

Our Ref: HQ15223
[REDACTED]

23 December 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your recent freedom of information request, which was received on 30 November 2015. This gives a statutory deadline for responding of 30 December 2015 under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

You asked the following, and for ease of reference I have copied your original questions as follows.

1. How many prisoners have been granted leave from prison to go home over the upcoming Christmas period? (23rd – 27th December 2015) Of these prisoners, how many are serving a life sentence and how many are serving a sentence relating to sexual offences.
2. In 2014, between 23rd and 27th December, how many prisoners were given temporary leave to go home over the Christmas period? Of these prisoners, how many were serving a life sentence and how many were serving a sentence relating to sexual offences

We have now completed our search for the information you request, please see answers below.

1. Having completed our search of all available records held by the SPS I can confirm a total of 175 prisoners are scheduled to be released on temporary leave during this time, of which 15 are serving a life sentence. We do endeavour to provide information whenever possible. However, in this instance an exemption under section 38.1(b) of FOISA applies to some of the information requested. Due to the low numbers of prisoners serving sentences relating to sexual offences being granted leave from prison during the timescales provided, we are unable to provide the exact number as this may lead to the identification of the person(s) concerned. We can however tell you that less than 5 have been granted leave during this time period.
2. Having completed our search of all available records held by the SPS I can confirm a total of 211 prisoners were given temporary leave. The figures for 2014 unfortunately did not aggregate sentence type when recorded.

Further information on home leave during the festive season in 2015 is available on our website here: <http://www.sps.gov.uk/FreedomofInformation/FOI-3758.aspx>

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you have the right to request a review. Your request should be made within 40 working days of the date of receipt of this letter and we will reply within 20 working days of receiving your request. Under section 20(3)(c)(ii) of the Act your request should outline your reason for seeking a review. If our decision is unchanged following a review and you remain unsatisfied with this, you then have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner.

If you require a review of our decision to be carried out, please write to Colin McConnell, Chief Executive, Scottish Prison Service, Calton House, Redheughs Rigg, Edinburgh EH12 9HW. The review will be undertaken by staff not involved in the original decision making process.

I trust this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Head of Corporate Affairs