



NEW ZEALAND
PAROLE BOARD

Annual Report 2024 - 2025

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.

Chair's foreword



I am pleased to present this report on the work of the New Zealand Parole Board in the 2024/25 reporting year.

While I only took up my role as Chair in mid-July 2025, after the reporting period had ended, and can therefore claim no direct involvement in the activities and achievements reported on, I am

delighted to acknowledge the fine work of my fellow Board members, NZPB Director Karyn McLean and her administrative team that support our work and all those who contribute to our hearings throughout the year.

During the 2024/25 year the Board conducted a total of 8,498 unique hearings. These hearings involved a total of 4,767 offenders serving long-term sentences. Long-term sentences are in excess of two years imprisonment. The Board does not have any involvement with offenders who are sentenced to two years or less or community-based sentences.

In comparison, in the 2023/24 year the Board conducted 7,698 unique hearings and saw 4,234 offenders.

Reflecting on those increases, I wish to acknowledge the leadership and dedication of my predecessor, Sir Ron Young, who retired at the end of March this year after seven years as Chair, and the legacy he leaves behind. Sir Ron was a tireless worker and advocate for the Board, guiding it through many challenges during his tenure.

Sir Ron was also a tireless proponent for improving the experience for victims of crime who engage with the Board. During the last three years a range of initiatives have been rolled out to make what is inevitably a challenging experience as easy of possible for victims.

It was appropriate that the new '*Enhancing the voice of victims in Parole Board hearings*' initiative, a collaboration between the NZPB and NZ Police, was implemented late last year while he was still in office and he was able to see the almost immediate beneficial impact of the initiative.

As well as Sir Ron, the Board farewelled other long-standing members who completed their terms in the last year. Associate Professor Philip Brinded (1993 - 2024), Judge Geoff Ellis (2019 - 2025), Bryan McMurray (2008 - 2024) and Alan Ritchie (2008 - 2024) all stepped down during the year and I thank them each for the important contributions they have made to the work of the Board over many years.

Associate Professor Brinded sat on the Extended Board, for over 20 years, guiding its challenging work in deciding when, if at all, those subject to life sentences or preventive detention, might be released into the community. All those associated with the Board were delighted to see he was recognised in this year's King's Birthday Honours for services to psychiatry.

With the numbers of hearings and offenders steadily increasing, it is critical that the staff who support the Board have the right tools to ensure they can work as efficiently and effectively as possible. In last year's report Sir Ron spoke of the work underway to implement a new operating model, which will assist the administrative team to move away from manual, time-consuming processes. Considerable progress has been made over the last 12 months, with the new system due to be rolled out in the first quarter of the new reporting year. NZPB Director Karyn McLean has more to say about this in her report.

In closing I want to again recognise the work of all those involved in the work of the Parole Board. Thank you for what you do. I look forward to meeting more of you as I take on this exciting new challenge.

The Honourable J M Doogue
Chair

Director's report

The NZPB administrative support team is made up of 35 staff, based in Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and the Hawke's Bay.

A priority for the 2024/25 year has been progressing the development of our new Parole Board Hearing System. The aim of this modern and fit-for-purpose technology is to enable an easy to use and predictable end-to-end administrative support operation. Our new system will automate a range of key tasks and pre-populate information from the Department of Corrections' Integrated Offender Management System. The changes the system will bring will enable our team to spend more time on high-impact interactions, such as more active case management and victim engagement.

The build of the new system is now completed, and the team is moving into the training and user-acceptance testing phase of the project. The new system is on track to go live in the first quarter of the 2025/26 year.

A highlight this year has been the design and implementation of the 'Enhancing the voice of victims in Parole Board hearings' initiative, a collaboration between the NZPB and NZ Police that went live in November 2024. Victims who may not have been aware of their rights are being given an opportunity to make submissions to the Parole Board and to opt-into the Victim Notification Register (VNR) to receive other information they are entitled to.

Through this initiative the Parole Board is receiving important victim information it would not have otherwise been aware of when considering whether to release offenders on parole – this includes information on victim locations which ensures offenders are not released near victims.

To date nearly 70 individuals have registered on the VNR since the start of the initiative. Several of these victims have met with, or intend to meet with, the Parole Board to make oral submissions about their case. Many others have made written submissions. The majority have agreed to share their address details with the Parole Board so that release decisions are fully informed.

Feedback received so far has been overwhelmingly positive and people have been very appreciative of the efforts made both to locate them and to offer the opportunity for their voices to be heard.

As a team we have also continued our focus on providing quality services to the Parole Board, Ara Poutama Aotearoa, victims, those appearing before the Board, and whānau. This has included an enhanced focus on various quality assurance measures to help in ensuring those appearing before the board and victims receive notifications and outcomes in a timely manner and receive the right information at the right time.

I would like to thank our NZPB administrative support team for the care and dedication they bring to their mahi every day, particularly as we have move towards the implementation of the new hearing system that will enhance the way they undertake their roles.

Finally, I would like to thank Sir Ron Young for the leadership, support and guidance he provided our team during his tenure as Chair. This has been greatly appreciated by each of our team (past and present).



NZPB Admin Team Director Karyn McLean and Department of Corrections Deputy Chief Executive - Communities, Partnerships and Pathways Sean Mason present former Board Chair Sir Ron Young with a patu to mark his retirement.

Our team is looking forward to supporting the new NZPB Chair, Hon. Doogue and all Board Members in the coming year.

Karyn McLean
Director, NZPB Administrative Support Team

Enhancing the voice of victims in Parole Board hearings:

What victims say

"This was really helpful, thank so you much, this is amazing for me and my family."

"I'm very grateful to be now involved with the VNR and I'm representing my wider whānau through the process. I express my gratitude to the Board for being able to have my voice."

"Thank you I really appreciate your help in organising my meeting with the Board. The work you and your team do is incredible."

"This is a really good idea and I'm happy to be kept informed."

"I'm grateful now to have had the chance to make a submission."



New Zealand Parole Board Members

Chairperson

The Honourable Jan Marie Doogue. *Appointed 2025. Took up her appointment on 15 July 2025.*

Panel convenors

Judge Gus Andrée Wiltens. *Appointed 2022.*

Serina Bailey. *Appointed 2020.*

Ann-Marie Beveridge. *Appointed 2024.*

Judge Louis Bidois. *Appointed 2011.*

Olivia Brittain. *Appointed 2024.*

Martha Coleman. *Appointed 2014.*

Judge Michael Crosbie. *Appointed 2003.*

Judge Jane Lovell-Smith. *Appointed 2002.*

Richard Marchant. *Appointed 2022.*

Annabel Markham. *Appointed 2020.*

Mary More. *Appointed 2016.*

Judge Stephen O'Driscoll. *Appointed 2023.*

Judge Eddie Paul. *Appointed 2010.*

Aaron Perkins KC. *Appointed 2024.*

Judge Tania Sharkey. *Appointed 2020.*

Judge Anna-Marie Skellern. *Appointed 2023.*

Kathryn Snook. *Appointed 2011.*

Carolina Tiumalu. *Appointed 2020.*

Judge Arthur Tompkins. *Appointed 2004.*

Neville Trendle. *Appointed 2008.*

Judge Tania Williams-Blyth. *Appointed 2014.*

Forensic psychiatrist members

Professor Susanna Every-Palmer. *Appointed 2024.*

Dr Blair Leslie. *Appointed 2024.*

Dr Jeremy Skipworth. *Appointed: 2008.*

Community members

Karen Coutts. *Appointed 2019.*

Greg Coyle. *Appointed 2017.*

Dr Sally Davis. *Appointed 2015.*

Materoa Dodd. *Appointed 2019.*

Paul Elenio. *Appointed 2014.*

Dr Sharon Gemmell MNZM. *Appointed 2024.*

Alan Hackney. *Appointed 2016.*

Pauline Hopa. *Appointed 2024.*

Dr Julia Ioane. *Appointed 2022.*

Chris King. *Appointed 2017.*

Marian Kleist. *Appointed 2019.*

Dr Paul Knox. *Appointed 2024.*

Matire Kupenga-Wanoa. *Appointed 2024.*

Sam Perry. *Appointed 2015.*

Fiona Pimm. *Appointed 2015.*

Campbell Roberts. *Appointed 2019.*

Gemma Rogers. *Appointed 2024.*

Gordon Sinclair. *Appointed 2024.*

Alistair Spierling. *Appointed 2019.*

Waimarama Taumaunu. *Appointed: 2016.*

Lawrence Tawera. *Appointed 2015.*

Desley Watkins. *Appointed 2024.*

Annabel Young. *Appointed 2024.*

Board membership as at 31 July 2025



Year in review

1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025

This year saw increases in both the number of Parole Board hearings held and offenders seen.

Hearings went up from 8,261 in 2023/24 to 9,098 in 2024/25, while the number of offenders seen rose from 4,234 in 2023/24 to 4,767 in 2024/25.

Total hearing count

9,098^{*1}

Offenders seen

4,767



Parole hearings

Total parole hearings **6,158**

Hearings for offenders on determinate sentences **5,615**

Hearings for offenders on indeterminate sentences **543**

Parole approved **1,171**

Parole granted for offenders on determinate sentences **1,096**

Parole granted for offenders on indeterminate sentences **75**

Offenders released on conditions on completion of their sentence. **538**

Their sentence has expired therefore these offenders cannot be recalled to prison for breaches.

^{*1}. 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 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" number, 8,498.



Recalls

While the vast majority of the Board's work is considering whether to grant parole, it also has significant other work.

In 2024/25 the Board heard 387 applications to recall offenders from parole to prison, compared with 375 in 2023/24. It granted 334 of those applications, compared with 329 in 2023/24.

Recall applications made by the Department of Corrections	387
Number of hearings as a result	432
Applications granted	334
Recall applications for offenders on determinate sentences	327
Number of hearings as a result	358
Applications granted	283
Recall applications for offenders on indeterminate sentences	60
Number of hearings as a result	74
Applications granted	51

Applications for recalls are triggered by Community Corrections. Typically, an offender is either not coping on parole, not complying with their special conditions or in some cases they 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, then a warrant is issued for the offender's arrest and they are taken back to prison. A full hearing is held within a month to decide whether or not 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 Parole Board to monitor an offender's progress for up to one year after parole is granted. Monitoring hearings give the Board an opportunity to talk to an offender and their probation officer to understand what is working and what might need further support in the community.

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

Monitoring hearings enable the Board to assess the offender's progress on parole

518

In 2024/25, the Board saw 518 offenders who had been granted parole, on monitoring hearings, to see how they had managed their parole. This compares with 513 hearings in 2023/24.





Varying conditions (excluding Compassionate Release)

Applications to vary parole conditions	237
Number of hearings as a result	244
Applications granted	210



Discharging conditions

Applications to discharge parole conditions	176
Number of hearings as a result	178
Applications granted	152



Varying and discharging conditions combined

In the year under review the Parole Board varied or discharged 362 special conditions. It did so to ensure that the conditions better reflected the offender's risk and public safety.

Applications to discharge and vary parole conditions	413
Number of hearings as a result	422
Applications granted	362



Extended Supervision Orders

Applications by the Department of Corrections for the Board to impose special conditions	30
Number of hearings as a result	38
Applications granted	28
Biennial reviews of ESO conditions	55



Compassionate release

Offenders who are seriously ill and unlikely to recover can apply to the Parole Board for an early compassionate release.

These are always difficult decisions. If risk can be managed in the community and then the Board's preference is always to safely release an offender who has such a serious illness and where recovery is unlikely. Often offenders are close to death when released. The Board received 14 such applications in the 2024/25 year and granted 11.

Offenders who have given birth to a child in prison can also apply for compassionate release. The Board received no applications on these grounds in 2024/25.

Applications received	14
Number of hearings as a result	17
Applications granted	11



Requests for an earlier hearing

Where an offender appears before the Parole Board for consideration of parole, the Board would typically set an offender a series of tasks. For example, psychological counselling, and alcohol and drug programme counselling, to be undertaken in prison to reduce their risk and to develop a release plan for a safe release into the community. Sometimes, the offender completes these tasks earlier than anticipated. In such cases, the Board can see offenders earlier than anticipated to consider parole. In the last year the Board considered 133 such applications and granted early hearings in 72 cases.

Applications for an earlier hearing under section 26 of the Parole Act **133**

Cases heard earlier than scheduled **72**



Reviews

Offenders can request to have their decision reviewed under Section 67 of the Act.

Applications to review Board decisions during the year **67**

Decisions that were then amended, quashed or referred to the Board for reconsideration **7***

Decisions that were confirmed **60**

* Four amended, one quashed, two referred back to the Board.



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 practical.

Decisions revoked this year **29**



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 this year **8**



Victim submissions

Verbal submissions made to the Board by registered victims.

Verbal submissions made this year **355**



New members join the New Zealand Parole Board

Thirteen new members were appointed to the Board at the end of 2024, one of the largest cohort of new members to join the Board.

Their initial induction involved four days of training in Wellington in late January, led by Panel Convenor Martha Coleman and Board Member Alan Hackney.

Key areas of focus in this initial induction included:

- Understanding the Parole Act
- Assessing risk
- The hearing process/approach and the different types of hearings
- Victim involvement and meetings
- Structure decision-making
- Parole Board Administration.

Our new members then spent two days in March at Auckland Regional Women's Corrections Facility and Spring Hill Corrections Facility as part of their induction.

Members were welcomed onto both sites and toured the prisons to gain a better understanding of custodial operations beyond the board room.

Panel Convenor Olivia Brittain commentated that she found the two days incredibly enlightening and valuable.

"Gaining insight into the programmes and daily lives of offenders was informative and valuable, and it is knowledge that will serve us well in our roles. I am incredibly grateful for the experience."

At Auckland Regional Women's Corrections Facility, members heard from Case Managers and staff from Manurewa Community Corrections. The joint session showcased the positive and collaborative working relationship between the prison and local community corrections sites. This provided valuable insights for the members on the mahi being done leading up to release and how conditions set by the NZPB are practically managed in the community.

Members met with Spring Hill Corrections Facility Case Managers who discussed the reintegration services provided and the preparation undertaken for those they work with appearing before the NZPB.

Members also met with those attending the Saili Matagi Programme and the Special Treatment Unit for Men with Violent Offending and Adult Sexual Offending. This provided the members an opportunity to understand the content and experience of participating in these programmes, as well as speak with them in a less formal setting.

After six days of induction, observing a range of hearings and being supported by a Board mentor, all of our new members participating in Boards from April.



Paul Whitehead, Manager Psychological Services at SHCF, talking with the new members in the prison barber shop. From left Paul, Annabel Young, Matire Kupenga-Wanoa, Dr Paul Knox, Olivia Brittain, Ann-Marie Beveridge and Gordon Sinclair.



A session with the SHCF Case Managers on reintegration.

Members inducted

Ann-Marie Beveridge

Ann-Marie is a barrister based in the Waikato who has experience both defending and prosecuting cases of serious crime and has experience in mental health, intellectual disability and youth advocacy.

Olivia Brittain

Olivia was admitted to the Bar in 2006 and has over 18 years' legal experience, predominantly as a criminal lawyer, both in the public and private sector. She is the Managing Solicitor of a Community Law Centre, a role which she has held for more than three years.

Professor Susanna Every-Palmer

Professor Every-Palmer is Head of the Department of Psychological Medicine, University of Otago Wellington and forensic psychiatrist. She held numerous senior leadership roles in mental health including as a Forensic Clinical Director and as the Acting Director of Mental Health for New Zealand. Susanna is a former Chair of the New Zealand Committee of the RANZCP and a current Vice-President of the Pacific Rim College of Psychiatry.

Dr Sharon Gemmell MNZM

Dr Gemmell has served in leadership, advisory, academic, and governance positions in education, health, justice, iwi, and community. She has a doctorate in Indigenous Studies, First-Class Honours Master of Māori studies and a Master of Education.

Pauline Hopa

From Whangarei, Northland, Pauline is Ngati Whatua and Ngapuhi. Her work experience has been as a senior Manager for Corrections in Community Probation and the Ministry of Justice - Te Kooti Whenua Māori. Pauline was an integral part of the Māori SIDS team who spearheaded the Māori SIDS prevention mahi throughout Aotearoa under the auspices of the University of Auckland, in the late 90s / early 2000s.

Dr Paul Knox

Dr Knox is a registered clinical psychologist who works in private practice in Dunedin and also works at the University of Otago. He spent the first six years of his career as a psychologist working in the criminal justice system.

Matire Kupenga-Wanoa

Matire brings over 30 years of experience in Aotearoa's Criminal Justice System, spanning frontline probation work, regional operations, and senior leadership roles—including Regional Operations Director (Probation) and Deputy Prison Director at Arohata Prison. She also led national addiction and reintegration services as General Manager at CareNZ Manaaki Aotearoa.

Dr Blair Leslie

Dr Leslie is a forensic psychiatrist qualified in both medicine and law. He is employed with the Regional Forensic mental health service, Wellington. He has clinical experience in inpatient, prison and community care settings. He also has experience as a lawyer, gained with Crown Law and in international organisations in Geneva including the World Health Organisation and World Trade Organisation.

Aaron Perkins KC

An experienced criminal lawyer, Aaron was appointed King's Counsel in 2016.

Gemma Rogers

Gemma Rogers has over 15 years' experience working in the public service leading portfolios across corrections, health and housing. Her experience in the criminal justice sector in New Zealand, and New South Wales and Victoria, Australia, involved both assessment and management roles.

Gordon Sinclair

Gordon is a Clinical Psychologist with more than 30 years of practice. He has experience with developing programmes for offending behaviour, risk assessment, and treatment. He has worked across health, mental health, and disability services.

Desley Watkins

Desley has worked in the justice sector for over 25 years, from frontline police and probation to national management roles for Corrections. She has experience with parole, extended supervision, returning offenders and electronic monitoring.

Annabel Young

Annabel was in the NZ Territorial Army for nine years as a Signals Officer. For 15 years she worked in the taxation field, both as a solicitor and as a chartered accountant. She briefly worked with NSAD (now Care NZ) as a Trustee and as chief executive prior to becoming a Member of Parliament in 1997. After two terms in Parliament, Annabel worked for non-government organisations in the areas of tax accounting, farming, pharmacy and coastal shipping.



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