

## **Government approves plans for increased prison capacity**

### **Questions and Answers:**

#### **By when will the proposed capacity be provided?**

The proposed double bunking at Northland Region Corrections Facility will add 80 prisoner places and it is expected to be in service by early 2017; the accommodation block at MECF will add 245 prisoner places and is expected to be in service by late 2019; and, if approved, the new facility at Waikeria Prison will receive its first prisoners in 2020 and will add around 1500 prisoner places to the prison network.

#### **What happens if you don't build?**

If we don't plan for the forecast increase our prisons will get to the point where the network will be unable to support our core obligations to provide safe, secure and humane containment. As a result prison will become less safe for staff and prisoners. In addition, our objectives to assist with the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners will be compromised.

#### **Doesn't this mean that your target of reducing re-offending by 25% by next year has not really worked?**

The target was an ambitious one and it has focussed the whole of Corrections on getting offending down, and this has occurred.

What it also revealed is that over recent years we've seen a change in the drivers of our increased prison population, with less bail to the community now and a greater proportion of violent and sex offenders spending longer in prison.

The programmes that initially helped drive down offending now need to be targeted at these groups and we're also adding investment in help those with mental health challenges.

#### **Why is Corrections focussed on prisoner rehabilitation?**

A key contribution that we can make to public safety is to ensure that people who come into our facilities do not re-offend. That is why reducing re-offending is our ultimate goal. We actively work with offenders to provide rehabilitation, education and employment training that will make a positive difference in assisting them to turn their lives around.

We used evidence from our current service to determine which programmes work best, which is why we're going to use them more, both to help prisoners now and drive down the growth in the muster.

Targeted interventions help address the key underlying drivers of serious crime (such as dysfunctional and violent family environments, drug abuse and illiteracy) via increased delivery of the Department's most successful rehabilitative and re-integrative programmes, these include:

- Drug Treatment Units to address drug and alcohol related issues;
- Special Treatment Units to address violent and sexual offending;
- Reintegration programmes (including Out of Gate and Guided Release); and
- Education and training programmes such as core literacy and numeracy and industry training.

**Why build a new facility at Waikeria?**

The majority of New Zealand's population is in the upper North Island and the growth in demand for prisoner places reflects this. Ensuring sufficient prison capacity in the Auckland and Waikato Regions is in line with forecast population growth. Corrections owns the land and as such the location offers effective use of our existing resources.

**Why are you proposing to build a new facility of this size?**

Building a large 1500 bed facility delivers economies of scale at an existing site and is efficient from an operational perspective.

**What will it all cost?**

The costs of providing additional capacity will not be finalised until detailed planning and procurement negotiations have been completed. However, we expect total construction costs for Phase 2 of the Prison Capacity Programme to be around \$1 billion.

**Will the public have a chance to express their view about the new facility at Waikeria Prison?**

Corrections will shortly undertake public consultation as part of the resource consent process.

**Will the public have a chance to express their view about the accommodation block at MECF?**

The existing planning designation permits the building of the accommodation block. Although formal public consultation for the accommodation block is not required under the RMA, Corrections will work with the community and neighbours during the construction phase to provide early notification of upcoming major works and to minimise disruptions.

**What happens next?**

Cabinet approval was given for construction of the accommodation block at Mt Eden Corrections Facility to proceed. Corrections will go out to tender. A rigorous evaluation process will follow. After negotiations are complete with the successful bidder, a contract will be signed and construction can commence in the first half of 2017. The new accommodation block is scheduled to receive its first prisoners in late 2019.

Corrections is preparing a detailed business case advancing the recommended procurement approach of the Design Build Finance Maintain (DBFM) PPP for the new capacity at Waikeria Prison for Cabinet consideration in late November 2016. If approved, Corrections will procure the new facility through a public-private-partnership (PPP). Expressions of Interest will be sought in January 2017 from consortia wishing to design, build, finance, and maintain the new facility. Up to three consortia will be shortlisted, and they will be asked to respond to a Request for Proposal (RFP). Responses to the RFP will go through a rigorous evaluation and Corrections expects to announce a preferred consortium in late 2017. After negotiations are complete with this consortium, a contract will be signed and construction can commence in mid-2018. The development may be delivered in two stages. It is anticipated that the new facility will receive its first prisoners in 2020.

Subject to consultation with staff and Unions, and recruitment of the agreed staffing to ensure site security, staff safety and prisoner welfare, it is proposed that the additional 80 beds to be added double bunking at Northland Region Corrections Facility will be in service in early 2017.