

Emergency Early Release 2025/26

Data Analysis Summary Report
for releases between January
and April 2026 (tranches 4-7)

August 2026

This paper sets out an operational data analysis of use of the use of powers provided for in the Early Release of Prisoners (Scotland) Regulations 2025 by the Scottish Prison Service (SPS)

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Introduction

This paper sets out an operational data analysis of use of the use of powers provided for in the Early Release of Prisoners (Scotland) Regulations 2025 (“the Regulations”)¹.

The Regulations came into force on 10 November 2025. They were made in exercise of the powers conferred on the Scottish Ministers by Section 3C of the Prisoners and Criminal Proceedings (Scotland) Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) (as introduced by Section 11 of the Bail & Release from Custody (Scotland) Act 2023 (the 2023 Act)).

There are a number of exclusions to those eligible for Emergency Early Release that can be found [here](#).

This paper provides detail on the numbers released under these Regulations; the use of the Governor veto, releases by sex, sentence length and index offence; and releases by health board, local authority and establishment.

This data covers the last four tranches of releases under these Regulations (tranches 4-7), which took place in early 2026. All totals quoted in this report cover these tranches only; for information on tranches 1-3 see the [Emergency Early Release – January 2026 Data Analysis report](#).

Between 26 January and 30 April 2026, 328 individuals on short-term sentences were released early. This took place over 4 defined tranche periods. 16 individuals represented in the table below were delayed releases who were allocated to a tranche as per their original release date, but (in line with the legislation) were released a few days later to ensure that robust community reintegration plans were in place.

Tranche	Number of releases (proportion of all releases)
4 (26 th -28 th January)	142 (43%)
5 (23 rd -25 th February)	74 (23%)
6 (23 rd -25 th March)	53 (16%)
7 (28 th -30 th April)	59 (18%)
Total	328

¹ [The Early Release of Prisoners \(Scotland\) Regulations 2025](#)

Data Reporting

SPS has committed to being open and transparent about use of the Regulations. Weekly updates of the total number of people released were provided on the SPS website following each of the seven tranches. Further publications of data will be forthcoming about returns to custody for those who were released under these regulations.

This paper sets out an analysis of data by various breakdowns for tranches 4-7. The breakdowns provided include the number of Governors' vetoes applied, and the number of those released by sex, index offence grouping, sentence length, health board, and local authority.

Use of Governor's vetoes

Governors and Directors (and, in their absence, Deputy Governors/Deputy Directors) had the power to veto (prevent) the release of an individual if they had evidence to show that the person posed an immediate risk of harm to a named individual or group if released under the power.

The distribution of vetoes across the tranches is displayed below:

Tranche	Total considered	Initial vetoes (proportion)	Re-assessed vetoes (proportion)	Number of releases
4	290	90 (31%)	58 (20%)	142
5	254	75 (30%)	105 (41%)	74
6	260	82 (32%)	125 (48%)	53
7	276	80 (29%)	137 (50%)	59
Total	1,082	329 (30%)	425 (39%)	328

Before each tranche, individuals who were eligible to be considered for release but who had been vetoed in previous tranches were reassessed to consider whether they should be vetoed again, or if their circumstances had changed and were now suitable for release.

The table shows the number of individuals considered in each tranche, the number who were vetoed in the initial tranche they were eligible for release in, and then the number of people who were vetoed again in a subsequent tranche they were eligible for release in.

These figures, as far as possible, exclude those who were initially considered for release and later became ineligible (for example, due to receiving a further sentence), but due to constant changes to sentences in the eligible population, it is not possible to ascertain that all ineligible individuals have been excluded from these figures.

In previous publications of emergency release data, SPS has provided figures for those individuals who were initially deemed to be eligible for early release, but subsequently became ineligible before they were released (for example, where they received another custodial sentence before their early release date arrived). However, as this programme of emergency release operated over a period of several months, individuals moved in and out of eligibility across the period of assessment (e.g. when new sentences made individuals ineligible, or backdated sentences meant they became eligible for consideration), and as a result it has not been possible for such figures to be reported for this process.

Releases by sex

Of those released:

Sex	Number released (proportion of releases)
Female	37 (11%)
Male	291 (89%)
Total	328

Releases by sentence length

Sentence length	Released (proportion of releases)
0 to 6 months (0-180 days)	22 (7%)
6+ to 12 months (181-365 days)	101 (31%)
12+ months to 2 years (366-730 days)	126 (38%)
2+ years to 3 years (731-1,095 days)	50 (15%)
3+ to 4 years (1,096-1,460 days)	29 (9%)
Total	328

Sentence length reported here is the length of the sentence the individual was serving at the point of release. All those released were within 180 days of their original date of liberation.

Releases by index offence grouping

Index offence groupings are shown here in order of sentence tariff carried (i.e. most serious offences first), as delineated in the official prison population statistics².

Index offence grouping	Released (proportion)
Non-sexual crimes of violence	100 (30.5%)
Crimes against society	97 (29.6%)
Crimes of dishonesty	74 (22.6%)
Road traffic offences	28 (8.5%)
Antisocial offences	19 (5.8%)
All other offences	10 (3.0%)
Total	328

Releases by NHS Board

Both local authority and NHS board are assigned on the basis of the last known address for an individual in custody; they may not necessarily return to the same area. Where there were no individuals returning to an NHS board or local authority, the NHS board or local authority is not included in the tables below. Please note that <5 denotes 0 to 4.

NHS Board	Released
NHS Ayrshire and Arran	32
NHS Borders	7
NHS Dumfries and Galloway	<5
NHS Fife	16

² [Scottish prison population statistics technical manual - gov.scot](#)

NHS Forth Valley	24
NHS Grampian	22
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde	71
NHS Highland	14
NHS Lanarkshire	38
NHS Lothian	48
NHS Shetland	<5
NHS Tayside	36
NHS Western Isles	<5
Outwith Scotland	13
Total	328

Releases by Local Authority

Local Authority	Released
Aberdeen City	15
Aberdeenshire	5
Angus	<5
Argyll and Bute	<5
City of Edinburgh	26
Clackmannanshire	<5
Dumfries and Galloway	<5
Dundee City	24
East Ayrshire	15
East Dunbartonshire	<5
East Lothian	6
East Renfrewshire	<5
Falkirk	14
Fife	16
Glasgow City	29
Highland	12
Inverclyde	8
Midlothian	<5
Moray	<5
Na h-Eileanan Siar	<5
North Ayrshire	9
North Lanarkshire	22
Perth and Kinross	15
Renfrewshire	17
Scottish Borders	7
Shetland Islands	<5
South Ayrshire	7
South Lanarkshire	14
Stirling	6
West Dunbartonshire	8
West Lothian	11
Outwith Scotland	13
Total	328

Releases by establishment

Note: the last held establishment is not necessarily the establishment an individual served their sentence in or that made the decision about their release. Individuals may be transferred after the decision to release under EER has been made.

Establishment	Released
Addiewell	35
Barlinnie	39
Bella	<5
Dumfries	6
Edinburgh	11
Glenochil	24
Grampian	12
Greenock	6
Inverness	6
Kilmarnock	21
Lilias	5
Low Moss	56
Open Estate	<5
Perth	17
Polmont	79
Stirling	6
Total	328