

16 March 2016

Dear [REDACTED]

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your recent freedom of information request, which was received on 19 February 2016. This gives a statutory deadline for responding of 18 March 2016 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. Please provide a breakdown of how many Home Background Reports were requested by each prison in each year since 2013/14, and the year up to date. How many of these were requested (a) more than 6 weeks, (b) 6 weeks, (c) 5 weeks, (d) 4 weeks, (e) 3 weeks, (f) 2 weeks, (1) week or less in advance of a parole board meeting date.
2. Please provide a breakdown of how many Home Background Reports that were requested were received (a) before the deadline, (b) on the deadline, (c) 1-2 weeks after the deadline, (d) 3-4 weeks after the deadline, (e) more than 4 weeks after the deadline, by each prison in year since 2013/14 and the year up to date.
3. Please provide details on what guidance is provided to each prison with regards to timescales in which they should request Home Background Reports.
4. Please provide details on how many occasions did a Home Background report become outdated causing a need for a new one to be requested due to a change in the date of a parole board meeting in each year since 2013/14, and the year up to date.

We have now completed our searches, with the answers detailed below.

In response to **Questions 1 & 2**; having completed our search of all electronic and paper records held by the SPS please find enclosed a summary report of the information available from each establishment.

In response to **Question 3**; having completed our search of all electronic and paper records held by the SPS I can confirm where a prisoner is subject to the parole process, his/her Parole Qualifying Date (PQD) is held on the Prisoner Records System (PR2). PR2 automatically produces a report each month for all establishments, listing all prisoners whose PQD is within six months.

The current guidance for establishments on timescales for requesting Home Background Reports is as follows:

“Parole Co-ordinators should ensure that the relevant reports [including Home Background Reports] are requested immediately following notification to commence a dossier and that reports are as up-to-date as possible at the point of referring the dossier to the Parole Board, or sending the dossier to the Parole Unit”.

The notification is the report produced by PR2 six months prior to the PQD. Social work are required to provide the Home Background Report within six weeks of the request.

In response to **Question 4**; having completed our search of all electronic and paper records held by the SPS I can confirm that only one establishment records this information. We enclose all the information available however for completeness you may wish to contact the Parole Board for Scotland who may hold the information you require. Contact details below;

Parole Board for Scotland
Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh
EH11 3XD

General Enquiries: 0131 244 8373

<http://www.scottishparoleboard.gov.uk/contact.asp>

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,

Corporate Communications Manager
Scottish Prison Service