



the Australia and New Zealand

School of Government

CASE PROGRAM

2013-150.2

Crowded House: the New Zealand prisons dilemma (B:Epilogue)

By 2011, New Zealand's prison population "appeared to have peaked" and was expected to decline gradually over the next 10 years, the Department of Corrections told its incoming Minister, Anne Tolley. The number of people on community sentences and orders was also expected to decline. Currently, there were 8600 prisoners being held in one of 19 prisons.¹

Prison capacity had been increased and "reconfigured" since 2008. The immediate response to the expected capacity crisis was to add almost 1000 extra beds by "double-bunking" at the four most recently completed facilities and at Mount Eden. Double-bunking" involved fitting out some cells so that two prisoners could share accommodation, an arrangement that had already been used in some older prisons and was "common practice in other jurisdictions."

In the 2010 Budget, \$69.3 million was allocated over four years to "ensure there are enough prison beds to cope with the rising prison population....An additional 2270 prison beds will be needed at New Zealand prisons by 2019 due to forecast growth of more than 1200 prisoners and the decommissioning of 1055 existing prison beds."²

As at 14 June 2013, the prison muster was 8613, while available beds totalled 9545.³ By early 2013, Corrections had "reconfigured" its accommodation, closing prisons at Wellington (built in 1927) and New Plymouth (opened in 1870). Capacity was reduced at five other facilities. A 960-bed men's prison under construction at Wiri in South Auckland was due for completion in 2014.

In 2011, Corrections had a target to reduce reoffending by 10 percent by 2017. The State Sector-wide *Better Public Services* initiative, announced in 2012, revised this upwards.

This epilogue was written by Janet Tyson, Australia and New Zealand School of Government, to complement the case study 2013-150.1.

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¹ Department of Corrections, Briefing to the Incoming Minister 2011. Other significant changes in 2011 included the arrival in January of Ray Smith, formerly with the Ministry of Social Development, as Chief Executive of Corrections: and the implementation of a prison-wide smoke-free policy in July 2011.

² <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/budget-funding-ensure-enough-prison-beds>

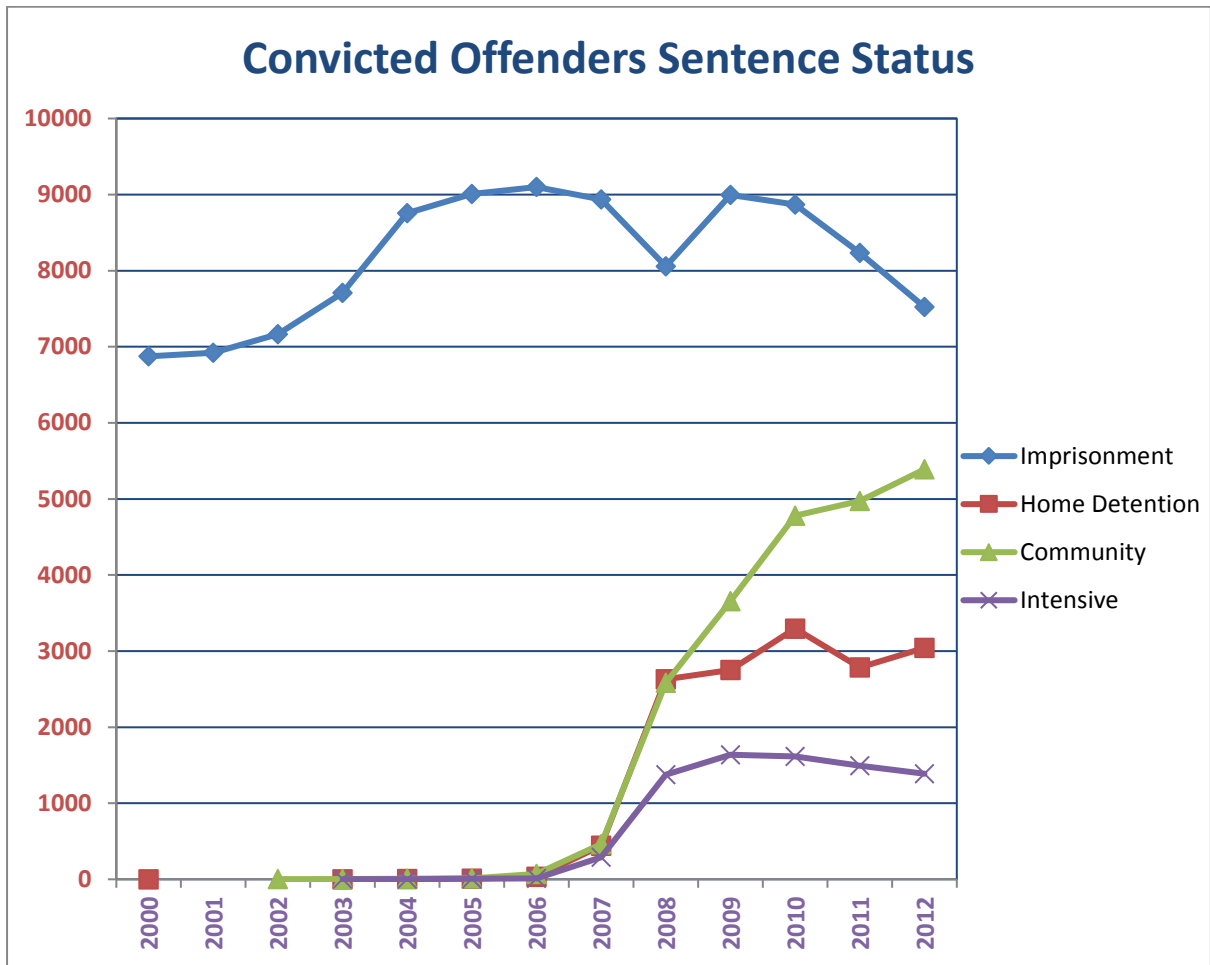
³ Department of Corrections media desk, 14 June 2013. 180 beds were not available for use while repairs were carried out.

Result 8, one of two result areas for which the justice sector was responsible, set a “bold but achievable” 25 percent reduction in both re-imprisonment and re-conviction of community offenders by 2017. This would mean around 600 fewer prisoners, 4000 fewer community offenders, and 18,500 fewer victims each year from 2017.

In Budget 2012, Corrections Minister Anne Tolley announced “reprioritised funding of \$65.0 million in operating expenditure over the next four years” which would be directed to addressing the drivers of crime. The funds would go towards expanded drug and alcohol treatment in prisons and the community; new and expanded rehabilitation services; increased education and employment training, and new partnerships with employers and industry to increase real job opportunities for prisoners and community offenders.⁴

⁴ Tolley, A. Media Release: ‘Setting targets for safer communities, less crime’, 24-05-2012 downloaded from <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/setting-targets-safer-communitie-less-crime> 14-06-2012

Exhibit A:



Extracted 19 April 2013 from NZ Stat.

<http://nzdotstat.stats.govt.nz/wbos/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=TABLECODE7353>

Exhibit B: New Zealand prison sites as at 2013

Source: Department of Corrections website 14-06-2013.

