



DEPARTMENT OF
CORRECTIONS
ARA POUTAMA AOTEAROA

HEALTH & SAFETY
STRATEGY
2016 – 2020
YEAR ONE

Everyone Safe

Every Day

Foreword from the Minister

I'm proud to see the commitment the Department of Corrections is making to keep everyone safe, every day through this health and safety strategy.

Whether we are talking about the public, staff, offenders or visitors to prison, safety is central to everything you do each and every day at Corrections.

Like Corrections, this Government wants to make work a safer place to be. Every life lost in the workplace is one too many.

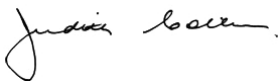
Government agencies have a clear duty to do their work safely and to minimise the risk of harm.

This strategy is not just about meeting legislative requirements. It's about doing what is right.

I'm especially pleased to see the breadth of initiatives covered here; from wellness programmes for new recruits, to addressing violence among prisoners, safety for those on community work, and a sharper safety focus with the department's external providers and partners.

Perhaps best of all, the strategy empowers everyone at Corrections to make safety a priority in everything they do. That sets a powerful example to others about making New Zealand a safer place to work and live.

I can assure you this is a priority for me as Minister of Corrections and I look forward to supporting Corrections to achieve its goal to keep everyone safe, every day.



Hon Judith Collins
Minister of Corrections

Foreword from the Chief Executive

Everyone safe, every day.

It's a simple concept for health and safety that poses a complex challenge for Corrections.

Our responsibility goes beyond our 8000 staff and workmates. It extends to safeguarding some of the country's most dangerous people, and the wider public.

This health and safety strategy requires our collective commitment and leadership.

It means doing some things differently, and it means thinking differently so that safety is foremost in all our decision making and all our actions.

Together we will build a safety culture that helps us to reduce incidents of serious harm and minimise risk so we can focus on our primary goal to reduce re-offending.

As Chief Executive I've made a personal commitment to health and safety. I'm asking the same of you.

It will take our ongoing effort to achieve the goals set out in this strategy and it's an effort we must make.

Failure is too costly.

Each and every one of you deserves to come to work each day and go home safe. Together we can make sure that everyone is safe, every day.



Ray Smith
Chief Executive

Achievements

We are placing greater importance on health and safety throughout the organisation.

Safety Leadership & Culture

- > Established a Health & Safety Risk Governance Committee where ELT and independent experts review our higher risk activities. This group has achieved:
 - stopping unacceptably high risk activity (e.g. wind fall forestry)
 - vehicle fleet upgrades
 - quad bike crush prevention devices
- > Introduced drug & alcohol testing for staff to ensure they are clear headed and safe on the job
- > Overhauled our health & safety approach with new recruits to put safety first

Equipping Staff to be Safe

- > Introduced stab resistant body armour
- > Trialled on body cameras
- > Deployed smart phones with safety applications across our community workforce

- > Refreshed Advanced Control & Restraint approaches in line with best practice
- > Rolled out Safety in the Community and Tactical Exit training to our prison and community workforces
- > Purchased Health & Safety Tracker software to record incidents and near misses to help prevent future harm

Offender Safety

- > Promoted strategies to reduce offender violence throughout the organisation

Health & Wellbeing

- > Established staff welfare roles in each region to support staff through tough situations at work and in their personal lives
- > Extended staff health and vaccination programmes
- > Trialled Physical Readiness Assessment with wellness support to promote healthy balanced lifestyles

Partnerships for Safety

- > Joined the Business Leaders' Health & Safety Forum where we share knowledge and learning with other organisations that have world-leading safety practice
- > Established partnerships on the construction of a new prison in south Auckland and overhauls of Community Corrections sites in most need of updating

The broader New Zealand Health & Safety Strategy

The Pike River disaster was a real wake-up call for New Zealand. In response, the Government pulled together a taskforce to lift our national efforts.

Every workplace death represents real families losing a loved one – a mother, father, son, daughter, uncle or auntie who goes off to work but never comes home.

Our workers are twice as likely to be killed or suffer serious harm as workers in Australia and six times as likely as those in the United Kingdom (UK). One in ten workers suffer harm in New Zealand and between 600 and 900 people die from work-related illnesses.

These are appalling statistics and the “she’ll be right” attitude just isn’t good enough.

New Zealand Strategy and Vision

In response to the taskforce recommendations the Government has introduced a new regulatory body called Worksafe New Zealand and enacted new legislation which is more in line with Australian and UK approaches. Both the UK and Australia started from a similar base as us and have succeeded in significantly reducing harm rates in recent years.



WORKSAFE
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Keeping the public, our staff and offenders safe is foremost in all we do, every day. Our people and partners are empowered to take action so that harm is eliminated or minimised.

Safety Leadership and Culture

Safety leadership and culture is about the ownership each of us takes every day to put safety first.

Goals for 2016 – 2020:

We will develop our people at every level to give them further skills and confidence in owning and leading the safety and wellbeing of our staff and the offenders in our care. This includes effective and proactive governance at every level.

We will be clearer about what a safety culture at Corrections looks like. Leaders will use evidence from channels like safety audits and near miss reporting so they can work in partnership with staff, unions and offenders to eliminate or minimise the hazards most likely to cause harm or injury.



In 2016 we will:

- > Provide clear safety guidance to staff and managers so that everyone is clear on their roles and responsibilities in relation to health & safety.
- > Provide training and useful tools to all frontline managers to help them work together with their teams to improve safety outcomes.
- > Develop and deliver a senior leadership safety programme based on best practice that enables more senior leaders to lead safety effectively and empower staff throughout the organisation to make changes when it comes to safety.
- > Help everyone to use the Health & Safety Tracker information to learn lessons, better understand “lead indicators” and take proactive action to prevent incidents.



Equipping Staff to be Safe

The nature of our business and the safety risks we face demand that we fully equip staff with what they need to remain safe in everything we do.

Goals for 2016 – 2020:

We will get better at collectively focusing on the critical risks most likely to cause serious harm. We will identify the most effective controls to eliminate or minimise these risks and ensure everyone has the right equipment, knowledge, technology and skills to achieve this.

Managers and staff will be empowered to deploy these approaches according to risk.



In 2016 we will:

- > Deliver the offender contacts application to our staff who use smart phones so that they can make even better evidence based decisions around safety risks.
- > Upgrade 13 more Community Corrections sites as part of a five year \$80 million plan to create safer working environments that will meet the demands of a modern corrections system.
- > Introduce a wider range of practical health & safety training packages focused on our most critical hazards such as:
 - offender violence
 - vehicle related accidents
 - stress and fatigue
 - industrial accidents (offender employment/community work)
 - exposure to bodily fluids.
- > Further expand and improve the pepper spray programme following our review with the unions.
- > Explore, test and expand how we deploy the latest and best emerging safety equipment such as Stab Resistant Body Armour, On Body Cameras and industry appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) on offender employment and community work sites.

Offender

Safety

We have a duty of care to offenders while we are working with them. Addressing violence and other causes of harm will not only improve offender safety but also make our staff safer and lift our ability to reduce re-offending.

Goals for 2016 – 2020:

We will continue to build on our zero tolerance approach to violence and other anti-social behaviour. Ensuring we understand and address the underlying causes of this behaviour will make offenders safer while they are in our care and when they have finished their sentences.

Safety experience, skills and qualifications will be highly valued across the labour market as New Zealand lifts its game on health & safety. Providing these qualifications and working practices to offenders while they are in our care will make Corrections safer and significantly increase offenders' employment prospects.



In 2016 we will:

- > Introduce incentives and earned privileges schemes to reward pro-social, non violent and ultimately safe behaviour.
- > Expand the use of prisoner violence panels and prisoner engagement panels to reinforce our zero tolerance stance and address the underlying causes of prisoner violence.
- > Deliver violence reduction and zero tolerance programmes to offenders across Community Corrections and prisons.
- > Provide health & safety training and qualifications to offenders engaged in industry and work to make them safer while they are with us and also more attractive to potential employers.
- > Introduce tools that allow us to step up our use of intelligence and other data so we can proactively eliminate and minimise the risks associated with offender violence.

Health

and Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing are the foundations of a safety culture. Corrections can be a tough environment for our staff and the offenders in our care. Focusing on the health and wellbeing of everyone is one of the most reliable early prevention methods available to us.

Goals for 2016 – 2020:

We aim to build on the health and wellbeing approaches for everyone at Corrections. A more unified approach will cover the full spectrum of wellbeing for offenders and staff. This includes deliberate efforts to proactively address their physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing.





In 2016 we will:

- > Introduce a leading wellness programme for all new frontline recruits focusing on effective and practical approaches to maintaining physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing.
- > Refresh the wellness and wellbeing content and tools available to staff and managers to ensure they are tailored to the specific needs of our work environment.
- > Establish regional wellness plans to ensure that all sites are effectively driving health and wellness as a priority activity.
- > Deliver specific training for managers and staff on how to practically integrate health and wellness activity into our daily routines.
- > Present a clear set of recommendations through the “Making Shifts Work” project to create rosters for our staff that enhance safety and wellbeing. We will work closely with unions, staff and independent experts to achieve this.
- > Establish clear guidelines and tools to help managers and staff further improve how we manage workload and stress in the workplace.

Partnerships for Safety

Safety is a team effort where everyone has a role to play in getting better outcomes. Effective partnerships with Worksafe New Zealand, the unions and organisations that provide services to us or on our behalf are vital if we are to achieve our safety goals.

Goals for 2016 – 2020:

Corrections works closely with many partner organisations to deliver our services and it is important they all prioritise safety in the same way we do. We will build stronger working practices to ensure that all of our partners and providers take safety as seriously as we do and they have the systems and culture to back that up.

We will strengthen our partnerships and working practices with staff and unions to ensure that we truly work as one team to make Corrections safer for everyone who is affected by our work.

We will continue to work closely with other organisations who can help us in our safety journey. Working with Worksafe New Zealand and maintaining membership of the Business Leaders' Health & Safety Forum gives us access to expertise and lessons learned to ensure our safety programme is world class.



In 2016 we will:

- > Provide clear guidelines to our partners in construction so that everyone is clear on their roles and responsibilities in relation to health & safety.
- > Set up a structured approach to ensure frontline staff are involved in safety decision making at the Executive Leadership Team's Health & Safety Risk Governance Committee. This will include a review and refresh of our participation agreements.
- > Organise regular engagements and formal arrangements with both Worksafe New Zealand and the Business Leaders' Health and Safety Forum to help us to lift our safety performance.
- > Set up clear health & safety expectations and monitoring regimes for those organisations who deliver offender-facing services for us. There will be a particular focus on agency community work, the NGO sector and our partners such as Serco and 3M.
- > Take an active partnership role with other state sector agencies in the high risk working group such as NZ Fire Service and Police.



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