

18 September 2012

C59316

Alecia Bailey
Manawatu Guardian
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Dear Alecia

Thank you for your email of 26 July 2012 in which you requested information on sex offenders in Manawatu under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). As you are aware, your request has been transferred from the Ministry of Justice to the Department of Corrections for reply.

I understand that you have agreed to re-scope your request after contact with Jessica Paul, Ministerial Advisor on 1 August 2012. You are now requesting information on how many sex offenders have been in Manawatu since 2005.

A major focus of the Department is to contribute to safer communities by holding offenders to account and managing them to comply with their sentences and orders, reduce their likelihood of re-offending, and minimise their risk of harm to others. There are currently approximately 36,000 offenders nationally serving community-based sentences and orders. Below is the web address that will take you to information that explains how the Department manages offenders in the community: www.corrections.govt.nz/about-us/fact-sheets/managing-offenders-in-the-community.html

The Department manages offenders in 15 community-based services districts. The following website link provides details of the 15 districts: www.corrections.govt.nz/utility-navigation/locations/community.html

We manage offenders on nine community-based sentences and orders. The hierarchy of these sentences and orders is outlined in Table 1 below.

Order Type
Extended Supervision (high risk child sex offenders following prison and parole)
Parole (after prison sentences greater than two years)
Released on Conditions (after short prison sentence two years or less)
Post Detention Conditions (after Home Detention)
Sentence Type
Home Detention
Intensive Supervision
Community Detention
Supervision
Community Work

Table 1: Hierarchy of community-based order/sentence type

Table 2 below shows for each of the years 1 July to 30 June, the number of offenders convicted of a sexual offence (SO), or a sexual offence against a child (CSO), who commenced a community-based sentence or order in Manawatu – defined as the area managed by the Palmerston North and Feilding Service Centres.

Year	Offenders with sex offence (SO)	Offenders with sex offence against a child (CSO)
2005-06	6	10
2006-07	5	7
2007-08	4	7
2008-09	7	13
2009-10	3	9
2010-11	7	2
2011-12	3	13

Table 2: Offenders convicted of a sexual offence or a sexual offence against a child in the Manawatu area from 2005-2012

The primary concern for the Department when assessing accommodation for offenders in the community is public safety. The suitability of a residential address for child sex offenders is assessed on a case by case basis before it is approved by a probation officer. Factors considered include proximity to victims, the type of risks the offender presents, and where they are likely to get the best re-integrative support to mitigate their risk.

The preparation that goes into approving a suitable address for a child sex offender includes checking the property, as well as conducting a visual check of the neighbourhood for signs of children residing nearby, proximity of the house to schools, kindergartens, parks, swimming pools, libraries, thoroughfares and other places frequented by children. An address is approved where it is considered there is no undue risk to the safety of the community by having the offender live there.

The following website link will take you to a copy of the booklet *Keeping Communities Safe*, which gives more information on how people in prison are released and managed in our communities:

www.corrections.govt.nz/about-us/fact-sheets/managing-offenders-in-the-community/other_information/how-serious-violent-and-sexual-offenders-are-released-and-managed-in-our-communities.html

I trust this information is helpful. You are welcome to contact us for clarification of any of the information contained in this response. Please phone (04) 460 3365 or email commdesk@corrections.govt.nz

Yours sincerely



Maria McDonald
Assistant General Manager
Corrections Services