



NEW ZEALAND
PAROLE BOARD

Annual Report

2025 - 2026

Te whanaketanga o te whakaaro:
Change the mindset, the person will follow.



This design reflects on changing of pathways, individual growth, thus encouraging whānau growth. This talks to the many pathways one can walk in life; helping one to change their mindset is a major way to help an individual walk a new path.

Chairperson's Foreword



I am pleased to present this report on the work of the New Zealand Parole Board for the 2025-26 reporting year.

It has now been a year since I took on the role of Chairperson.

Throughout that time, I have observed a number of challenges facing the Board,

but perhaps nothing quite so evident as the need to address the Board's increasing workload.

The volume of hearings has increased every year since 2022-23, with the total number of hearings increasing from 8,045 in 2022-23 to 9,887 in 2025-26.

Impact of the increase in hearings

The Board held more hearings this year than it did any other year for the past decade. In a variety of different types of cases, it must assess whether a sentenced offender poses an undue risk to the safety of the community or not.

The hearing itself takes only a fraction of the time required for a Board member to prepare for it. The Board assesses up to 10 offenders a day and considers a vast amount of information before each hearing.

That information includes the sentencing notes of the Judge who sentenced the offender to imprisonment, as well as the offender's criminal history. The Board will also in each case have detailed information about the offender from the Department of Corrections as to the offender's risk assessment, their conduct in prison and their response to any rehabilitative programmes they have undertaken in prison.

The information may also include submissions from victims, specialist reports from psychologists and/or psychiatrists and reports of any restorative justice processes.

It may also receive legal submissions on behalf of the offender and the offender's own submission. In some cases, the Board will also hear from the offender's supporters.

Every member of the Board is acutely aware of their responsibilities to the New Zealand public, offenders and victims and takes those responsibilities very seriously.

The increase in hearing volumes has placed serious additional pressure on the Board.

Developing a workload model

I have commissioned an expert analysis of the Board's workload and the establishment of a workload model to forecast future resources required for the Board and administrative staff – including Hearing Managers and Victim Advisers – before, during and after hearings.

The workload model will draw both on empirical data and the Delphi Model (i.e. a subject matter expert's assessment of estimated times required for the various activities undertaken).

This work will also provide advice on how to schedule our work to ensure Board members have the time they need to prepare thoroughly for hearings and make sound decisions about an offender's release.

I look forward to receiving the findings of this work later in the year.

Acknowledging members

In 2025-26 we welcomed five new members: Panel Convenor Judge Jim Large and four community members: Jessica Bruin, Dr Shane Collins, Lawrence Jensen and Mike Kernaghan. We also farewelled two Board members this financial year – Paul Elenio and Judge Arthur Tompkins.

My first year in the role has given me first-hand experience of the challenges faced by both the New Zealand Parole Board and the administrative team that supports us.

My colleagues and I are deeply grateful for the hard work, professionalism, and dedication of the administrative support team, whose efforts are essential to the effective operation of the Board.

The Honourable J M Doogue Chairperson



Chairperson Hon Jan-Marie Doogue and Board Member Alan Hackney with Greg, Emma, John and James from the Salisbury Street Foundation, a residential programme for community reintegration of offenders.

Director's Report



Our team and our mahi

The New Zealand Parole Board administrative support team is made up of 38 staff based in Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Rotorua and the Hawke's Bay.

Areas of focus for the 2025-26 year

Our key focus has been the implementation of the new Parole Board Hearing System (PBHS), which went live on 1 September 2025, delivering an end-to-end digital platform to support the management of all Board hearings nationwide.

PBHS was developed through strong collaboration across multiple teams within Corrections, alongside our New Zealand Parole Board administrative support team, reflecting a shared commitment to improving how hearings are managed and delivered.

The new system has changed the way Hearing Managers undertake each and every task. Some tasks undertaken by Parole Board Liaison Officers in each prison have also changed.

PBHS integrates with Corrections' Integrated Offender Management System (IOMS) and is the first system to do so. As is common with the implementation of a significant new digital system, technical issues were identified following the launch. These have been progressively addressed through ongoing system updates.

The automation of key tasks that PBHS enables will assist our team in managing increased hearing volumes over time. It is a single system containing all Board, offender and victim information which automatically generates new parole eligibility hearings and associated tasks, Board packs, offender packs and notifications. It is also a system that will support future growth.

Responding to workload increases

Workload increased steadily over the past year. This was particularly evident in the month that PBHS went live, where our team supported 819 unique hearings, compared to 681 unique hearings in September 2024 – a 20% increase.

The number of victims engaging in the parole process continues to grow. From data now centrally captured in PBHS, we can see that more than 1,000 written and verbal submissions have been made to the Board since 1 September 2025.

There has also been an increase in the number of Official Information Act and Privacy Act requests the Board receives, and media attended hearings.

To respond to these increases, and improve the service we provide, we made the shift to centralise some tasks rather than requiring each board's assigned Hearing Manager to complete them.

One such task is centralising hearing notifications. We have already seen measurable performance improvements and will be looking for further opportunities to centralise tasks next year. Through the workload modelling project that is underway, we will better understand Hearing Manager workloads, and that will help us to establish what other tasks may benefit from centralisation.

I would like to thank our administrative support team for its commitment to learning and adapting to our new hearing system, which has significantly changed the way they undertake their mahi, particularly at a time of increased hearing volumes and hearing complexity.

Also thank you to the Board Chair, the Honourable Jan-Marie Doogue, and Board members for the support provided to our team throughout the year.

Karyn McLean

Director, NZPB Administrative Support Team

Introducing PBHS

PBHS reduces reliance on manual tasks and introduces more streamlined digital workflows.

Key improvements include:

- Bringing together information and processes that were previously spread across a range of systems. Hearing Managers can now access all relevant details in one place, assisting in hearing preparation.
- Organising documents into structured packs for the Board and those appearing before it, ensuring the right information is available when needed.
- Reducing manual effort by automatically generating key communications to participants.
- Allowing staff to tailor how information is displayed, helping them manage their work more effectively.

New Zealand Parole Board Members

Chairperson

The Honourable Jan-Marie Doogue. *Appointed 2025.*

Panel conveners

Judge Gus Andrée Wiltens. <i>Appointed 2022.</i>	Annabel Markham. <i>Appointed 2020.</i>
Serina Bailey. <i>Appointed 2020.</i>	Mary More. <i>Appointed 2016.</i>
Ann-Marie Beveridge. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>	Judge Stephen O'Driscoll. <i>Appointed 2023.</i>
Judge Louis Bidois. <i>Appointed 2011.</i>	Judge Eddie Paul. <i>Appointed 2010.</i>
Olivia Brittain. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>	Aaron Perkins KC. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>
Martha Coleman. <i>Appointed 2014.</i>	Judge Anna-Marie Skellern. <i>Appointed 2023.</i>
Judge Michael Crosbie. <i>Appointed 2003.</i>	Kathryn Snook. <i>Appointed 2011.</i>
Judge Jim Large. <i>Appointed 2026.</i>	Carolina Tiumalu. <i>Appointed 2020.</i>
Judge Jane Lovell-Smith. <i>Appointed 2002.</i>	Neville Trendle. <i>Appointed 2008.</i>
Richard Marchant KC. <i>Appointed 2022.</i>	

Forensic psychiatrist members

Professor Susanna Every-Palmer. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>	Dr Jeremy Skipworth. <i>Appointed 2008.</i>
Dr Blair Leslie. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>	

Community members

Jessica Bruin. <i>Appointed 2026.</i>	Marian Kleist. <i>Appointed 2019.</i>
Dr Shane Collins. <i>Appointed 2026.</i>	Dr Paul Knox. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>
Karen Coutts. <i>Appointed 2019.</i>	Matire Kupenga-Wanoa. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>
Greg Coyle. <i>Appointed 2017.</i>	Sam Perry. <i>Appointed 2015.</i>
Dr Sally Davis. <i>Appointed 2015.</i>	Fiona Pimm. <i>Appointed 2015.</i>
Materoa Dodd. <i>Appointed 2019.</i>	Campbell Roberts. <i>Appointed 2019.</i>
Dr Sharon Gemmell MNZM. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>	Gemma Rogers. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>
Alan Hackney. <i>Appointed 2016.</i>	Gordon Sinclair. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>
Pauline Hopa. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>	Alistair Spierling. <i>Appointed 2019.</i>
Dr Julia Ioane. <i>Appointed 2022.</i>	Waimarama Taumaunu. <i>Appointed 2016.</i>
Lawrence Jensen. <i>Appointed 2026.</i>	Lawrence Tawera. <i>Appointed 2015.</i>
Mike Kernaghan. <i>Appointed 2026.</i>	Desley Watkins. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>
Chris King. <i>Appointed 2017.</i>	Annabel Young. <i>Appointed 2024.</i>

Board membership as at 30 June 2026

2025-26 Highlights

Welcoming new members

In the 2025-26 financial year, five new Board members were appointed.

Jessica Bruin has 17 years' experience in the justice and mental health sectors in New Zealand and Australia. With qualifications in psychology and criminology, she has held both frontline and national roles within Corrections, supported people accessing community mental health services and worked with individuals experiencing gambling-related harm.

Dr Shane Collins has extensive leadership experience across the public, community and sporting sectors. She has held senior management roles with the New Zealand Police, Earthquake Commission, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Ministry for Women and was previously Chief Executive of Rugby League New Zealand.

Lawrence Jensen has worked in social services for more than 30 years, facilitating a reconciliatory process with whanau, police and the community. He served in many roles including Chair Iwi community panels with Te Pae Oranga (2008-2026), as a JP (2010-2026), and on the Executive Board for Tuu Oho Mai, abuse intervention and prevention of family violence (2008-2026).

Mike Kernaghan has held senior leadership roles across New Zealand's sporting and not-for-profit sectors for more than 30 years. He has served as Chief Executive Officer of the Cancer Society of New Zealand Badminton New Zealand and Triathlon New Zealand and has been a New Zealand Olympic Committee selector since 2013. He also had a distinguished career in lawn bowls as both a national selector and New Zealand representative.

Judge Jim Large was admitted to the Bar in 1975 and practised in Dunedin, primarily in Criminal and Family Law and also served as Tenancy Adjudicator and District Inspector Mental Health. Judge Large was Appointed as District Court Judge in 2015, retiring in 2024.

Supporting the establishment of a Fijian Parole Board



In October 2025, New Zealand Parole Board members and some of the administrative support team met with Fiji's Acting Attorney General & Minister for Justice Hon Siromi Turaga and representatives from the Fijian government and Parole Board.

In the past 12 months, members of the New Zealand Parole Board and its administrative support team met twice with the Fijian Parole Board and government representatives. The purpose of the meetings was to share our knowledge with the representatives as they work to establish a Parole Board in Fiji. At the most recent meeting in May 2026, staff fielded questions about how our team supports the New Zealand Parole Board. The delegation also spent a day at Rimutaka Prison and met with the Director, Acting Chairperson Kathryn Snook and PC Annabel Markham.

Workforce modelling

In 2026, the Chairperson commissioned a project to develop an empirically based model for rostering and scheduling Board hearings and managing non-hearing work.

The work includes building an understanding of how the Board and administration support team works, and the time it takes members and staff to prepare for, run and follow up after the various types of hearings.

Two workload models will be completed by the end of November 2026 with review and testing completed by February 2027.

Year in Review

1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026

2025-26 at a glance

Total hearings **9,887***
⬆ 9% on 2024-25

Total offenders seen **5,416**
⬆ 15% on 2024-25

Once again, there was an increase in both the number of Parole Board hearings held and the number of offenders seen this financial year.

Out of the total 9,887 hearings, 7,005 were parole hearings.



PAROLE HEARINGS

Total parole hearings **7,005**

Parole hearings for offenders on determinate sentences **6,446**

Parole hearings for offenders on indeterminate sentences **559**

Parole declined **5,648**

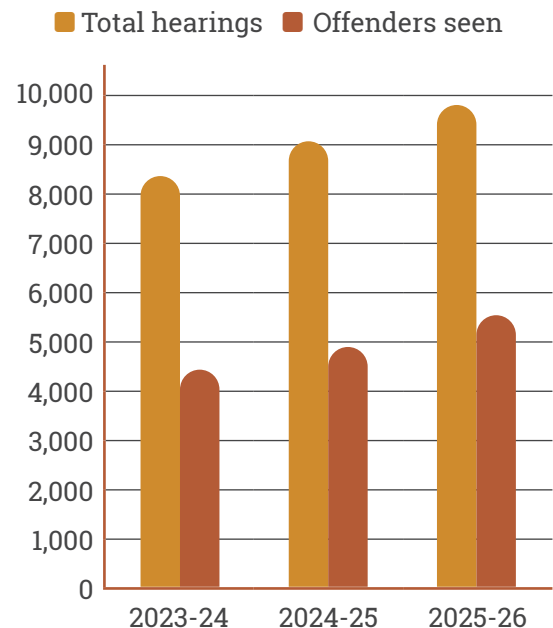
Parole granted **1,171**

Parole granted for offenders on determinate sentences **1,101**

Parole granted for offenders on indeterminate sentences **70**

Offenders released on conditions on completion of sentence **681**

Growth over three years



Increase in hearings and offenders seen over the past three years

*This figure includes cases where a person in prison may have two or three hearings recorded against their name even if they only appeared before the Board once.

For example, one person may have had a parole hearing (which was declined) and a Statutory Release Date (SRD) conditions hearing at the same time. This is recorded as two hearings.

With those duplicates removed, this figure drops to the "Final unique hearing count" which is 9,475.

Year in Review

1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026

RECALLS

Recall applications made by the Department of Corrections	354
Recall applications for offenders on determinate sentences	294
Applications granted	240
Recall applications for offenders on indeterminate sentences	60
Applications granted	44
Total number of recall hearings	440

Although the vast majority of the Board's work is considering whether or not to grant parole, it also carries out a significant amount of other work.

In 2025-26 the Board heard 353 applications to recall offenders from parole to prison, 9% less than in 2024-25, when there were 387 applications. In 2025-26 the Board granted approximately 80% of applications (282) compared to 2024-25 when 86% of applications (334) were granted.

Applications for recalls are triggered by Community Corrections. Typically, this happens when an offender is not coping on parole, not complying with their special conditions or, in some cases, have committed further crime.

The Board considers, within hours, any application for a recall from Community Corrections and may grant an interim recall application. If it does so, a warrant is issued for the offender's arrest and the offender is taken back to prison. Within a month, a full hearing is held to decide whether the recall should be made final.

MONITORING HEARINGS

It is important for the Board to understand how offenders are coping in the community after release. The Parole Act 2002 allows the Board to monitor an offender's progress for up to one year after parole is granted.

Monitoring hearings give the Board the opportunity to talk to an offender and their probation officer to understand what is working and if they need further support in the community.

It is also an opportunity, if the Board is concerned, to recall an offender, however this is a rare event.

Monitoring hearings enable the Board to assess the offender's progress on parole	560
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In 2025-26, the Board saw 560 offenders who had been granted parole, in monitoring hearings, to see how they had managed their parole. This compares with 518 hearings in 2024-25.

**VARYING CONDITIONS**

Applications to vary parole conditions	324
Number of hearings as a result	340
Applications granted	289

**DISCHARGING CONDITIONS**

Applications to discharge parole conditions	18
Number of hearings as a result	20
Applications granted	15

**VARYING AND DISCHARGING CONDITIONS COMBINED**

In 2025-26, the Board varied and/or discharged 342 special conditions.

It did so to ensure that the conditions better reflected the offender's risk and public safety.

Applications to vary and/or discharge parole conditions	342
Number of hearings as a result	360
Applications granted	304

**EXTENDED SUPERVISION ORDERS**

Applications by the Department of Corrections for the Board to impose special conditions	25
Number of hearings as a result	33
ESO conditions imposed	25
Hearings for biennial reviews of ESO conditions	62

*These figures exclude Compassionate Release applications but do include applications to vary Compassionate Releases.

Year in Review

1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026



COMPASSIONATE RELEASE

Offenders who are seriously ill and unlikely to recover can apply to the Board for an early compassionate release. These are always difficult decisions. If risk can be managed in the community, the Board's preference is always to safely release an offender who has a serious illness where recovery is unlikely. Often offenders are close to death when released. The Board received 11 such applications in the 2025-26 year and granted 7.

Applications received	11
Applications granted	7

Offenders who have given birth to a child in prison can also apply for compassionate release. The Board received one application on these grounds in 2025-26.



REQUESTS FOR AN EARLIER HEARING

under Section 26 of the Parole Act

When an offender appears before the Board for to be considered for parole, the Board may set the offender a series of tasks, e.g. undertaking psychological, alcohol or drug programme counselling in prison to reduce their risk and developing a release plan for a safe release into the community.

If the offender completes the tasks earlier than anticipated, they may apply to the Board for an earlier hearing.

Applications for an earlier hearing under Section 26 of the Parole Act	189
Applications granted	91



REVIEWS

Offenders may ask to have their decision reviewed under Section 67 of the Parole Act 2002.

Applications to review Board decisions	94
Decisions that were then amended, quashed or referred to the Board for reconsideration	20
Decisions that were confirmed	74



REVOCATION ORDERS

The Board may revoke or amend a direction to release an offender at any time before parole commences. If a decision is revoked another hearing must be held as soon as practicable.

Decisions revoked	27
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PAROLE POSTPONEMENT

The Board can postpone a hearing for a maximum of five years where it is satisfied that, in the absence of any significant change in their circumstances, an offender will not be suitable for release when they are next due to be considered for parole.

Parole postponements	5
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VICTIM SUBMISSIONS

Victims can meet with the Board to make a verbal submission before an offender's hearing.

Verbal submissions made	328
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MEDIA AND INFORMATION REQUESTS

There has been an increase in Official Information Act (OIA) and Privacy Act (PA) requests.

There were 35% more OIA requests in 2025-26 than the previous year, and 32% more privacy requests.

Official Information Act requests	203
Privacy Act requests	183
Media attended hearings	52
Hearing decisions released to media	259



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www.paroleboard.govt.nz
info@paroleboard.govt.nz
