 10 areas of prison life: reception and admission, first days in custody, escorts and transfers, duty of care, health, environment, good order, purposeful activity, reintegration and prison staff.
5. Follow-up inspections consider areas of prison life that were the subject of findings in the initial inspection. Standards that are new or were not considered as part of the initial inspection are also considered in the follow-up inspection.
6. The *Inspection Standards* are informed by:
 - » the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners ('the Nelson Mandela Rules')
 - » HM Inspectorate of Prisons *Expectations* (England's equivalent criteria for assessing the treatment of and conditions of prisoners)
 - » the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders ('the Bangkok Rules')
 - » the Yogyakarta Principles, which guide the application of human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity
7. Inspectors make their assessments with four key principles in mind, to ensure that prisoners are treated in a fair, safe, secure and humane way. The principles are:
 - » **Safety:** Prisoners are held safely.
 - » **Respect:** Prisoners are treated with respect for human dignity.
 - » **Purposeful activity:** 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 reoffending.
8. The Inspectorate has adopted the assessment methodology used by HM Inspectorate of Prisons for England and Wales¹ to assess progress made by prisons since our initial inspection. There are four possible progress judgements:
 - » **Good progress:** Managers have implemented a realistic improvement strategy and have delivered a clear improvement in prisoner outcomes.

¹ Refer to guidance on Independent Reviews of Progress <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisoners/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2019/03/INSPECTION-FRAMEWORK-2019.pdf>

- » **Reasonable progress:** Managers are implementing a realistic improvement strategy and there is evidence of progress (for example, better systems or processes) and/or early evidence of some improving prisoner outcomes.
 - » **Insufficient progress:** Managers have begun to implement a realistic improvement strategy, but actions taken have not yet resulted in any discernible evidence of progress (for example, better systems or processes) or improved prisoner outcomes.
 - » **No meaningful progress:** Managers have not yet formulated and resourced a realistic improvement plan.
9. The fieldwork for the follow-up inspection was completed by four inspectors, a Principal Inspector and a Clinical Inspector. Inspectors carried out:
- » interviews with prison management and selected staff
 - » informal interviews with prisoners
 - » a physical inspection of all prison units, including the Health Centre, and
 - » a review and analysis of relevant documents and data
10. This report sets out observations from our 2017 initial inspection, the National Commissioner's response to those observations, and the findings of our 2019 follow-up unannounced inspection.
11. In April 2020, we provided the National Commissioner with a draft of this report. The National Commissioner responded to the draft in July 2020 and her response is attached as Appendix B. We acknowledge the progress that has taken place at the prison in response to the first inspection report.

Rimutaka Prison

12. Rimutaka Prison is located in Upper Hutt, north of Wellington. The prison was established in 1967 and is now one of New Zealand's largest prisons, with capacity to accommodate more than 1,000 low to high security male prisoners.
13. The prison's high security facility consists of 14 units (HM1 to HM14), each containing 30 cells (16 of which are double bunked). It also houses the Management Unit, which contains 20 single cells, and the Intervention and Support Unit (ISU), which contains 24 single cells.
14. At the time of our inspection, HM7 to HM14 accommodated sentenced prisoners classified as low medium to high security and remand prisoners. HM1 to HM6 housed remand prisoners and HM11 and HM12 are the prison's Drug Treatment Units.
15. The prison's low security facility is comprised of eight low medium units (numbered from Unit 4 to Unit 11). Units 4 to 8 have 60 single cells, Unit 9 has 30 single cells and Unit 11 has 39 double-bunked cells. At the time of our inspection, Units 7, 8 and 11 accommodated voluntary segregated prisoners.
16. Unit 10 is divided into two sub-units (Kauri and Rimu), which form the High Dependency Unit (HDU). The HDU is a 30-bed unit for prisoners who have ongoing and complex health or disability needs as a result of ageing or other medical conditions and who require additional assistance with their activities of daily living. Kauri has 20 single cells, while Rimu has 10 single cells and one double-bunked cell. The HDU is the only unit of its type in a New Zealand prison.
17. Unit 5 (Te Whare Whakaahura) houses prisoners participating in Te Tirohanga (the kaupapa Māori treatment and rehabilitation programme). Unit 9, Te Whare Manaakitanga Special Treatment Unit, houses high-risk violent prisoners taking part in an intensive rehabilitation programme.
18. The prison has a Self Care Unit, with five houses, each of which can accommodate up to four prisoners.

Prisoners

19. At the time of our inspection, the prison housed 1,038 prisoners. Of these, 703 were sentenced prisoners and 350 were on remand. Five hundred and fifty-three of the prisoners were classified or managed as high security.
20. The largest ethnic group at the prison was Māori (53% of the prisoner population), followed by Pākehā (32%) and Pasifika (11%).
21. At the time of our inspection, 21 prisoners were aged 19 and under, and 81 were aged 60 and over.

Staff

22. At the time of our inspection, the prison had 419.6 FTE² custodial staff, which is nine FTE below its minimum operating requirement. Four corrections officers were identified as being on light duties or leave. In addition, the prison's Health Centre had 25.9 FTE nurses, 1.4 FTE below the minimum operating requirement.

² Full time equivalent.

Complaints received and deaths in custody investigated by the Inspectorate

23. For the six month period prior to our inspection (1 April–30 September 2019), the Inspectorate received the following contact from prisoners based at Rimutaka Prison:

- » 198 complaints³
- » 8 information requests
- » 18 statutory reviews (misconducts and temporary release/removal reviews)
- » 3 Visitor Prohibition Order reviews

24. In addition, there was one death in custody.⁴

Official visitors and events

25. Rimutaka Prison and Arohata Prison are the closest prisons to the Department of Corrections' National Office in central Wellington. These prisons share a single Prison Director and Assistant Prison Director.⁵ They are urban prisons and their accessibility means they host a high number of official visitors, National Office staff and events, which they must manage in addition to their day to day operations. During our inspection, we were informed that the frequency of these external visitors and events places the Prison Director and her management team under significant pressure.
26. Between February 2019 and December 2019, Rimutaka Prison hosted 54 events, including the acclaimed 'Gate to Plate' Wellington on a Plate festival event, which requires the direct support of either the Prison Director and management team.
27. In addition, the site received 27 visits from Probus Clubs,⁶ and the Upper Hutt City Council; each of which required dedicated staff and/or managerial support. The site also hosts the monthly National Learning Centre and National Office induction site visits for new Corrections staff.

³ The top five complaint categories were the complaints process (17%), transfer and movements (14%), health services (12%), property (11%) and telephone and written communications (9%).

⁴ There is no further comment in this report about the death. The Inspectorate is investigating it separately.

⁵ In 2019, a separate Deputy Prison Director position, to support the day to day operations at Arohata Prison was established.

⁶ Probus Clubs are clubs for retired or semi-retired people from a diverse range of backgrounds and may include business representatives and/or other professionals. Typically, members receive a tour of the outside prison grounds or a presentation from a staff member, followed by a self-funded lunch in the staff café. The tours ceased in November 2019, but the visits and lunches continue.

Progress since the initial inspection

Reception and induction

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
<p>During reception and admission, the prison generally took steps to keep prisoners safe and staff treated prisoners in a humane and respectful manner.</p> <p>The quality of prisoner inductions varied due to inconsistencies with the induction process and some inductions did not take place at all.</p> <p>Most prisoners we spoke with were able to contact their family promptly after their arrival in prison.</p>	<p>Principal corrections officers were reminded to discuss with their staff the importance of a robust induction into the unit. Every fortnight, a manager or principal corrections officer will consult the Corrections Business Reporting and Analysis (COBRA) platform to check whether inductions have taken place and have been recorded correctly in IOMS.⁷</p>

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners are safe and treated with respect on their reception and during their first days in prison. Prisoners' immediate needs are identified on arrival and staff ensure that individuals' immediate anxieties are addressed before the end of the first day.
- Prisoners are promptly inducted and supported to understand life in prison and know what will happen to them next.
- Prisoners can access legal advice and, where applicable, a consular representative.
- Information relating to prison life is accessible for all prisoners.

28. During our follow-up unannounced inspection, we observed that Receiving Office staff continued to operate at the same high standard as observed in 2017.
29. Most prisoners we spoke with confirmed they could make an initial telephone call on arrival.
30. The site has improved its consistency with the induction process. Staff advised that all prisoner inductions were completed on the day of a prisoner's arrival. We reviewed a sample of prisoner files, which confirmed that inductions occurred for all but one prisoner.⁸
31. Prisoners we spoke with confirmed they had received unit inductions and were familiar with the unit rules and routines.

⁷ Integrated Offender Management System.

⁸ Who was a long-serving prisoner and had been accommodated in the unit for many years.

2019 Findings

Finding 1. The Receiving Office continues to operate to a high standard.

Finding 2. The prison has made good progress in improving prisoner inductions.

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Duty of care

Access to legal advisers and attendance at court hearings

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
The prison is making good use of the audio-visual facilities. This mitigates risks to safety and good order that can arise when prisoners are transported to and from court. Some prisoners advised it was difficult to arrange telephone calls with lawyers because some staff could refuse to facilitate this.	The prison would ask all units about how they facilitated telephone calls to lawyers and remedy any deficiencies.

Inspection Standard

- Prisoners have reasonable access to consult with a legal advisor.
- An audio-visual link can be used for eligible court cases and for other legal consultations.

32. The prison continued to make good use of the audio-visual link facilities for court appearances and legal consultations.
33. Staff advised that the units had a dedicated room for prisoners to make legal telephone calls. Staff said they would often unlock prisoners to facilitate telephone calls to lawyers.
34. None of the prisoners we spoke with said they had difficulty arranging telephone calls with their lawyer.

2019 Findings

- Finding 3. The prison continues to make good progress in the use of the audio-visual link facilities for court appearances and other legal consultations.
- Finding 4. The prison has made good progress in facilitating prisoner telephone calls with lawyers.

Bullying and violence reduction

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
<p>Despite generally low levels of prisoner-on-prisoner violence and intimidation in the high security units, the larger prisoner population, gang membership, failure to challenge inappropriate behaviour, potential access to contraband, limited drug testing and poor security practices created conditions that allowed some prisoners to engage in violence and standovers.</p> <p>The low security units generally provided a safe environment in which prisoners were actively managed, and levels of violence and intimidation were low.</p>	<p>The National Commissioner acknowledged the high level of overt gang activity and material in some units and that staff and managers had no excuse for overlooking this. Staff in units where overt activity and material existed would be formally reminded of the Department's expectations and potential consequences.</p> <p>Prison management will send out a communication to all staff reinforcing the Department's expectations about addressing standovers and other activities (such as trading) when observed and reminding them of possible consequences for failing to proactively manage this known risk.</p> <p>The prison's Intelligence team followed the National Gang strategy.</p> <p>To address standovers, the prison had advised staff to ensure that all meals were served appropriately and in a controlled manner.</p>

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners feel safe from bullying, abuse and violence.

35. While prisoners we spoke with said they generally felt safe, violence, gang activity and standovers continued to occur in most of the high security units. In the six months to 31 September 2019, there were 69 recorded prisoner-on-prisoner assaults. Of those, 59 occurred in the high security units. During the same period, 26 prisoner-on-staff assaults were recorded.⁹
36. Staff mitigated the risk of violence in the high security units by operating a six-landing unlock regime, in which each unit¹⁰ was split into six groups.¹¹ During unlock, one group was released into the yard, while another group was released into the unit. The remaining groups remain locked in their cells. Each group had approximately 45-50 minutes unlock time in the morning and again in the afternoon. At the time of our inspection, the six-landing unlock

⁹ In comparison, in the six-month period prior to our 2017 inspection, 68 prisoner-on-prisoner and 22 prisoner-on-staff assaults were recorded.

¹⁰ Each high security unit (excluding HM11 and HM12) typically has between 43 and 45 prisoners.

¹¹ The exception to this arrangement was the high security unit designated as the Drug Treatment Unit. This unit is managed as a modified therapeutic community meaning prisoners are unlocked for the majority of the day to undertake alcohol and other drug treatment sessions as well as other purposeful and therapeutic activities.

regime had been in place for two months and replaced the four-landing unlock regime that was operating during our 2017 inspection.

37. Staff said the six-landing unlock regime meant they managed a smaller number of prisoners during the unlock periods. However, this approach also meant staff spent more time completing the unlock process. Staff said the reduced time out of cell could cause tension as prisoners were difficult to manage.
38. High-security prisoners we spoke with advised they felt frustrated with the limited time out of their cells and confirmed that tension existed in the units. During one morning unlock process, we observed prisoners in the yard ignoring staff instructions and attempting to delay having to return to their cells. Staff told us that type of response from prisoners regularly occurred in the units, which meant the time available for the afternoon unlock was further reduced.
39. One staff member told us about a prisoner he had spoken to who wanted to assault an officer so he could be re-classified and transferred to another prison where he was likely to receive more time out of his cell.
40. In contrast, several prisoners we spoke with who were subject to voluntary segregation told us that, while they did not like the limited time out of cell, they appreciated being unlocked with fewer prisoners and felt safer.
41. Rimutaka Prison continued to have a high number of active gang members. On 30 September 2019, the prison had 1,038 prisoners, of whom 536 (51.6%) identified as gang members. Of those, 346 (64.5%) were housed in the high security units. Overall, there was an increase of 157 active gang members since our 2017 inspection.
42. In the high security units we observed several young prisoners with gang-affiliated facial tattoos. Staff said the ongoing presence of gang members in the units had led to an increase in prisoner tattooing, particularly facial tattoos. For the six-month period to 31 October 2019, 72 incidents were recorded relating to tattoos with all but five linked to the high security units. Staff told us tattoos were typically completed in the evening by gang members sharing cells with other prisoners. Staff reported they found it particularly difficult to see a younger prisoner emerge from their cell during morning unlock with a facial tattoo.
43. Staff advised that part of Rimutaka Prison's gang strategy was to reduce the prevalence of prison tattoos. From January to March 2019, one prevention response was to remove the availability of CD players (which contain a key mechanical component needed for tattooing). However, this approach was unsustainable in the long term and tattooing had since continued to be an issue. Subsequently, the prison established the Rimutaka Prison Tattoo Workgroup which was responsible for developing a sustainable plan to reduce prisoner tattooing.
44. We also observed extensive gang-related graffiti scratched into the doors of prisoner cells. Staff advised this graffiti was historic and could only be removed when the cells were empty, which was not possible at the time of our inspection due to the prison population.
45. Prisoners we spoke with in the high security units did not appear overly concerned about standovers. Staff advised us that when standovers occurred they typically involved nicotine replacement lozenges.¹² Staff said any new prisoners arriving into the unit were often targeted by other prisoners for their lozenges.

¹² Nicotine replacement lozenges are given out to new prisoners who have a history of smoking, to help them adjust to the prison's smoke free rules.

46. Contraband (including drugs, alcohol and weapons) creates safety and good order risks for staff and prisoners. Prisoners we spoke with informally across the prison all advised there was either no contraband in the units, or that contraband levels were low.
47. Data we reviewed supported this prisoner perception. In the six-month period to 31 September 2019, Rimutaka Prison tested 550 urine samples and only 31 prisoners tested positive for drugs.¹³
48. In the low security units we inspected, the prison continued to provide an environment where prisoners reported they felt safe from bullying, violence and standovers. In Te Whare Whakaahura Unit (Unit 5), where Te Tirohanga, a rehabilitation pathway is delivered, very little prisoner violence was reported. Staff in this unit supported prisoners to manage their behaviour in line with the kaupapa or principles of the unit. When a prisoner's conduct affected the therapeutic function of the unit or his ability to successfully engage with Te Tirohanga pathway, he could be removed from the unit and the programme.
49. This was also the approach adopted in the Special Treatment Unit (Unit 6) programme for violent prisoners.
50. During our visit, we observed custodial staff in both Te Whare Whakaahura and the Special Treatment Unit proactively conducting cell searches and removing gang-related material, including posters and drawings.

2019 Findings

- Finding 5. The prison has made insufficient progress to reduce the opportunities for violence, gang influence, standovers and assaults on prisoners and staff in the high security units.
- Finding 6. The prison is making reasonable progress preventing contraband entering the prison and drug testing prisoners.
- Finding 7. While the introduction of the six landing unlock regime in the high security units allows staff to manage prisoners in smaller numbers, it significantly reduces prisoner time out of cell, increases tension and makes some prisoners difficult to manage.
- Finding 8. More prisoners were observed with tattoos (particularly facial tattoos) since our last inspection.
- Finding 9. In Te Whare Whakaahura and the Special Treatment Unit, prisoners feel safer and the level of prisoner violence and intimidation was low.

¹³ In comparison, for the six-month period prior to our 2017 inspection, Rimutaka Prison tested 438 urine samples, of which 41 were positive.

Accommodation

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
<p>Some prisoners were placed in shared cells without a Shared Accommodation Cell Risk Assessment (SACRA) being undertaken or completed. This created potential risks to safety and good order. We acknowledge the steps the prison has taken since our inspection to address these issues.</p> <p>The increase of prisoners in the units has led to difficulties finding suitable prisoners to share cells.</p>	<p>SACRA had been a performance focus area for the prison for some months. This is regularly monitored by the Deputy Prison Director as part of the prison's standard operating procedures. The prison will continue to closely monitor SACRA compliance to ensure the practice is consistent and embedded.</p> <p>While double bunking was not the most desirable arrangement, the Department had to house a prisoner population growing faster than new beds could be introduced and had no control over this fast growth. The prison had a corresponding increase in staff to manage the added workload but the recent reduction in prison population had allowed a pause in double bunking in the Drug Treatment Unit.</p> <p>To meet the immediate demand for prisoner accommodation, double bunking would be introduced as emergency beds at a number of sites including Rimutaka Prison. Twenty beds in the Self Care Units have had a second bed installed. The additional beds would only be used during periods of significant capacity pressure or in an unplanned loss of capacity at another site.</p>

Inspection Standards

- The placement of prisoners in shared cells is done after careful consideration of their suitability for associating with one another.

51. Since our 2017 inspection, prison staff have improved the rate that they complete the Shared Accommodation Cell Risk Assessments (SACRA).¹⁴ In the six months to 30 September 2019, the prison completed 2,265 SACRAs on time.¹⁵

¹⁴ Before placing prisoners in shared cells, a SACRA must be carried out to determine whether there are any safety risks to the prisoners. The risk assessment takes into account a prisoner's age, offending history, gang affiliation, prison experience, size and strength, mental health, risks of violence and/or self harm, special needs, security classification, segregation status, sentence status and other factors relevant to safety and good order.

¹⁵ In comparison, during the six months ending 31 August 2017, the prison only completed 399 SACRAs on time.

52. Staff we spoke with advised that they have been making a concerted effort to ensure SACRAs were completed on time.
53. Staff said prisoners were often prepared to double bunk, and more so when they knew each other outside prison. Occasionally, a prisoner stated initially he was comfortable sharing a cell but might change his mind the following day. Staff said prisoners might resort to assaulting the person they were housed with to ensure no future association and be moved elsewhere, or to ensure their placement in a single cell. With the high demand for beds in most units, staff told us that often it could be difficult to place prisoners in alternative or single cells.
54. Prisoners we spoke with said they generally had no concerns with sharing a cell.

2019 Finding

Finding 10. The prison has made good progress increasing the rate and timeliness that Shared Accommodation Cell Risk Assessments are completed.

Māori prisoners

Inspection Standards

- Māori prisoners can access and practice their Māori culture and customs.
- Māori prisoners have access to kaupapa Māori informed and tikanga-based rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.
- Māori prisoners are supported to access stable whānau support.

55. In 2014, the prison established Te Whare Whakaahura Unit which offers Te Tirohanga kaupapa Māori rehabilitation pathway.
56. Te Tirohanga pathway typically includes three phases, each lasting at least three months:
 - » Phase 1 (compulsory) – Te Waharoa: Prisoners complete an NZQA Level 2 course in Māori Studies, which includes learning te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, and obtaining literacy and numeracy credits. Prisoners are also supported to strengthen their relationships with whānau.
 - » Phase 2 (compulsory) – Mauri Tu Pae programme: A group-based therapy and rehabilitation programme aimed at addressing causes of offending among medium-risk prisoners.
 - » Phase 3 (if required) – The completion of the Drug Treatment Programme.
57. During our follow-up inspection, staff advised that Te Whare Whakaahura Unit continued to include a large number of prisoners who were not currently undertaking Te Tirohanga pathway (at times, up to half the prisoners in the unit). This is in part due to the high prisoner population, but it also included prisoners who were awaiting approval to start or who had already completed Te Tirohanga pathway. Staff said this could, at times, undermine the therapeutic approach to prisoner management and be distracting for those who were trying to change their behaviour. Despite this, staff said they made sure all prisoners residing in the unit participated in karakia together each morning and night.

58. At the time of our inspection, of the 60 prisoners housed in the unit, 13 were completing phase one of the programme and 10 were undertaking phase two.
59. Staff advised that the unit was currently unable to offer as many cultural activities to prisoners as they would like. For instance, the unit did not have a carving instructor so the carving room was not in use. Staff said they were hopeful that the Department's *Hōkai Rangi: Ara Poutama Aotearoa Strategy 2019-2024* might lead to an increase in resources to support prisoners to reconnect with their culture.¹⁶
60. Staff told us they would like to see the Tikanga Māori Motivational Programme available to remand prisoners, to prepare and encourage those who remained in prison when sentenced, to eventually access Te Tirohanga pathway. The Tikanga Programme incorporates Te Ihu Waka framework, which connects participants to four kaupapa: Manaakitanga (reciprocal care and goodwill), Whanaungatanga (kinship and responsibilities to whānau), Rangatiratanga (humility and willingness to support others) and Wairuatanga (cultural and spiritual integration). The contracted provider at Rimutaka Prison currently delivers the Tikanga Programme to sentenced prisoners only.

2019 Finding

Finding 11. The prison should develop more opportunities for Māori prisoners, including those on remand, to learn and practise their language, culture and customs.

Relationships with family and whānau

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
Prisoners were generally positive about the access to telephones and believed that staff treated their visitors with respect	To ensure that all prisoners have reasonable telephone access, the maximum length of prisoners' telephone calls will be reduced to 10 minutes. This will allow a maximum of 24 calls each day. Staff will ensure unit routines are adhered to, to allow maximum opportunities for calls to take place

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners are located as close as possible to their family/whānau and the community they have a strong attachment to. If prisoners are placed in prisons outside their home region, it is for the minimum time necessary and for an identified reason.
- Staff support prisoners to maintain close relationships with stable family or whānau.
- Prisoners can promptly inform their family or whānau or designated contact person about their imprisonment, transfers, illness or injury.

¹⁶ The Hōkai Rangi strategy outlines the Department's commitment to delivering better outcomes for those in its care, and their whānau.

- Prisoners are encouraged to maintain contact with family/whānau members.
- Prisoners have regular access to visits.
- Prisoners have regular access to telephones and other communications, subject to a risk assessment.

61. During our unannounced follow-up inspection, staff advised that an estimated two thirds of the prison's population are from outside the Wellington region. Consequently, it is important that the prison provides prisoners with the means to maintain regular contact with their family and whānau.
62. Between 1 January–31 October 2019, there were 1,725 prisoner movements into or out of the prison. Of those, 805 (47%) prisoners were transferred to Rimutaka Prison, and 920 (53%) were transferred from Rimutaka to another prison. The average number of days spent on site was just over 76. One third (32%) of the total movements were for multiple transfers in or out (two or more).
63. Prisoners who must be moved between prisons need to keep their family and whānau informed of their whereabouts and wellbeing. We observed during our inspection that prisoners continued to have reasonable access to telephones and visits. Further, despite the limited time out of cell for those housed in the high security units, prisoners said they were able to telephone their family and whānau as needed. Some prisoners said if they needed to make an urgent telephone call, staff would unlock them to do so. Some prisoners said the cost of telephone calls was high compared to the Auckland-based prisons they had transferred from.¹⁷
64. Due to the high number of prisoners from areas outside the Wellington region, several staff said these prisoners could access extended or special visits given the long distances their visitors had to travel.

2019 Finding

Finding 12. The prison continues to make good progress supporting prisoners who reside outside of the Wellington region, to maintain regular contact with family and whānau.

Property

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
Some prisoners experienced long delays receiving mail and property.	We accept there were delays in some prisoners receiving their personal property. By 20 April 2018, funding for an additional property officer had been approved, and the prison was in the process of making an

¹⁷ The cost of making telephone calls at Rimutaka Prison is the same as at all other prisons apart from Auckland Prison and Auckland South Corrections Facility.

appointment.

On 16 November 2017, the prison conducted a mail and property review. A further review will be conducted by the prison to ensure that best practices relating to mail and property processes are being followed.

Inspection Standards

- Prisoner's property held in storage is secure, and prisoners can access it on reasonable request.
- Prisoner funds are managed securely and are accounted for.

65. In July 2018, the prison began trialling a centralised mail/property process for both Rimutaka and Arohata prisons, to improve efficiency and site safety. The trial was paused while a new mail sorting room was set up in a repurposed prison workshop. Although the new mail sorting room had been established, at the time of our inspection, it was not operational. The trial was due to recommence in late 2019.
66. In 2019 two additional staff were employed to assist with prisoner property and mail.¹⁸ Staff advised that the additional staff resource meant they had cleared the backlog of prisoner mail.
67. At the time of our follow-up unannounced inspection, there continued to be delays with prisoners receiving their property. Since 2017, there has been an increase in the number of prisoner PC.01 complaints relating to property matters.¹⁹
68. During our inspection, we observed several boxes of property waiting for Unit 4 staff to collect. Receiving Office staff advised that the boxes had been waiting to be collected for six days. We also saw electrical items, such as radios, waiting to be checked by an electrician. Staff advised us it was taking up to two months for electrical items to be checked due to the unavailability of an electrician. The prison was in the process of arranging for another electrician to do the testing.

2019 Finding

Finding 13. The prison has made insufficient progress to address the delays and issues associated with the checking and distribution of prisoner property. Delays with distributing prisoner mail have been addressed.

¹⁸ One staff member was employed in April 2019 and the other in September 2019.

¹⁹ Prisoners fill in a PC.01 complaint form if they wish to make a complaint. In the six months ending 30 September 2019 there were 128 complaints from prisoners about property matters, compared with 95 complaints for the six months ending 31 August 2017.

Health

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
<p>Prisoners' health needs were generally well met.</p> <p>The demands on the Health Centre Manager were unrealistic, and the medication room was not fit for purpose. We acknowledge the steps the prison has taken since our inspection to address these issues.</p> <p>A new satellite health unit has been built but, at the time of our inspection, it had yet to be fitted out with equipment and was not being used.</p>	<p>The doubling of the prisoner population at the prison since the Health Centre was built has put considerable pressure on the facilities. As the Health Centre space was no longer optimal, the prison reconfigured the existing space and expanded the centre slightly into the outdoor space next to the unit. This satellite health unit for high security facilities is partly operational, with the centre being used to dispense restricted and other medication. Work continues in collaboration with other health practitioners who provide services to the prison to ensure that best use is made of the second health unit.</p> <p>The Rimutaka Prison and Arohata Prison Health Centre Manager directly manages a large team. The rapid growth in the prison population worsened the situation so a second Health Centre Manager has been appointed to focus on Arohata Prison. The prison is looking to fill other vacancies, such as Team Leader and Assistant Health Centre Manager.</p>

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners have timely access to community-equivalent health and dental services, and receive treatment which is sensitive to their diverse needs from competent staff in an environment that promotes dignity and maintains privacy.
- Prisoners are supported and encouraged to optimise their health and well-being.
- Prisons have a health-care service which ensures professional care of the physical and mental health of prisoners.
- Health files are accurate, up-to-date and confidential, and accompany the prisoner when they are transferred.
- Prisoners have access to specialised external secondary and tertiary health care services when required.
- On reception, prisoners are made aware of the prison health services available and how to access them.
- Prisoners have a right to health confidentiality and do not have to provide information, undergo health interventions or screening.

Provision of health care

69. Since our last inspection, the workload and associated responsibility for Rimutaka's Health Centre Manager has eased, with the establishment and recruitment of a Health Centre Manager for Arohata Prison. The Health Centre Managers of both sites work well with each other and provide support across both sites.
70. Other vacant leadership roles have been recruited, including Clinical Team Leader and Assistant Health Centre Manager.
71. Prisoners' access to health care appears to be poorer than in 2017. At the time of our unannounced inspection, wait times for non-urgent medical officer appointments were more than two weeks and for the dentist between four and six weeks. A review of the MedTech computer system showed that wait times for all clinics, including nurse's, were largely due to a lack of available appointments, with a high number of appointments being rebooked due to previous missed appointments.
72. Health staff advised that missed appointments were often due to the unavailability of custodial officers to facilitate prisoner movements. To reduce these delays, health staff advised they undertake a prisoner's initial health assessment when they first arrive in prison at the Receiving Office. Health staff said that without this approach, they would not complete all new prisoner initial health assessments within the required timeframe. However, this approach is not best practice because the first day of reception is not an appropriate time for an in-depth personal discussion with a prisoner about their health needs. Prisoners are often distressed when they arrive at prison and are often unreceptive to questions or advice about their health needs.
73. The prison's health care facilities, while improved since our 2017 inspection with the extension at the main centre and the addition of the high-medium satellite clinic, remain suboptimal. For example, in the main Health Centre the sterilisation unit is located inside the sluice and equipment cleaning room (see Image 1). Mixing sterile and used cleaning equipment is contrary to the standard infection control policy.
74. The new satellite health unit in the high security unit is not fit for purpose. We observed that:
 - i. the medication room is poorly designed, as the medication folders with prisoners' names on them are clearly visible through the dispensing window. As a result, health staff must work behind a curtain to ensure patient confidentiality.
 - ii. The door to the staff office opens directly in front of the medication window where prisoners line up to receive their daily medication. If a prisoner is waiting for his medication, this door is blocked and cannot be opened.
 - iii. Medical supplies are shelved behind a curtain in the treatment area. They should be stored in a more secure way.
 - iv. The panic alarm is located behind the patient²⁰ chair and would be inaccessible in an emergency. The panic alarm in the medical officer's room

²⁰ Health staff refer to prisoners as patients.

is also located next to the patient bed and not behind the medical officer's desk.

75. The prison has New Zealand's only High Dependency Unit (HDU). The HDU is a 30-bed unit for male prisoners with ongoing complex health or disability needs, as a result of ageing or other medical conditions, and who require additional assistance with their day to day activities of daily living. During our inspection, prisoners in the HDU received a high standard of care. All prisoners we spoke with acknowledged and appreciated the care provided.
76. The HDU provides care for an increasing number of prisoners who have potentially life-threatening conditions, with at least one prisoner at the time of our inspection requiring 24-hour continuing care.²¹ The facilities and staffing levels are not adequate to safely provide this level of care. Health staff advised that they regularly work extra hours to ensure all tasks are completed as a registered nurse is only available on call overnight.
77. At the time of our unannounced inspection, some of the unit's equipment was broken and unsuitable for the environment. Staff advised the unit needed new mobile reclining chairs, washing facilities for immobile prisoners (i.e. a bath which can be used with a hoist), hospital mattresses and a replacement hoist.
78. The unit also has no designated equipment storage area. As a result, equipment is kept either in the disability shower/bathroom or in the corridors. This poses a potential health and safety risk for both staff and prisoners.
79. Throughout the inspection, observations were made of on-going clinical professional development, with posters on the walls for training opportunities, Staff were enthusiastic about learning.

2019 Findings

- Finding 14. The prison has made good progress in health services management, with the additional appointment of a Health Centre Manager for Arohata Prison and Assistant Health Centre Manager and Clinical Team Leader at Rimutaka Prison.
- Finding 15. The prison has made insufficient progress in improving the timeliness of access to health care. Delays have increased and are often due to the unavailability of custodial support to facilitate prisoner movements.
- Finding 16. The prison has made insufficient progress to ensure adequate and suitable health facilities, which impacts the ability of staff to provide appropriate health care.
- Finding 17. The High Dependency Unit does not have the necessary equipment to safely meet the increasing health-related needs of the prisoners.
- Finding 18. The health team at Rimutaka Prison continues to be enthusiastic and well engaged in their work and continuing professional development.

²¹ Prisoners who have very high and complex needs can also be assessed as requiring continuing care. This is the highest level of care available in community-based hospitals and can include end of life palliative care.

Mental health

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
<p>The prison was taking steps to monitor and address prisoners' mental health needs. However, some prisoners experienced delays in their admission to forensic mental health services.</p> <p>Staff in the At Risk Unit showed compassion and respect for prisoners held there. Custodial staff had not received specific training to support prisoners with mental health needs. We acknowledge the steps the prison has taken since our inspection to address this issue.</p>	<p>The National Commissioner agrees that At Risk Unit staff, High Dependency Unit staff, case managers and many nurses would benefit from additional awareness education and targeted training in working with people who have mental health, personality disorder and other complex issues.</p>

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners with mental health needs are identified promptly and supported by community-equivalent services to optimise their well-being during their time in prison and on release.
- Prisoners at risk are appropriately located in a therapeutic environment and supported by trained staff who are resourced to meet their individual needs.²²

80. There continues to be delays for prisoners accessing forensic mental health services. The current waiting time for an appointment is more than a month following an initial mental health referral.
81. The prison's Intervention and Support Unit (ISU), formerly known as the At Risk Unit, manages a range of complex and at times very unwell prisoners. During our follow up inspection, we observed that the unit was clean and tidy, with minimal graffiti and bright artwork and murals on the walls.
82. Health staff and corrections officers worked well to ensure prisoners were appropriately housed in the unit, and all staff appeared to apply the Tokorima a Māui²³ values in how they worked and supported prisoners. During our visit, we observed health staff and corrections officers managing an extremely distressed prisoner in a safe, respectful and caring manner.
83. Staff in the ISU are supported by two forensic nurses, three psychiatrists and a forensic psychologist who visits the unit once a week. Some custodial staff had also attended motivational interviewing training to better support prisoners in the unit.

²² Note this as an indicator – not a standard.

²³ The five kaupapa values of manaaki (respect), rangatira (leadership), whānau (relationships), wairua (spirituality) and kaitiaki (guardianship).

2019 Finding

- Finding 19. Some prisoners continued to experience delays in their admission to forensic mental health services, which we acknowledge is out of the direct control of Corrections.
- Finding 20. Staff in the Intervention and Support Unit continued to make good progress with ensuring prisoners held there were treated with compassion and respect.
- Finding 21. The prison has made reasonable progress providing training for some custodial staff to support prisoners with mental health needs, but training opportunities were not available to all staff.

Prisoners with disabilities

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
A prisoner in a wheelchair accessible cell said other prisoners and staff could see him through the cell door when he was using the toilet.	Privacy screens have now been installed in the disability cells of the high security units to enable prisoners to maintain their dignity and privacy.

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners with physical, mental or other disabilities have full and effective access to prison life on an equitable basis.
- Prisoners with a disability or age related needs are placed in a cell that is suitable and appropriate for their health related needs.²⁴

84. During our follow-up inspection, we observed that prisoners housed in disability²⁵ cells continue to be seen through the cell door when using the toilet. There were no privacy screens in place in the disability cells in the high security units.

2019 Finding

- Finding 22. No meaningful progress has been made to ensure the privacy and dignity requirements are met for prisoners residing in disability cells.

²⁴ Note this as an indicator – not a standard.

²⁵ Wheelchair accessible cells with a shower, toilet and grab rails specifically adapted for individuals with disabilities.

Environment

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
<p>The prison's high security units generally provided a good environment in which prisoners' needs were met. However, graffiti and gang posters covered some cell walls, some pillows and mattresses were stained and mouldy.</p> <p>The increase of prisoners in the units has led to inadequate hot water supply for showering and making hot drinks, and growing tension among some prisoners.</p> <p>The low security units provided an environment in which prisoners' needs were generally met</p>	<p>The prison would act immediately to remove the graffiti in all units and would introduce a programme of work to ensure that the prison maintained active oversight and management of this ongoing problem. It would also take immediate steps to remove all gang-related material from cells.</p> <p>Bedding is washed and maintained in the Unit 8 laundry. Managers are responsible for the ongoing ordering and rotation of bedding within the units. Managers are to maintain a monthly stock of 5–6 mattresses and bedding as appropriate. Worn stock could be sent to Unit 8 for repurposing or disposal. Managers are to implement a cell bedding audit and replacement regime for mattresses and bedding.</p> <p>Double-bunked prisoners should be as safe and comfortable as possible and high standards of hygiene are to be maintained. The prison will review and explore options for improving the situation, including strategies such as giving prisoners more time out of cells, meals out of cells and greater access to cleaning supplies.</p> <p>The prison is also further investigating whether there continues to be any issues with the provision of hot water for showers and drinks.</p>

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners live in a clean and suitable environment which is in a good state of repair and fit for purpose.
- Prisoners have sufficient bedding that is laundered regularly.
- Prisoners have a varied, healthy and balanced diet which meets their individual needs.
- Upon request, the prison provides meals and food in line with religious, cultural and other special dietary requirements.
- Prisoners' food and meals are stored, prepared and served in line with hygiene regulations.
- Clean drinking water shall be available to every prisoner.

Residential units

85. The prison continues to provide a generally good environment in which prisoners' needs are being met, in both the high security and low security units. We observed that prisoners' bedding, pillows and mattresses were clean and free from mould. Each unit had its own laundry and prisoners were able to wash their sheets on a regular basis, while the duvets and duvet covers were laundered in the prison's main laundry. Similarly, access to hot water for showering had improved, with no prisoners spoken to informally raising any issues.
86. In Unit 5, which is a low security unit, we observed the guttering pulling away from the roof. Staff advised this could be an issue during heavy rain as it can lead to flooding in the unit.
87. Access to hot drinking water continued to be an issue for some prisoners in the high security units. Both prisoners and staff raised concerns that the hot water boiler capacity did not meet the needs of prisoners in the unit. While the hot water capacity was sufficient when units consisted of single cells, the demand for hot water increased with the introduction of doubling bunking. Prisoners also confirmed to us that often they could not access hot water quickly prior to their evening lock up.
88. While we observed limited graffiti on the walls of the common areas in the high security units, we saw graffiti on the fixed steel tables in the wings, and in the cells and on cell doors. Most graffiti looked as if it could be covered with fresh paint. The graffiti was often gang related. During our inspection of the cells in the high security units (except HM11 and 12), we observed some prisoners had gang memorabilia and drawings on their cell walls.
89. In all high security units (except HM 1 and 2) there was evidence of graffiti in the external yards and programme rooms.
90. Staff advised they previously had plans to have prisoners re-paint the cells to remove graffiti. However, we were told that this initiative could not progress because painting in the units was undertaken by a contracted service provider and because the consistently high prison population meant all cells were usually occupied. However, staff told us that the contracted painter could not access the units because of the multiple unlock regimes in place in the high security units.
91. In some high security units, prisoners had spread toothpaste over the viewing dome²⁶ in their cells. This restricted staff from monitoring all parts of the cell.
92. In some high security units, prisoners had used torn bed sheets to improvise curtains, light shades and washing lines. Some prisoners had also torn up bed sheets and attached them to their television to enable them to change the channel from their bed.

Clothing

93. Prisoners across the site did not raise any concerns about access to clothing. All high security units have a small laundry to wash personal clothing. Larger items are sent to the main prison laundry.

²⁶ A reflective dome which enables staff to view the prisoner wherever they are in the cell.

Food

94. Prisoners from all units spoke favourably about the new national menu that was implemented across all Corrections managed prisons in October 2019. The new menu reduced the quantity of bread per day (from 11 slices to six per prisoner), improved sandwich fillings for lunch, introduced salads at weekends and introduced two meat free dinners.

2019 Findings

- Finding 23. The prison has made reasonable progress to ensure prisoners reside in a clean and suitable environment where their needs can be met.
- Finding 24. The prison has made insufficient progress to remove graffiti and gang related items in some cells.
- Finding 25. Prisoners in the high security units have insufficient access to hot drinking water.
- Finding 26. Corrections has made good progress to improve the food available to prisoners.

Released under the Official Information Act

Good order

Discipline

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
Staffing issues meant some low-level disciplinary charges were not proceeded with. We acknowledge the prison's work to train additional prosecutors and adjudicators.	In May 2018, two staff completed prosecutions training and another three adjudicator training. A further three staff were to complete training in October 2018. A roster had been implemented for hearing adjudication duties, which the prosecution team reported had contributed to minimal disciplinary charges being dropped due to missed timeframes.

Inspection Standards

- Disciplinary sanctions against prisoners are imposed by the proper authority.
- Prisoners are subject to disciplinary procedures which are fair and proportionate and follow due process.
- Prisoners are promptly informed of any disciplinary sanction, and understand the charges and procedures they face.
- Interpreter services will be used, where necessary, to explain any disciplinary charges, procedures and the process for defending the charges.
- Prison management does not rely on prisoners for any disciplinary functions, whether in a formal or informal manner.

95. Since our 2017 inspection, the prison has increased the number of trained adjudicators and prosecutors to 11 and five respectively. Staff told us that although adjudicators and prosecutors are rostered on an eight-week cycle, staff often became unavailable, leaving too few staff to keep up to date with the volume of charges. As a result, staff said they were often unable to respond to disciplinary charges before prisoners were transferred from the site. For the six-month period ending 30 September 2019, we were informed that 532 charges were heard on time. The remaining 190 charges (23%) were either withdrawn, cancelled or dismissed.

2019 Finding

Finding 27. The prison has made reasonable progress to increase the number of trained adjudicators and prosecutors. However, there are still delays responding promptly to some disciplinary charges.

Searches

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
With the exception of three rubdown searches in HM1 and Unit 7, none of the rubdown searches we observed were sufficiently thorough to detect any unauthorised items that prisoners might have concealed. Prisoners' torsos and legs were checked only briefly and other parts of the body were not searched.	<p>Staff were to be reminded that cell standards were monitored every day and to check property regularly when completing cell searches.</p> <p>The prison will introduce further support and training in rubdown techniques. By 20 April 2018, the SERT team had conducted short training sessions for staff</p> <p>Further, the National Commissioner advised that staff had misinterpreted the Corrections Act and Prison Operations Manual. On 26 October 2017, the Security Manager advised all security staff of their ability to strip search Release to Work prisoners. Secondary assurance checks had now been completed, confirming staff understanding and these searches had been undertaken appropriately.</p>

Inspection Standards

- Searches of cells and prisoners are carried out only when necessary and are proportionate, with due respect for privacy and dignity.

96. During our follow-up inspection, most rubdown searches we observed were not conducted appropriately. In some instances, staff did not undertake all necessary prisoner searches, for example, when prisoners were entering the yards in the high security units.

2019 Finding

Finding 28. The prison has made insufficient progress to improve the quality of prisoner rubdown searches and, in some instances, staff did not undertake necessary prisoner searches at all.

Purposeful activity

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
<p>Restricted time out of cell in the high security units has meant prisoners had limited opportunities to engage in constructive out-of-cell activities.</p> <p>One activities officer advised that, due to staffing shortages, only seven gym sessions were held between 1 September and mid-October 2017.</p>	<p>The prison has partially implemented a new fitness programme with the current staffing of three activities officers. The length of sessions has been reduced from 60 minutes to 45 minutes to increase the number of prisoners who can attend.</p> <p>The National Commissioner advised that the prison had applied for funding for two additional activities officers. The gym will operate seven days a week, rather than five, when all activities officer positions are filled. A new rostered timetable was distributed to the site in March 2018. When the two activities officer roles have been filled, there will be fortnightly attendance reports to ensure that prisoners are accessing the gym.</p>

Inspection Standards

- All prisoners are able to spend at least one hour in the open air every day.
- Prisoners have access to physical exercise and recreational activities.

Exercise

97. Following our 2017 inspection, the prison increased the number of activity officers from three to six. The activity officers are based in the prison's main gym and respond to the exercise needs of prisoners located in the high security units.
98. Activity officers told us they are regularly redeployed from the gym to cover unplanned staff absences in the units or to undertake off-site prisoner escorts, movements and support the audio-visual link suite. Staff told us that, ideally, all six activity officers would be working concurrently.
99. Staff advised they previously had weight-based exercises for prisoners to complete. However, to adequately manage the risk to other prisoners and staff, prison management removed the hand-held weights from the gym. As a result, only cardiovascular circuit workouts are available to prisoners in the gym. Staff said getting prisoners to participate in cardio circuits could be challenging, as prisoners typically preferred weight-based training.
100. Due to the reduced time out of cell in the high security units, some prisoners we spoke with informally said it was often not worth going to the gym. By the time they got there, they only had about 15 minutes to exercise before they were escorted back to their unit and locked up. Staff advised that when they were operating the four-landing unlock regime they typically

had around 10 prisoners per landing seeking to go to the gym. However, under the current regime they often had only one prisoner choosing to visit the gym. During our follow-up inspection, we observed only one prisoner attend the gym from HM3 during that unit's rostered gym time.

101. Staff told us that due to low uptake from prisoners, some high security units cancelled their gym sessions and other units were offered the additional gym slot. As a result, we were told that some prisoners were able to attend the gym twice a week.
102. Each low security unit has its own suitably equipped gym. Prisoners also access the outdoor grass areas in the low security units to play sports.

2019 Findings

Finding 29. The prison has made insufficient progress to improve prisoner access to the gym in the high security units, despite an increased number of activity officers.

Finding 30. Low security prisoners have regular access to suitable exercise opportunities.

Library

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
<p>Prisoners in the high security units cannot access the main library. Prisoners in HM6 and HM8 advised they had no access to library books.</p> <p>The library does not have a cataloguing system with a list of books available for prisoners to select from. Instead, books are issued depending on what programmes are being run in the library on any particular day.</p>	<p>To support the delivery of library services, a library in the high security facility has been built and a second librarian has been employed. Units are provided with a catalogue and a system is in place for prisoners to request books. In addition, units have a prisoner librarian who supports the delivery of the library service.</p> <p>Prisoners in the Management Unit can access the library at various times, depending on their security classifications.</p> <p>A weekly library trolley service delivers books to all low security units. In addition, the trolley service processes specific requests. Furthermore, book boxes have been issued to Unit 8 and Unit 10 and replaced every 4–6 weeks.</p>

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners have regular access to a suitable library, library materials and additional learning resources that meet their needs.

103. Following our 2017 inspection, Rimutaka Prison created a catalogue that is available to prisoners in high security units to help them order books. Prisoners can order books from the catalogue, via a request form. The librarian now delivers the books to the units twice a week. Prisoners we spoke with said they had no issues accessing library books.
104. In the low security units, the librarian delivers a trolley of books to the units once a week.

2019 Finding

Finding 31. The prison has made good progress towards ensuring prisoners can access books.

Offender Plans

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
<p>We saw no evidence that a Right Track meeting took place.</p> <p>Access to case managers, the limited number of programme rooms and the increase in the prisoner population impacted some prisoners being scheduled onto programmes. It also meant some prisoners were not suitably prepared for their parole hearing and subsequent release from prison.</p>	<p>The prison would ensure that Right Track meetings were held weekly and, where appropriate, recorded in IOMS</p> <p>By 4 May 2018, managers and principal corrections officers were to complete fortnightly compliance checks, to ensure Right Track meetings took place.</p> <p>There was ongoing recruitment of case managers to ensure that all prisoners are allocated a case manager promptly. A number of new case managers have been appointed.</p>

Inspection Standards

- All prisoners have an offender plan.
- All prisoners receive support to achieve the targets in their offender plans and progress through their sentence.

105. Case managers work with prisoners to develop a comprehensive phased rehabilitation and reintegration plan. This offender plan provides the basis for managing and monitoring a prisoner's needs.
106. Following our 2017 inspection, Right Track meetings now take place across the prison every Wednesday afternoon.²⁷ In HM7 and HM8, we observed one Right Track meeting take place where staff discussed the behaviour and conduct of four prisoners in the unit.

²⁷ During their sentence, prisoners are supported to make positive changes under the Right Track process. Custodial, health and education staff, case managers and others (such as psychologists and chaplains) work together to support the prisoner's journey towards rehabilitation and to make progress on their offender plan.

107. Prisoner access to case managers continued to be raised as a key issue with inspectors as we moved through the units. Some prisoners, particularly those housed in the high security units, told us they did not know who their case manager was. Those who did know their case manager, told us they saw them infrequently and found the lack of contact "*frustrating and stressful*". Lack of contact with case managers impacts on a prisoner's ability to make progress on their offender plan.
108. At the time of our follow-up inspection, the prison had 36 case managers employed (an increase of nine since our 2017 inspection). Of the 36, 12 were still completing their initial pathways training, and therefore were not authorised to have a full caseload. Two other case managers were on indefinite sick leave. With the introduction of the case management practice lead roles across the country, two experienced case managers had left to take up these leadership positions.
109. The case management Standards of Practice²⁸ requires prisoners to be allocated a case manager within 10 days of their arrival into prison. Once allocated, a case manager has 10 further working days to have an initial meeting with the prisoner.²⁹
110. As previously mentioned, there were 1,725 inter-prison transfers in and out of Rimutaka Prison in the six months to 30 September 2019. During the week of our inspection, 45 prisoners arrived who required allocation to a case manager. Staff advised that the large volumes of movements, along with the high-volume of prisoners on site, meant case managers were not allocated and meeting with prisoners within the 20-day Standards of Practice timeframe.
111. Data confirmed this position. In the six months to 30 September 2019, just under 48% of new prisoners met their case manager within the required timeframe. Furthermore, at the time of our inspection, 318 prisoners had not yet been allocated to a case manager.³⁰ Of those, 206 prisoners had offender plans that needed to be finalised.
112. In addition, staff advised that since our 2017 inspection, the time available to produce Parole Board assessment reports had reduced from 12 weeks to seven. Staff also told us that in response to feedback from the Parole Board, assessment reports were now written solely by case managers instead of jointly by probation officers and case managers. This change meant case managers must facilitate the exchange and analysis of information received from probation officers and often the prisoner's support people in order to prepare the report.
113. A principal case manager (PCM) told us that staff prioritise their workload, with the completion of parole assessment reports given priority. Staff then divide their time between working with new arrivals and prisoners nearing release and the development of offender plans, taking any complex health issues into account. The PCM said often there was little capacity left to work meaningfully with prisoners on remand or those who were not yet allocated to a case manager.³¹
114. The PCM and case managers we spoke with felt that the case management workflow model was not fit for purpose.

²⁸ Standards of Practice set the baseline expectations for all case managers' day to day responsibilities.

²⁹ New prisoners should receive an initial contact visit with their case manager within 20 days of their arrival.

³⁰ In contrast, at the time of our 2017 inspection, 160 prisoners had not been assigned a case manager.

³¹ The PCM confirmed they had capacity to allocate case managers to prisoners who are due to appear before the Parole Board in the following six months, but not up to 12 months, as they are expected to.

2019 Findings

Finding 32. The prison has made good progress ensuring that regular Right Track meetings take place to promote appropriate prisoner behaviour in all units.

Finding 33. The prison has made no meaningful progress to improve prisoner access to case managers.

Rehabilitation

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
<p>Prisoners in the high security units had limited access to work experience or rehabilitation, treatment or education programmes. In particular, prisoners on short sentences had limited access to programmes.</p> <p>Prisoners in low security units had a broad range of activities available to support positive change, including rehabilitation programmes, work experience and education programmes. This kept prisoners engaged, offered clear pathways to positive change, and allowed prisoners to address the causes of offending and obtain valuable skills.</p> <p>Waiting times for some rehabilitation programmes could be long, sometimes exceeding a year.</p>	<p>Few short programmes were available to remand prisoners. The Assistant Prison Director will ensure that all prisoners eligible for programmes are waitlisted. Case managers are encouraged to use practice tools to address the shortage and ensure that prisoners receive intervention. The Principal Case Manager is developing a scheduling process to address the competing demands of interventions and employment.</p> <p>There were insufficient programme rooms available for the size of the prisoner population and interventions. A scheduling/intervention coordinator project has been established to address any issues. A centralised booking system is needed to better coordinate interventions at the prison.</p> <p>The prison recognises that prisoners approved for programmes are on long waitlists. In part, this is due to the increased prisoner population and the limited number of programmes and rooms available. Prison managers will discuss the programme allocation for 2018/19 to ensure the prison has an appropriate number of programmes.</p>

Inspection Standards

- Appropriate interventions are provided to reduce the likelihood of reoffending and promote successful reintegration.
- Rehabilitation programmes, targeting the specific needs of the prisoner, are available and accessible.
- There is good cooperation and communication between the prison and social

support organisations, including those that deliver rehabilitation programmes in the prison.

115. During our follow-up inspection, we found that prisoners in the high security units continued to have limited access to rehabilitation programmes.
116. As at 21 October 2019, 69 prisoners were participating in a rehabilitation programme and another 95 were on waitlists. Of those 69, 42 were from the high security units. The rehabilitation programmes included: the Drug Treatment Programme [DTP] (29 prisoners), the Medium Intensity Rehabilitation programme [MIRP] (19), Mauri Toa Rangatahi³² (3) and the Special Treatment Unit rehabilitation programme (18).
117. The availability of suitable programme rooms continued to be an issue in the high security units. DTP staff advised that room availability was problematic because the MIRP was being delivered in the Drug Treatment Unit alongside the DTP. Additional programme space is required for the DTP because the programme is delivered simultaneously to separate groups of mainstream and segregated prisoners. Staff said the need for more dedicated programme delivery space in the high security facility was regularly raised as an issue with prison management. Staff said that design plans were available to repurpose an existing space in the high security facility for programme delivery, but there was no funding available to undertake the work.
118. In addition, staff working in the DTU advised that the unit is often seen as 'just another high security unit' and, as a result, the therapeutic environment is subject to the same disruptions and restrictions as other high security units. This meant the unit often contains men who are not on the programme, not waiting for the programme to start or who had not completed the programme, which undermines the therapeutic community function and values. Similarly, regular custodial staff rotation has meant the unit has received inexperienced staff who are not aware of the unit's kaupapa or programme content and can unintentionally undermine the rules, values or a prisoner's therapy.
119. In addition, staff in the Special Treatment Unit advised that treatment of prisoners was often undermined when, following the completion of their treatment, they were placed back into a mainstream unit alongside untreated prisoners. Staff told us prisoners who successfully complete their rehabilitation should be placed in the Self Care unit and receive Release to Work opportunities. However, due to the limited number of places available in Self Care, prisoners were often placed in a mainstream unit which could undo treatment gains and trigger past trauma.
120. A principal programme facilitator advised that the issues with case management processes impacted their ability to fill rehabilitation programmes. Case managers were referring insufficient numbers of eligible and suitable prisoners to the MIRP because of the lack of contact between case managers and prisoners. As a result, facilitators were spending their time checking the unallocated list themselves to search for eligible prisoners. Our conversations with staff and prisoners confirmed that the lack of contact by case managers was making prisoners feel anxious about their ability to swiftly complete their rehabilitation pathway and achieve parole.

³² A programme for young men (under 20 years old) to help them to see their strengths and take opportunities to create a positive future.

121. During our inspection, the prison was in the planning phase of establishing a programme for prisoners aged under 25. The prison aimed to have one high security unit allocated to younger prisoners, with one side of the pod for remand prisoners and the other side for sentenced prisoners. Once in the unit, it is intended that psychologists, case managers and custodial staff will provide integrated wraparound support to facilitate their eventual release.

Education

Inspection Standards

- Education and vocational training programmes are offered in line with the needs of the learners.

122. There continues to be a broad range of education programmes available to engage prisoners in learning. However, prisoners we spoke with informally in the high security units remained dissatisfied with their access to education opportunities.
123. Between 1 April and 31 September 2019, there were 162 education programme attendances involving remand prisoners housed in the high security units.³³ Programmes attended included: Intensive Literacy and Numeracy, parenting, driver licencing and the Tikanga Māori Motivational. Other programmes available at the site, but not running during that six-month period, included first aid and forklift training.
124. Waiting lists for education programmes remained high. At the time of our follow-up inspection, the waiting list to access an education programme stood at 1,158.³⁴ Of those, 612 were from high security units.
125. Due to the high turnover of prisoners on site, the education team advised that they often struggled to meet new prisoners within the required timeframes.³⁵ Staff said that although they are meant to meet with a new prisoner within 14 days, in reality it can take six months to a year. For example, staff said that in March 2019 more than 300 new prisoners had not been seen by an education tutor. Similarly, as at 1 August 2019, 546 prisoners needed a learning pathway review. Of those, 335 were from high security units (including the ISU and Management Units), 203 were from low security units (including Self Care).
126. In addition, staff said the high turnover and volume of prisoners meant some prisoners struggled to achieve in programmes. Staff said they would often just get a prisoner into an education programme, only for them to be transferred to another site. Or alternatively, staff said they would arrange to meet a prisoner, only to find they had been moved elsewhere.
127. Similarly, staff said they often get a prisoner placed on an education programme only for them to be removed and placed on a rehabilitation programme as that was seen as being more important.

³³ Attendances are recorded per month and some prisoners on Intensive Literacy and Numeracy courses may attend multiple times.

³⁴ Prisoners may be waitlisted on multiple programmes.

³⁵ The education team standard of practice requires them to complete an education assessment within seven days of a new prisoner entering a site (this does not necessarily mean they meet with them). A learning pathway is then to be undertaken within a further seven days of the education assessment being completed, which requires a one on one conversation.

Supporting prisoner wellbeing

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners can access out of cell activities which promote learning, well-being and support rehabilitation.

128. The prison has more than 300 volunteers who work with prisoners. Volunteer groups provide prisoners with a number of activities including baking and cooking (Good Bitches Baking and Common Unity), yoga, Zumba, sewing, recycling textiles, budgeting and meditation.
129. Kaiwhakamana are also available to prisoners once a month. The role of a kaiwhakamana is to enable the well-being of Māori offenders. Those in the role include kaumatua, kuia, tohunga, spiritual leaders and other specialised persons who are endorsed by their respective Māori communities.

Work

Inspection Standards

- All prisoners, where possible, can engage in work that is purposeful, benefits them and increases their employability.

130. Prisoners we spoke with informally in the high security units, including remand prisoners, continued to be dissatisfied with their access to working opportunities. Each high security unit has seven prisoners working as unit cleaners, laundry men and server workers. Some high security prisoners were also undertaking WelTec tier three courses such as plastering and tiling. During the week of our inspection, 23 prisoners were enrolled in WelTec courses. A further 433 prisoners across the site were on waitlists.
131. In contrast, lower security prisoners can work and receive numerous training opportunities in areas such as horticulture, agriculture, plastering, bricklaying, plumbing, gas fitting, carving, decorating, recycling bicycles, construction, catering, distribution, printing, the central kitchen or grounds maintenance.
132. As part of the prison's building and construction programme, prisoners recently constructed a two-bedroom house and obtained Level 3 New Zealand Certificates in Construction Trade Skills (Allied Trades and Carpentry). The building and construction programme also allows prisoners undertaking the Level 3 painting and decorating programme to gain valuable skills.
133. The prison also offers opportunities for lower security prisoners to work beyond the perimeter fence on a land care work party, planting native plants around the outside of the prison. Prisoners who work at least three months as part of a work party may then be approved to progress to Release to Work opportunities. At the time of our inspection, 121 prisoners were engaged in some form of work at Rimutaka Prison, including those taking part in Release to Work.
134. Industries staff advised that one of their challenges was identifying sentenced prisoners who were motivated and suitable for work. Staff said they had little oversight of which prisoners were available for work. Prisoners who had a numeracy and literacy level below level 3 were unable to be considered for work. Similarly, prisoners subject to voluntary segregation or on remand were also unsuitable. Staff said when they did find a suitable prisoner, they would

often be removed from their work to complete a rehabilitation programme. Effective case management and programme scheduling should prevent this from occurring. In some instances, prisoners could be working for six months or be almost finished their qualification, when they were removed to complete a rehabilitation programme.

2019 Findings

Finding 34. The prison has made no meaningful progress to improve prisoner access in the high security units to rehabilitation, work, education or training programmes. Remand prisoners have limited access to work opportunities.

Finding 35. The prison continues to make reasonable progress to ensure access to rehabilitation, education, training and work opportunities for low security prisoners. Prisoners on voluntary segregation have difficulty accessing training and work opportunities.

Finding 36. There are too few programme delivery rooms available in the high security facility to meet the needs of prisoners.

Finding 37. Prisoners often had difficulty maintaining their treatment gains when they were placed back into mainstream units.

Finding 38. Some prisoners were unable to complete their education or training programme.

Religious or spiritual support

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
Chaplaincy services were, at times, limited due to regime restrictions and the availability of rooms.	

Inspection Standards

- Prisoners are supported by the chaplaincy, which contributes to prisoners' overall care, support and rehabilitation.
- Prisoners' freedom of religion is respected, and they are able to practise their religion.

135. Chaplaincy Services now has office space within the prison, allowing for better service coverage across the site. The prison now has three chaplains, with one based in the high security units, one in the low security units and the other in the administration block. The chaplains maintain good working relationships with representatives of other faiths in the community, so they can administer support to prisoners of all faiths.

136. Access to the chaplain remained an issue for some high security prisoners. Although the chaplain appeared to have higher visibility in the units, the chaplains advised that some custodial staff prevented their access to the units for security or safety reasons, and they could be restricted by the limited availability of rooms. However, in units such as HM7 and HM8, the chaplain had been able to set up an office, and there were plans underway to

commence Bible study classes. We also observed the chaplain working in HM11 and 12 during our inspection.

2019 Finding

Finding 39. The prison has made reasonable progress to improve prisoner access to chaplains and appropriate faith-based support.

Reintegration

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
<p>Some services were available to support reintegration. However, the increased prisoner population, and limited number of programme rooms and case managers, resulted in some prisoners not being adequately prepared for their parole hearing and subsequent release from prison.</p> <p>Prisoners we spoke with informally advised that they had to wait until after their first parole hearing before case managers would consider what programmes they could take part in. A case manager acknowledged this, and advised that child sex offenders in particular were not able to complete their programmes before their parole eligibility date.</p>	<p>Due to increasing pressures around the prison population, staff shortages, scheduling, funding, and insufficient suitable programmes rooms, some prisoners did not have access to programmes before their parole hearings. The prison is recruiting more case managers and improving its scheduling to address the competing demands of interventions and employment.</p> <p>In April 2018, the prison implemented a Parole Ready Panel initiative. This panel has representatives from case management, programme delivery, scheduling and psychological services. The initial focus was on discussing parole readiness in principle. The concept is now being supported by the parole ready work stream of the High Impact Innovation Team and the focus has shifted to include discussions on specific prisoners who are six months from their first NZPB hearing and those who have recently been declined.</p> <p>It is planned to widen the Parole Ready Panel's focus to include prisoners who have approximately 18 months until their first hearing. It is working to facilitate access to activities for individual prisoners and identify wider themes regarding barriers in this area.</p>

Inspection Standards

- Prison management actively prepares prisoners for their release by facilitating access to post-release services.
- Prisoners with continuing health and social care needs are prepared and assisted to access appropriate services in the community prior to their release.
- Prisoners with drug and/or alcohol problems are prepared for release and have access to appropriate support and continued treatment in the community.
- Prior to release, prisoners have an up-to-date plan for addressing outstanding rehabilitation needs, which is managed in partnership with Community

Corrections.

- Prisoners are given all necessary practical support and support information ready for their day of release.

137. The prison continues to offer reintegration opportunities.
138. The panel in place to consider Guided Release, work outside the wire and Release to Work applications from Rimutaka-based prisoners meets fortnightly to consider, on average, up to 12 applications per meeting. Typically, Rimutaka Prison's management approves most of the applications as they are carefully vetted by Corrections, Ministry of Social Development and Police representatives.
139. Rimutaka Prison requires prisoners to have worked outside the wire before they can access Release to Work. However, during our inspection there were only a small number of work positions outside the wire, particularly for segregated prisoners, thereby slowing the number of possible Release to Work placements.
140. At the time of our inspection, 21 prisoners were accessing Release to Work and another 11 had been approved by prison management. This number was significantly higher than all other prisons at the time of our inspection. Of the 11 approved applicants, most were being considered for outside the wire work parties or awaiting further WelTec training support and/or a suitable job vacancy.
141. During our inspection, we were informed that it could be difficult to identify prisoners for reintegration opportunities. To reduce the pressure on case managers, the prison relies on principal corrections officers to identify eligible prisoners.

2019 Findings

Finding 40. The prison has made reasonable progress ensuring access to reintegration opportunities, particularly through Release to Work. However, there are a limited number of options for working outside the wire, including for segregated prisoners.

Finding 41. The prison has difficulty identifying eligible prisoners for reintegration opportunities.

Prison Staff

2017 observations	National Commissioner's response
With the exception of some officers in HM7 and HM8 Units, officers were observed interacting positively with prisoners, responding to their needs, role-modelling good behaviour, and acting promptly in tense situations.	The prison acknowledged that some staff were overly familiar with prisoners and did not challenge breaches of the rules, and confirmed that staffing changes had been made, including the appointment of a new manager and principal corrections officer. On 21 February 2018, staff attended a training day to bring the unit in line with the prison's operational guidelines. A mentoring programme was also established. With these measures, the prison hopes to achieve a culture change within HM7 and HM8.

Inspection Standards

- All prison staff, who work with prisoners, have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude, and are trained to work in line with professional and human rights standards.
- There is an adequate number of custodial staff to manage prisoners safely.
- Staff are good role models for prisoners and relationships between them are professional, positive and courteous.
- Prisoners have a dedicated member of staff who supports them to make positive changes in their lives.

142. Staff role modelling and positively engaging prisoners was variable in the high security units, largely due to the limited time prisoners spend out of their cells. The exception was the Drug Treatment Unit where prisoners spend most of the day unlocked.
143. In most of the high security units we observed staff spending most of their time locking and unlocking prisoners in their cells. Staff advised that with the six landing unlock regime they struggled to find time to engage prisoners and could only address urgent matters. In the staff hubs, we observed senior corrections officers responding promptly to prisoner issues, while also operating door controls, supporting prisoner movements and answering the telephone.
144. Prisoners we spoke with informally said they knew who their unit case officer was, and they were generally good at dealing with matters. However, prisoners said that the lack of case management access and support, along with not knowing who their case manager was, was a trigger for frustration and stress. Staff in the high security units said they had become de-facto case managers at times to ensure prisoners who were due to appear before the Parole Board were being adequately supported.
145. In the Drug Treatment Unit we observed staff interacting positively with prisoners. The unit's Principal Corrections Officer (PCO) said staff morale had improved since our 2017 inspection,

however, many custodial staff were new and inexperienced. The PCO acknowledged that the regular staff rotation policy was problematic in therapeutic units for custodial and clinical staff as well as prisoners. Custodial staff often just developed their rehabilitation programme knowledge and relationships with programme facilitators before they were rotated to another unit.

146. In the low security units, we continued to observe positive staff-prisoner relationships.

2019 Findings

- Finding 42. In the high security units, beyond dealing with urgent matters, staff often had limited opportunities available to positively engage, role model and support prisoners.
- Finding 43. Regular rotations of custodial staff was problematic for staff and prisoners in the dedicated treatment units.
- Finding 44. The prison has made good progress improving staff-prisoner relationships in low security units.

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Appendix A – Images



Image 1. Health: sterilisation and cleaning room



Image 2. Special Treatment Unit compound



Image 3. High Dependency Unit



Image 4. HM1 cell (high security)



Image 5. HM2 wing (high security)



Image 6. Te Tirohanga gym

Appendix B – National Commissioner's response



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16 July 2020

Janis Adair
Chief Inspector
Department of Corrections

By email: janis.adair@corrections.govt.nz

Tēnā koe Janis

Re: Draft Report on Rimutaka Prison Unannounced Follow-Up Inspection October 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the draft inspection report. The Prison Director, Regional Commissioner and I are proud of the progress Rimutaka Prison has made since your previous inspection in October 2017. I know the Prison Director was particularly pleased to see the positive commentary about not only about areas of progress, but those where the site maintained high standards, for example the operation of the Receiving Office, provision of a broad range of activities and feelings of safety from bullying, violence and stand-overs in the low security environment.

I noted too that staff in the Intervention and Support Unit have continued to make good progress with ensuring those placed there were treated with compassion and respect and that some of the 'basics' such as staff-prisoner relationships, consistent inductions, access to legal phone calls, sufficient and clean bedding and books, had improved. It is many of these basic practices where opportunities lie for systems and staff practice to align with our Hōkai Rangi strategy. I also noted in the high security environment, while some of the expected challenges persisted that nonetheless some prisoners have reported feeling safer as a result of different unlock regimes.

As you are aware, with capacity for 1,045 prisoners Rimutaka Prison has until recently been the largest facility for men in our network. While the size alone creates many challenges for their operations it also creates room for innovation and specialism. There are many features of Rimutaka Prison that we are enormously proud of, for example the High Dependency Unit, specialist treatment and rehabilitation centred units and their partnership with and contribution to the Hutt Valley community.

However recently it has become clear that the size of responsibility for the Prison Director and their team who together lead both Rimutaka Prison and Arohata Prison sites is simply not sustainable long term. Pleasingly we are now in the process of recruiting a Prison Director for Arohata Prison who will take over all responsibility for the women's sites. This is considered a positive step for the women in our care at Arohata, ensuring they have a focused and dedicated leadership team and it will also alleviate workload capacity for the Prison Director and their leadership team to focus on the busy site of Rimutaka Prison.

There are also a number of initiatives in place or underway at Rimutaka Prison that I'd like to comment on which are not detailed in your report.

Doing Thyme Café

In 2019 Rimutaka Prison established the Doing Thyme café for staff at Rimutaka Prison. This café provides important hospitality training opportunities for prisoners, mirroring the demands of a café in the community. Some of those employed in the café or who developed skills through the Wellington on a Plate initiative have progressed to similar release to work opportunities and maintained jobs on release. It is also true to say that staff have enjoyed the easy proximity and excellent standard of food offered.

Partnership with the community through Common Unity Project Aotearoa

Prisons are often seen as separate to, rather than part of the local community. This barrier is being dismantled with a partnership between Rimutaka Prison and Common Unity Project Aotearoa. This partnership contributes to a range of initiatives but most proudly, the men at Rimutaka Prison raise seeds and grow fruit and vegetables that are distributed to the community. In just over a year, vegetables grown by prisoners at Rimutaka Prison's five urban farms were made into 5,000 meals and donated to schools and Women's Refuges in the Lower Hutt area. Recently, over the COVID-19 lockdown period the vegetables grown by Rimutaka Prison were made into 200 meals a day to feed Lower Hutt families in need. The garden gives everything it grows to Common Unity who, with Kokiri Marae, distributed meals as part of their Urban Kai project.

Not only do the men learn practical skills for release, they are spending their time in custody in a meaningful and healthy way and they appreciate the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the local community.

Unit for men under 25 years of age

Rimutaka Prison staff from a range of disciplines recognised the impact of the prison environment on younger people and wanted to do more to support young men in their care to successfully transition to the community. A working group developed a proposal to implement a unit for men under 25 years of age. The proposal has been approved and the group are now readying for implementation in the coming months. The purpose of this unit is to create a high security environment that improves the wellbeing of the men, maintains staff safety, utilises kaupapa Māori frameworks to underpin the pathway and service provision in the unit and enables increased

whānau and community involvement to support young men while in our care and for a successful transition home. I know the team at Rimutaka Prison will be excited to share with you the progress they make with this initiative.

Challenges to address

Your report also offers a valuable insight into the prison by detailing a number of challenges faced. The following areas have been identified as priority areas of focus for the site.

Case Management and Industry, Treatment and Learning

The prison is pleased to report that they consider they have continued to see progress with the case management and wider Industry, Treatment and Learning team. They report they have benefited from having two full time Principal Advisers Rehabilitation and Learning to support the site. While case management practice is an essential discipline in the prison environment, the range of services coordinated and provided by the wider team ensure that case managers have a range of activities available to plan into prisoner pathways. The Assistant Prison Director is also particularly pleased with the significant improvement in allocation capacity for case managers.

The Assistant Prison Director is now focused on strengthening the practice and culture in the case management team and extending that cohesion across the site, particularly between case management and custodial staff. The team of principal case managers, and more widely, practice leaders will be critical to success with this focus area.

Safety in High Security

The report highlights a number of challenges associated with the high security environment. It further explores both drivers of safety risks such as contraband, and symptoms such as the prevalence of tattoos.

The report helpfully details strategies initiated to improve safety in high security, including through the six-landing unlock regime and the costs and benefits associated. While some frustration and tension is linked to reduced time out of cell it is positive that some prisoners reported feeling safer as a result. Similarly, it was positive to note a range of reports that indicated low levels of contraband.

It's clear that the prevalence of tattoos, including facial tattoos is an area of concern for staff, particularly on young people. The report also references the establishment of the Tattoo Working Group. Rimutaka Prison staff are confident in the impact this initiative, alongside the unit for under 25 year olds and ongoing effort to introduce further activities to people in high security, will have on reducing tattooing. Positively a short Tikanga programme has recently been delivered in the high security units.

There is not one single initiative that is considered likely to address all the high security environment challenges. Instead strong oversight and leadership of these units, through the safer custody panel meetings, implementation of the site's gang

strategy and ongoing refinement of strategies deployed will ensure a continuous improvement approach.

Health Services

I was happy to see recognition of the attitude of the health team at Rimutaka Prison. The report noted their enthusiasm for learning and their willingness to go the extra mile to ensure tasks are completed. I know they further appreciate the additional leadership support available now the Clinical Team Leader and Assistant Health Centre Manager roles have been filled.

It's also important to mention that since the inspection there have been significant changes to the health structure across Corrections. Rimutaka Prison's Health Centre Manager now reports directly to Lower North's Regional Operations Director Health. The relationship between the health and custodial teams remains critically important to the delivery of health services and I'm pleased that examples have been highlighted in the report of where this operates effectively at Rimutaka Prison.

It's pleasing the report recognises the high standard of care health and custody staff together provide to those housed there with complex health or disability needs. As you are aware Health and Corrections Services are currently collaborating to consider the clinical staffing levels in High Dependency Unit (HDU). The report also comments on some of the equipment in the HDU requiring replacement. The Regional Operations Director Health will ensure this is appropriately considered and planned for within existing asset replacement and procurement processes.

I consider the completion of the satellite health facility to be a positive development for the site and I consider it fit for purpose. However, it is not currently able to be used for direct patient care due to resourcing. I know the team look forward to this again in future and will use the current period to consider the facility issues raised in your report and arrange for any necessary adjustments.

As you've noted the team are enthusiastic for learning and development. The next area of focus is an education programme which will help nurses safely manage interactions during medical rounds or in the health centre with people who are escalated or agitated.

The report details well the demands on staff in the Intervention & Support Unit which manages complex, and at times, acutely unwell people. Health and custodial leadership were proud to see your inspectors' observations of a safe, respectful and caring interaction with someone in extreme distress. Given the intensity of work in this environment it's critical that continuous support is provided to staff and enhancing their resilience is current area of focus. A senior adviser from the Mental Health Quality and Practice Team is currently working with the site team to consider and plan for a range of education and coaching opportunities.

Additional issues

Some challenges were also detailed in the report which have progressed well since your inspection.

- The report details a trial improvement for mail management that was implemented in 2018 but later paused. I'm pleased to share this was recommenced in late 2019 and that the site have reported improvements in both mail and property management.
- The implementation of the booking tool for managing activities and facility availability has been well received by the site, staff and activity providers. One positive impact is that it has reduced the chances of conflicting appointments and provides confidence that bookings will be able to be successfully facilitated on the day.
- Curtains have been installed in the high security disability cells.

Finally, it would be remiss not to mention that since your inspection Corrections have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. I am not alone in being enormously proud of Rimutaka Prison and the network's united response. The pandemic response has highlighted how capable our staff are of being both effective and compassionate. Rimutaka Prison's leadership reflected also on the unity toward a common goal. The current sense of achievement has given the site momentum and they are now reflecting on what opportunities they have to maintain their successes and innovations.

I trust you are satisfied with our response to the draft report. Please advise me if you have any concerns or questions about the information provided.

Ngā mihi nui



Andrew Milne
Acting National Commissioner

Released

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