

News Release

CALIBRATED REHABILITATION APPROACH TO MINIMISE RE-OFFENDING

The Singapore Prison Service (SPS) ensures the safe custody of inmates and provides robust rehabilitation and reintegration programmes to minimise re-offending. In regard of the latter, in the last year, we have adopted a more rehabilitation-centric approach to dealing with drug abuse, and placed a higher proportion of supervisees on community corrections.

Recidivism Rate Remained Low and Stable

2. The overall recidivism rate has remained low and stable over the past three years (Table 1).¹ To address offenders' re-offending risks and rehabilitation needs, SPS adopts a throughcare approach, which means working closely with community partners and volunteers to provide comprehensive supervision and support for offenders, from in-care (when they are in prison) to aftercare (when they rejoin the community). SPS continued to place suitable offenders on structured and calibrated evidence-based rehabilitation programmes and community supervision programmes, which together with their families' support and their personal commitment to change, facilitated a smoother reintegration into the community.

Table 1: Overall Recidivism Rate

2015 Release Cohort	2016 Release Cohort	2017 Release Cohort
25.9%	23.7%	24.0%

Amendments to the Misuse of Drugs Act Enhance Rehabilitation Prospects of Drug Abusers

3. Since January 2019, repeat drug abusers who do not commit other concurrent offences are channelled to relevant rehabilitation pathways under the Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) regime, instead of being sentenced to Long-Term (LT) imprisonment.

4. As a result, there was an increase in the number of abusers admitted to DRC, from 1,257 in 2018 to 2,080 in 2019. Over the same period, the number of LT offenders admitted to prison decreased from 991 in 2018 to 459 in 2019.

¹ Recidivism rate is defined as the percentage of local inmates detained, convicted and imprisoned again for a new offence within two years of their release.

Table 2: Total Drug-related Admissions

Category	2017	2018	2019
DRC Admissions	1,152	1,257	2,080
Penal (LT) Admissions	810	991	459
Total	1,962	2,248	2,539

5. The DRC regime consists of the In-care Phase and the Community-Based Programme (CBP) Phase. During the In-care Phase, abusers go through psychology-based correctional programmes, skills training, as well as family support and religious services, in order to prepare them for reintegration into society after their release. These help abusers deal with the psychological and emotional aspects of their drug abuse, as well as equip them with the knowledge and skills to prevent relapse. Aftercare supervision during the CBP Phase provides abusers with supportive measures that facilitate their reintegration into society.

6. Superintendent of Prisons (SUPT 1A) Loh Hong Wai, Superintendent of the DRC in Institution B5, said, “At the DRC, by understanding the factors that led abusers to use drugs, we are able to tailor our rehabilitation regime accordingly. This helps us to provide structured and evidence-based interventions that are more effective in preventing further drug abuse. Even after their release, we continue to provide support to ease their transition back into the community, giving them a better chance of staying drug-free in the long run.”

More Offenders Placed on Community Corrections

7. The number of offenders placed on Community Corrections programmes continued to increase, as part of the step-down approach adopted by SPS to help offenders undergo rehabilitation in the community while still being supervised. This approach allows them to transit more smoothly to life after release.² The number of offenders placed on Community Corrections was 2,415 in 2019, a 20.9% increase from the 2018 (Table 3).

Table 3: Total Offender Population in the Community as at 31 Dec 2019

Community Corrections Population	2017	2018	2019
Total	1,688	1,998	2,415

² Community Corrections includes Community-Based Programmes, the Mandatory Aftercare Scheme (MAS) and Community-Based Sentences such as the Short Detention Order and Day Reporting Order.

Employment Crucial to Reintegration

8. SPS works closely with the Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitative Enterprises (SCORE) to identify job opportunities for offenders before they are released. In 2019, there were 5,603 employers registered with SCORE (Table 4), which was a 5.6% increase from the 5,307 employers in 2018. 96% of inmates who were referred to SCORE secured a job with these employers before release (Table 5).

Table 4: Number of Employers Registered with SCORE

2017	2018	2019
5,520	5,307	5,603

Table 5: Percentage of Inmates Referred to SCORE who Secured a Job Prior to Release

2017	2018	2019
97%	96%	96%

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About the Singapore Prison Service (SPS)

SPS is an agency under the Ministry of Home Affairs. As a key member of the Home Team, SPS operates a secure and exemplary prison system. SPS protects society through the safe custody and rehabilitation of offenders, working closely with its partners in aftercare and prevention. SPS is committed to realising its Captains of Lives vision. Its team of uniformed officers and civilian staff work together to steer ex-offenders towards becoming responsible citizens with the help of their families and the community.

About the Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitative Enterprises (SCORE)

SCORE is a key partner of SPS and plays an important role in our correctional system by creating a safe and secure Singapore through the provision of rehabilitation and aftercare services to inmates and ex-offenders. SCORE adopts a multi-faceted approach to enhance the employability of offenders and prepare them for their eventual reintegration into the national workforce by focusing on skills training, employment assistance, the development of the aftercare sector, and community engagement. One of its key engagement initiatives is the Yellow Ribbon Project. With the support of the community, SCORE aims to rebuild lives of ex-offenders by helping them enhance their employability potential.

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Singapore Prison Service Annual Statistics 2019

Total Offender Population in Prisons and in the Community as at 31 December 2019

Offender population	2017	2018	2019
In-care	10,948	10,809	10,570
Community Corrections	1,688	1,998	2,415
Total	12,636	12,807	12,985

Recidivism Rates³

Recidivism	Release Cohort 2015	Release Cohort 2016	Release Cohort 2017
Overall	25.9%	23.7%	24.0%
Penal	25.1%	23.7%	23.1%
DRC	29.5%	23.8%	28.1%

³ Recidivism Rate is defined as the percentage of local inmates detained, convicted and imprisoned again for a new offence within two years from their release.

Convicted Penal Inmate Population as at 31 December 2019⁴

Category		2017	2018	2019
Total Convicted Penal Population		8,885	8,781	8,078
Gender	Male	8,051	7,892	7,259
	Female	834	889	819
Age Group				
Age Group	Below 21	227	235	248
	21 – 30	1,441	1,466	1,347
	31 – 40	1,856	1,856	1,754
	41 – 50	2,555	2,385	2,040
	51 – 60	2,133	2,058	1,914
	61 - 65	491	559	530
	66 and above	182	222	245
Education Level⁵				
Education Level⁵	No Education	149	147	128
	Primary	3,151	2,975	2,564
	Secondary	4,301	4,257	3,942
	Pre – U	180	258	292
	Vocational	691	750	774
	Tertiary & Above	413	394	378
Main Offence Group⁶				
Main Offence Group⁶	Crimes Against Person	655	705	701
	Property Crimes	966	970	862
	Commercial Crimes	440	447	448
	Drug Offences	6,178	6,030	5,420
	Immigration Offences	102	64	59
	Crime Against Public Order	126	149	145
	Customs Offences	226	220	271
	Traffic Offences	62	58	39
	Other Offences ⁷	130	138	133

⁴ Convicted penal inmate population refers to the number of inmates who have already been charged and are within the inmate population as at the end of the respective year.

⁵ As declared by inmates upon admission.

⁶ Inmates are tracked based on index (i.e. most serious) offence.

⁷ Examples of "Other Offences" include National Registration Offences, National Service Related Offences and Telecommunication & Computer Related Offences.

Convicted Penal Admissions as at 31 December 2019⁸

Category		2017	2018	2019
Total Convicted Penal Admissions		8,974	9,471	8,574
Gender	Male	7,847	8,335	7,548
	Female	1,127	1,136	1,026
Admission⁹ Age Group				
Admission⁹ Age Group	Below 21	304	332	332
	21 - 30	2,600	2,715	2,431
	31 - 40	2,415	2,520	2,386
	41 - 50	2,008	2,049	1,730
	51 - 60	1,274	1,369	1,215
	61 - 65	249	324	297
66 and above		124	162	183
Education Level¹⁰				
Education Level¹⁰	No Education	162	191	175
	Primary	2,500	2,195	1,754
	Secondary	4,375	4,709	4,085
	Pre - U	268	531	636
	Vocational	873	1,025	1,137
	Tertiary & Above	796	820	787
Main Offence Group¹¹				
Main Offence Group¹¹	Crimes Against Person	1,091	1,282	1,303
	Property Crimes	1,417	1,465	1,386
	Commercial Crimes	823	771	762
	Drug Offences	1,690	1,958	1,416
	Immigration Offences	970	735	698
	Crime Against Public Order	844	909	742
	Customs Offences	578	501	528
	Traffic Offences	1,016	1,271	962
	Other Offences ¹²	545	579	777

⁸ Convicted penal admission figures refers to the number of convicted inmate admissions for the calendar year.

⁹ Age as at admission.

¹⁰ As declared by inmates upon admission.

¹¹ Inmates are tracked based on index (i.e. most serious) offence.

¹² Examples of "Other Offences" include National Registration Offences, National Service Related Offences, and Telecommunication & Computer Related Offences.

Remand population as at 31 December 2019¹³

Category		2017	2018	2019
Total Remand Population		1,343	1,391	1,135
Gender	Male	1,214	1,281	1,044
	Female	129	110	91
Age Group				
Age Group	Below 21	45	57	43
	21 - 30	395	387	309
	31 - 40	374	351	328
	41 - 50	293	297	236
	51 - 60	191	231	174
	61 - 65	32	47	33
	66 and above	13	21	12
Education Level¹⁴				
Education Level¹⁴	No Education	32	21	24
	Primary	353	331	258
	Secondary	697	752	572
	Pre - U	59	72	70
	Vocational	134	145	137
	Tertiary & Above	68	70	74
Main Offence Group¹⁵				
Main Offence Group¹⁵	Crimes Against Person	195	178	205
	Property Crimes	234	234	209
	Commercial Crimes	82	82	98
	Drug Offences	698	728	489
	Immigration Offences	18	15	10
	Crime Against Public Order	48	53	44
	Customs Offences	30	41	28
	Traffic Offences	16	17	14
	Other Offences ¹⁶	22	43	38

¹³ Remand population figures refer to the number of remand inmates who are within the prison population as at the end of the respective year.

¹⁴ As declared by inmates upon admission.

¹⁵ Inmates are tracked based on index (most serious) offence only.

¹⁶ Examples of "Other Offences" include National Registration Offences, National Service Related Offences, and Telecommunication & Computer Related Offences.

DRC inmate population as at 31 December 2019¹⁷

Category		2017	2018	2019
Total DRC Population		1,360	1,461	2,309
Gender	Male	1,093	1,171	1,938
	Female	267	290	371
Age Group				
Age Group	Below 21	116	131	115
	21 – 30	535	586	615
	31 – 40	411	389	592
	41 – 50	183	200	412
	51 – 60	88	112	431
	61 - 65	21	28	93
	66 and above	6	15	51
Education Level¹⁸				
Education Level¹⁸	No Education	9	10	31
	Primary	199	253	552
	Secondary	808	780	1,127
	Pre – U	35	83	110
	Vocational	189	223	351
	Tertiary & Above	120	112	138

¹⁷ The DRC Regime is meant for local inmates only. The figures refer to the number of DRC inmates who are among the inmate population as at the end of the respective year.

¹⁸ As declared by inmates upon admission.

DRC Inmate Admissions as at 31 December 2019¹⁹

Category		2017	2018	2019
Total DRC Admissions		1,152	1,257	2,080
Gender	Male	913	986	1,745
	Female	239	271	335
Admission Age Group²⁰				
Admission Age Group²⁰	Below 21	121	138	136
	21 - 30	487	529	552
	31 - 40	322	316	515
	41 - 50	135	167	378
	51 - 60	67	78	376
	61-65	16	19	82
	66 & Above	4	10	41
Education Level²¹				
Education Level²¹	No Education	7	10	27
	Primary	157	207	499
	Secondary	681	666	1,008
	Pre - U	30	75	97
	Vocational	167	199	324
	Tertiary & Above	110	100	125

¹⁹ The figures refer to the number of DRC inmate admissions for the calendar year.

²⁰ Age as at admission.

²¹ As declared by inmates upon admission.

Criminal Law Detainee (CLD) Population as at 31 December 2019²²

Category		2017	2018	2019
Total CLD Population		103	104	97
Gender	Male	103	104	97
	Female	0	0	0
Age Group				
Age Group	Below 21	4	3	4
	21 - 30	51	56	58
	31 - 40	33	33	24
	41 - 50	10	9	9
	51 - 60	4	2	1
	61 - 65	1	1	1
	66 and above	0	0	0
Education Level²³				
Education Level²³	No Education	3	3	2
	Primary	13	11	10
	Secondary	73	74	70
	Pre - U	1	1	3
	Vocational	12	13	10
	Tertiary & Above	1	2	2
Type of Criminal Activity				
Type of Criminal Activity	Secret Societies	86	93	88
	Unlicensed Money-lending	11	9	9
	Drug Trafficking	5	1	0
	Others	1	1	0

²² The CLD population refers to the number of persons detained under the Criminal Law (Temporary Provisions) Act and are still under detention as at the end of the respective year.

²³ As declared by inmates upon admission.

Releases – Convicted Penal Releases

Category		2017	2018	2019
Total Convicted Penal		9,545	9,492	9,149
Gender	Male	8,345	8,398	8,058
	Female	1,200	1,094	1,091

Releases – DRC Releases

Category		2017	2018	2019
Total DRC Releases		1,241	1,170	1,231
Gender	Male	1,004	920	980
	Female	237	250	251

Number of Judicial Executions as at 31 December 2019

Executions	2017	2018	2019
Murder	0	2	2
Firearms	0	0	0
Drug	8	11	2
Total	8	13	4

Major Incidents²⁴

Major Incidents	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019 (as at Dec 2019)
Escape Rate per 10,000	0	0	0
Assault Rate per 10,000 ²⁵	30.4	39.1	35.7

²⁴ Major incidents are measured per fiscal year (FY) as published in the annual Budget Book.

²⁵ This covers assault cases perpetrated by inmates who are charged under aggravated prison offences. Such cases would include any attack by inmates on prison officers, or assaults by inmates on fellow inmates in which serious injuries are sustained by the victim(s).

Emplacement and Completion Rates for Community-Based Programmes (CBP) as at 31 December 2019

Emplacement Number	2017	2018	2019
CBP for Penal inmates	951	1,098	1,420
CBP for DRC inmates	964	952	1,140

Completion Rates ²⁶	2017	2018	2019
CBP for Penal inmates	97.7%	98.5%	95.7%
CBP for DRC inmates	89.6%	86.3%	87.6%

Sentencing Numbers and Completion Rates for Community-Based Sentences (CBS) as at 31 December 2019

Day Reporting Order (DRO) ²⁷	2017	2018	2019
Number of offenders sentenced	27	26	31
Completion Rates	87.2%	100.0%	90.5%

Short Detention Order (SDO) ²⁸	2017	2018	2019
Number of offenders sentenced	32	23	22
Completion Rates	100%	100%	100%

Emplacement and Completion Rates for Mandatory Aftercare Scheme (MAS) as at 31 December 2019²⁹

Mandatory Aftercare Scheme	2017	2018	2019
Number of inmates emplaced	314	734	1,139
Completion Rates	91.6%	93.0%	91.4%

²⁶ The completion rate for DRC inmates as at 31 December 2017 has been amended to 89.6%. The variance of 1.8 percentage points was due to data transference errors. The amended completion rate and accompanying footnote have been reflected in previous years' Annual Stats Releases in the SPS website.

²⁷ A Day Reporting Order is a Community-Based Sentencing option introduced in the Criminal Procedure Code 2010, whereby an offender reports to a day reporting centre for counselling and rehabilitation programmes, instead of serving a sentence in prison.

²⁸ A Short Detention Order is a Community-Based Sentencing option introduced in the Criminal Procedure Code 2010, whereby an offender is detained in prison for a period not exceeding 14 days.

²⁹ With the amendment of the Prisons Act in 2014, selected ex-offenders who are at higher risk of re-offending or who need more support in their reintegration will be placed on the Mandatory Aftercare Scheme (MAS). The MAS is a structured aftercare regime that gradually reintegrates selected ex-offenders into society through progressive arrangements. It aims to support ex-offenders in staying crime-free and prevent them from re-offending.

Vocational Programmes as at 31 December 2019

Employability Skills Training³⁰			
Yearly Enrolment	2017	2018	2019
Number of training places	26,846	25,861	26,972
Number of inmates trained³¹	4,653	4,340	5,923

Work Programmes³²			
Engaged in Work Programmes	2017	2018	2019
Average number of inmates	3,606	3,352	3,104

Employment Assistance as at 31 December 2019

Number of Employers Registered with SCORE		
2017	2018	2019
5,520	5,307	5,603

Percentage of inmates referred to SCORE and secured a job prior to release		
2017	2018	2019
97%	96%	96%

³⁰ Employability Skills Training Programmes are provided by SPS and SCORE to equip inmates with relevant job skills. SPS and SCORE's training system is aligned to Workforce Singapore's Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) framework. Examples of training offered include Workplace Literacy (WPL), Employability Skills, Certified Operations Professional (COP) and Certified Operations Specialist (COS). Vocational skills training such as the WSQ Operate Forklift and Certificate in Generic Manufacturing (CGM), WSQ Retail Operations, and WSQ Hotel Accommodation and Services were also conducted.

³¹ Inmates may attend more than one training course.

³² Work programmes aim to impart vocational and employability skills through on-the-job training. Discipline, positive work ethics and values are inculcated by immersing inmates in a real work environment within prisons.

Academic Programmes

Yearly Enrolment	2017 ³³	2018	2019
Other Courses³⁴	153	166	94
'NA' Level	154	120	111
'NT' Level	-	86	142
'O' Level	132	95	87
'A' Level	60	66	49
Diploma	-	-	53
Total	499	533	536

Academic Results

GCE 'NA' Level Results of Prison Candidates (At least 1 'NA' Pass)		
2017	2018	2019
99.2%	100%	100%
GCE 'NA' Level Results of Prison Candidates (19 points or less in ELMAB3 - English, Mathematics and Best 3)		
2017	2018	2019
48.7%	56.7%	66.2%
GCE 'NA' Level Results of Prison Candidates (5 'NA' Passes)		
2017	2018	2019
62.2%	67.8%	74.3%
GCE 'NT' Level Results of Prison Candidates (At least 1 'NT' Pass)		
2017	2018	2019
NIL	100%	100%
GCE 'NT' Level Results of Prison Candidates (3 'NT' Passes)		
2017	2018	2019
NIL	73.1%	86.8%
GCE 'O' Level Results of Prison Candidates (At least 1 'O' Level Pass)		
2017	2018	2019
100%	100%	98.3%
GCE 'O' Level Results of Prison Candidates (At least 3 'O' Level Passes)		
2017	2018	2019
81.3%	81.7%	84.5%
GCE 'O' Level Results of Prison Candidates (5 or more 'O' Level Passes)		
2017	2018	2019
41.5%	34.5%	52.8%

³³ Yearly enrolment for Other Courses, 'NA' Level, 'O' Level and A Level for 2017 have been amended to reflect enrolment at the beginning of the year.

³⁴ Other courses include short-term courses such as English literacy classes and basic education programmes (primary to secondary level). Some classes offered previously under Other Courses are now reclassified under Employability Skills Training programmes.