

7 September 2018

C98772

BAW Russell
fyi-request-8428-26fc7ee0@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Russell

Thank you for your email of 3 August 2018, requesting information regarding Shared Accommodation Cell Risk Assessment (SACRA). Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Double bunking has been a long standing option in the New Zealand prison system and has worked well. When we double bunk cells, we also do everything we can to increase the other amenities and resources that are needed, such as additional staff, bathrooms, therapy rooms and activities.

Research has found that many prisoners thought that sharing a cell could help with their literacy skills and provide some support, particularly for young prisoners accommodated together. A separate report into double bunking at Northland Regional Corrections Facility in 2015 found positive effects on prisoner wellbeing including decreased loneliness, increased social and emotional support and reduction in self harm.

Custodial staff use a comprehensive assessment tool called the Shared Accommodation Cell Risk Assessment (SACRA) to enable them to carefully consider relevant information prior to placing two prisoners in a shared cell. This tool helps to inform their decisions and minimise any risk.

The SACRA process is carried out by experienced custodial staff who review the compatibility of both prisoners before making a decision on their placement. Information about the SACRA, as per the Prison Operations Manual, is available on the Department's website via the link below:
http://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/Induction/I-8.html

1. *Total throughput of prisoners*

There were 23,657 prisoners received into prisons during the 2017/18 financial year.

2. *Total number of prisoners held in shared cells (throughput view)*

This request is declined under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information requested is not held by Corrections, and we have no grounds for believing that it is held by another agency or more closely connected with the functions of another agency.

The information that you request does not currently exist in a form that can be readily supplied to you, and would instead require initiation of a project to extract, analyse and present the data in the form requested.

For your information, as at 18 July 2018, a total of 4,304 prisoners were sharing a cell.

3. *Total number of SACRA assessments undertaken*

4. *Total number of SACRA assessments completed on time*

Please see the table below provides number of SACRA assessments completed in the 2017/18 financial year.

| Prison | Total | Completed on time | % Completed on time |
|--|---------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Arohata Prison | 762 | 623 | 81.8% |
| Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility | 4,667 | 4,278 | 91.7% |
| Auckland South Corrections Facility | 3,137 | 2,894 | 92.3% |
| Christchurch Men's Prison | 5,258 | 4,674 | 88.9% |
| Hawke's Bay Regional Prison | 2,925 | 2,239 | 76.5% |
| Invercargill Prison | 670 | 606 | 90.4% |
| Manawatu Prison | 1,114 | 832 | 74.7% |
| Mt Eden Corrections Facility | 23,669 | 22,647 | 95.7% |
| Northland Region Corrections Facility | 4,688 | 4,391 | 93.7% |
| Otago Corrections Facility | 2,888 | 2,663 | 92.2% |
| Rimutaka Prison | 5,068 | 3,618 | 71.4% |
| Spring Hill Corrections Facility | 6,869 | 6,397 | 93.1% |
| Waikeria Prison | 4,927 | 4,639 | 94.2% |
| Whanganui Prison | 1,138 | 946 | 83.1% |
| Total | 67,780 | 61,447 | 90.7% |

As described in the SACRA review report, which has been previously released to you, and the Letter to the Chief Custodial Officer from me (Appendix 6), many of these assessments that were described as 'completed late' were completed 'on paper' and within minutes of the electronic cell allocation. In practice, this means the assessment still occurred before the prisoners are physically located in the cell together.

5. *Total number of times the SACRA assessment indicated the prisoner could be held in a shared cell*
6. *Total number of times the SACRA assessment indicated the prisoner should not be held in a shared cell*

This request is declined under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information requested is not held by Corrections, and we have no grounds for believing that it is held by another agency or more closely connected with the functions of another agency.

The information that you request does not currently exist in a form that can be readily supplied to you, and would instead require initiation of a project to extract, analyse and present the data in the form requested.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with Corrections. Alternatively you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Yours sincerely



Rachel Leota
National Commissioner