



Justice Sector Outlook

June 2016 quarter



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Summary of the current quarter

Prison population is at an all-time high and rising

Despite less volume in the criminal justice pipeline, the prison population is at an all-time high due to:

- An increase in cases prosecuted as serious violence.
- Greater Police focus on family violence.
- Increased use of custodial remand, especially resulting from the Bail Amendment Act 2013.
- Longer remand periods relating to pre-sentence restorative justice.

These trends have caused the remand population to grow significantly over the past two years. Since 2015, the sentenced population has started to increase following the increase in remand (though the increase in sentenced population is expected to be less than the increase in remand). The prison population is at an all-time high, which is putting considerable pressure on prison capacity.

Inflows to the pipeline have flattened, while serious cases have increased

After five years of falling steeply, the following inflow quantities have levelled off:

- Proceedings by court action (prosecution).
- Proceedings by non-court action (mainly formal and informal warnings).
- Court volumes – at 42 percent below the 2009 peak.

However, prosecution of serious cases (Category 3) has increased, especially for family violence offences due to greater Police focus in that area. We expect a slow rise in the volume of prosecutions.

Legal aid expenditure is within appropriation, but higher than recent years

Legal aid expenditure for the year to June 2016 was \$137.5m, 3% below its appropriation value of \$141.9m. Legal aid expenditure is higher than in recent years, as forecast. This is due to:

- Decrease in cases allocated to the Public Defence Service, due to resource constraints.
- Increase in applications for legal aid, partly due to the increased Police focus on family violence.

Legal aid expenditure is currently forecast to remain at about the current level, on the assumption of steady volumes and steady average costs per case. The legal aid forecast will be refreshed next quarter.

Crown Law volumes have increased; now forecast to be flat

The number of cases involving Crown Law has increased due to more serious violence cases. Crown Law cases volume is forecast to remain at about current levels, on the assumption of steady volumes.

The trend towards more serious sentence types continues

Numbers of most sentence types – especially fines – have fallen over the last few years due to declining prosecution volumes. However, as a proportion of all sentences, imprisonment and community-based sentences have increased due to an increasing focus on serious cases, particularly serious violence.

Court imposed fines are broadly flat, now forecast to slowly decrease

The total dollar amount of court-imposed fines has decreased markedly since peaking in 2009, but now is levelling off.

The forecast of fines and remittals has been updated this quarter. The use of monetary penalties is forecast to slowly decline, in part due to implementation of new payment arrangements.

Environmental factors are mixed

Operational and legislative factors drive the criminal justice pipeline

Variation in the criminal justice pipeline is only weakly driven by the amount of criminal offending. More important factors are:

- Operational and legislative settings that influence the entry of offenders into the pipeline.
- Choices that the justice sector makes, as offenders proceed through the pipeline.
- Time taken to travel through the pipeline.

Operational and legislative drivers

Current key operational and legislative drivers are:

- **Offenders deported from Australia.** Changes in Australian law are increasing the number of offenders deported from Australia. The eventual estimated change in the prison population is +100.
- **Parole Amendment Act 2014.** The amendment removed the 10-year limit on monitoring of child sex offenders after the end of prison sentences and allowed for deferral of parole hearings. The eventual estimated change in the prison population is +100.
- **Bail Amendment Act 2013.** The intended focus of this legislation was to increase the likelihood of custodial remand for serious and repeat offenders committing specified offences. The impact has actually spread across a wider range of offences, with remand rates increasing in less serious offence categories. The eventual estimated change in the prison population is +400-500.
- **Restorative justice.** An increase in the use of restorative justice, following legislative changes in December 2014, means some offenders remain in custodial remand for longer while the restorative justice process is completed. The estimated change in the current prison population is +150.
- **Legal aid reforms.** Criminal legal aid fees are to increase in stages over the next three years. Few historic Waitangi Tribunal claims remain to be completed; as these come to an end, contemporary claims will rise, but these are expected to be less costly.
- **Family Court Proceedings Reform Act 2013.** The Act introduced Family Dispute Resolutions for care of children cases in the Family Court. The aim is to resolve parenting matters outside of court; the result, since the Act was implemented in March 2014, is a 19% reduction in the number of Care of Children Act applications. This has reduced legal aid expenditure in the family jurisdiction.

Emerging risks of upwards pipeline pressures

Risks that are currently emerging across the criminal justice pipeline are:

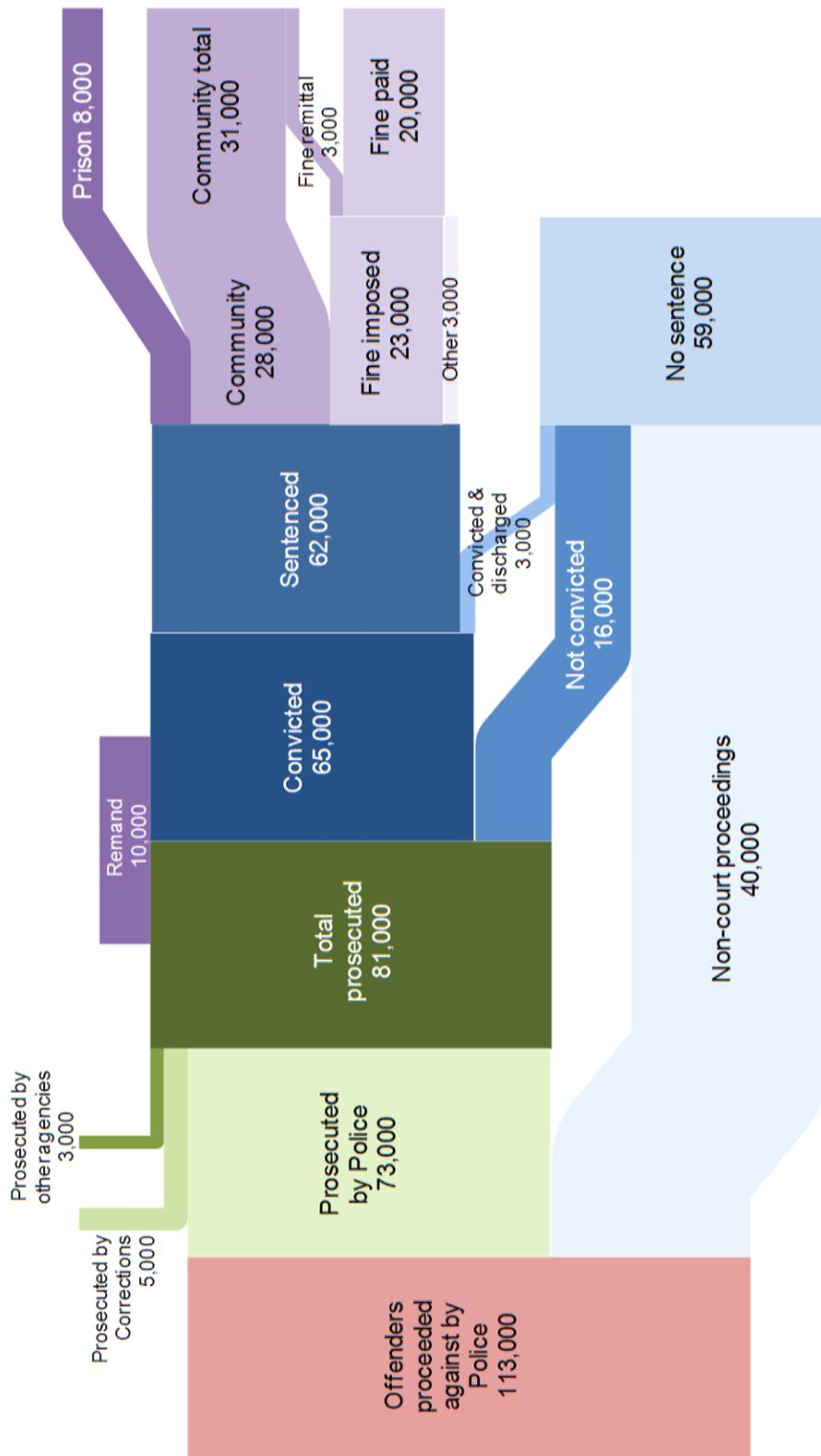
- The number of active Court cases has increased, especially for the serious (Category 3) cases. This increased number of cases is likely to flow through to the rest of the pipeline over the next few months (especially criminal legal aid expenditure and the sentenced prison population).
- There is an upward trend in prosecution of violence cases. This is creating pressure on Courts, legal aid, custodial remand, and potentially an eventual flow through to the sentenced prison population.
- Expenditure on family legal aid could increase with greater Police focus on family violence.
- Family violence legislation is currently being reviewed. Decisions about reforms were announced in September 2016. These changes may create further upwards pressure on Court volumes, legal aid expenditure, and the prison population.

These risks are being monitored and will be updated in the next quarterly outlook report.

Criminal justice pipeline

Counts of unique offenders in the criminal justice pipeline

12 months to June 2016



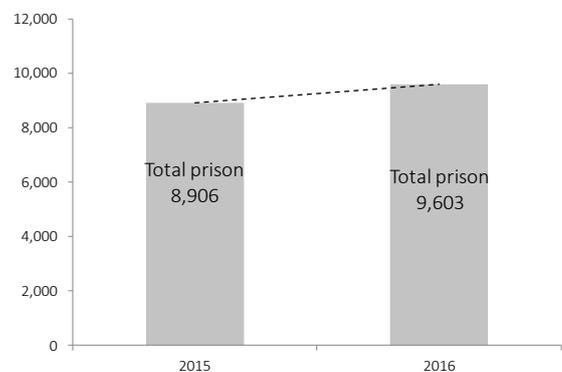
Focus: Prison population 2015 vs. 2016

Main points:

- The prison population increased by 8% from June 2015 to June 2016, mainly due to a 19% increase in the remand population.
- The rise in the remand population is due to a number of initiatives including the Bail Amendment Act of 2013, an increased use of Restorative Justice, and greater focus on family violence.
- The sentenced prison population has started to increase, following the increase in the remand.

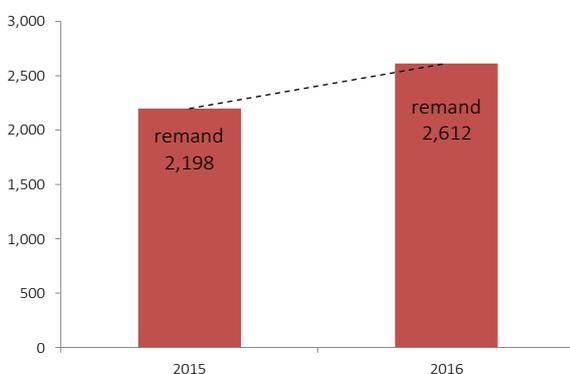
Total prison population has increased

In the last 12 months the prison population increased by 8%. This focus topic looks at some of the possible factors responsible for this increase, including: legislative changes, remand rate, average prison sentence length, charging events and sentence volumes.



Remand population and proportion remanded have increased

Remand population has increased by 19% compared to last year. The increase is due to more people being remanded in custody (the proportion remanded in custody has risen by 5% compared to last year) and people spending longer in remand. The reasons for these changes include the Bail Amendment Act 2013, which made it less likely for some offenders to be granted bail; Restorative Justice, which has led to longer remand periods; and an increase in family violence prosecutions.



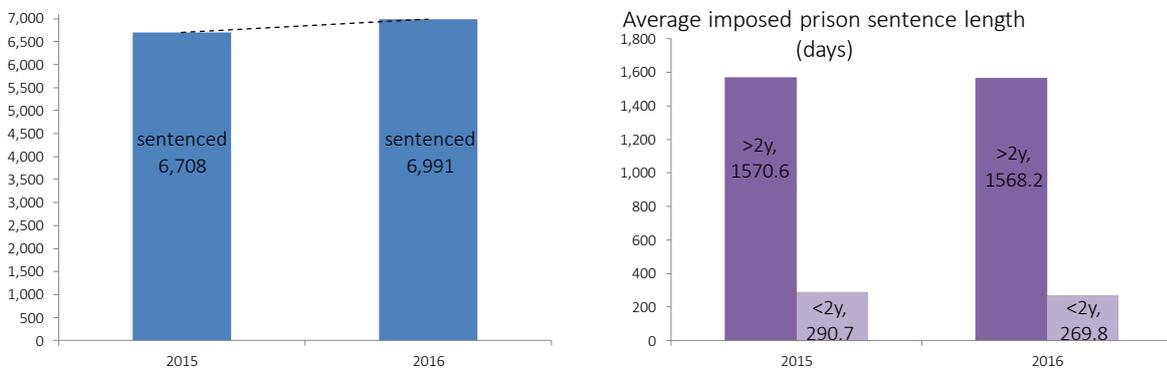
Sentenced population has remained level for the past 5 years

The sentenced prison population remained level at about 6,700-6,900 for the five years up to 2015. Since 2015, the sentenced population has increased by 4%, following the increase in remand population.

The average prison sentence length has remained level

The average prison sentence length has reduced slightly:

- The average length of short prison sentences (up to two years) is 270 days, a decline of 7% compared to last year. Because these sentences are relatively short, this decline in average length has little impact on the prison population.
- The average length of all other prison sentences (greater than two years) has remained close to 1570 days.



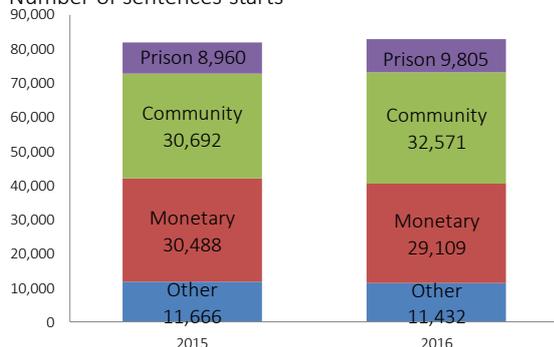
Charging events and total sentence starts has remained level, with a shift towards more serious sentences

Compared to last year, the number of charging events has increased by 2%, particularly in the more serious Category 3 offences. After several years of decline, the number of sentence starts rose by 1.4%.

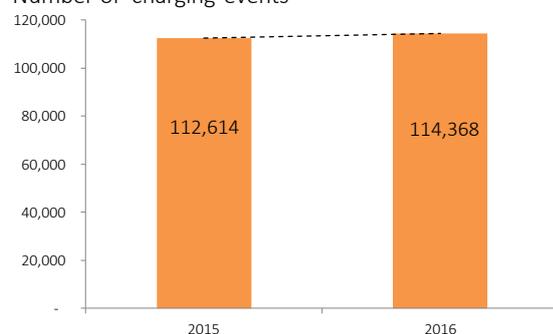
However, the shift towards more serious sentences continues. As proportions of all imposed sentences, Imprisonment and Community-based sentences have increased, due to increased prosecution on more serious cases, particularly serious violence.

Sentence	Current quarter			
	Monetary	Community	Prison	Other
Change cf. last year	-5%	+6%	+10%	-2%

Number of sentences starts



Number of charging events



Police proceedings volume has stopped falling

Police proceedings against apprehended offenders are the main entry point into the criminal justice pipeline:

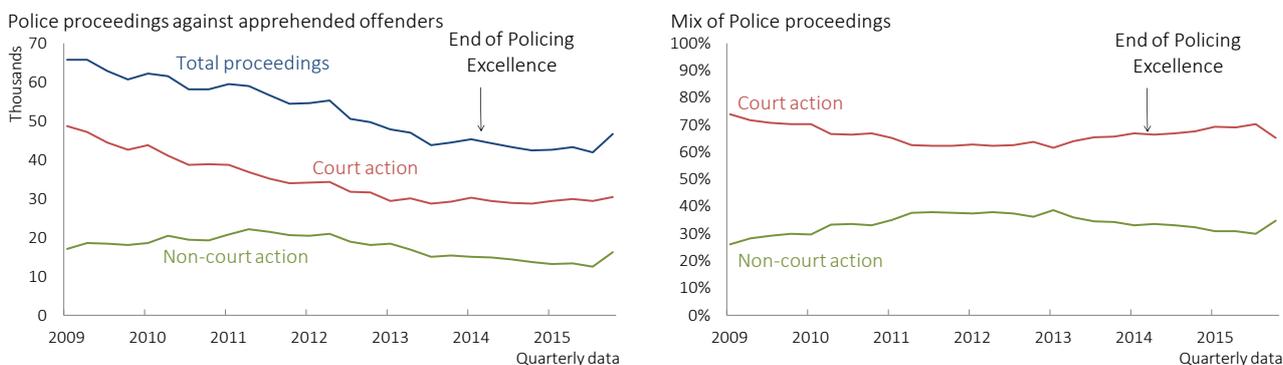
- Proceedings against apprehended offenders fell by one-third from a peak in 2009 until early 2014, due to falling crime and the Policing Excellence initiatives.
- But Police prosecutions for public order offences and drink driving have continued to fall, while prosecutions for assault and sexual offences have risen.

Police proceedings	Current quarter		Last 12 months		
	Proceedings	Change c.f. last year	Proceedings	Change c.f. last year	Change c.f. 2009 peak
By court action	30,400	+6%	117,500	0%	-36%
By non-court action	16,200	+18%	52,800	-11%	-27%
Total	46,600	+10%	170,300	-4%	-33%

Legislation and operational changes influence pipeline flows

Changes in legislation and operation practice can have a large impact on pipeline flows. For example, past inflows into the criminal justice system have been strongly influenced by the Policing Excellence initiatives, with a focus on prevention and alternatives for proceeding against offenders (i.e. court versus non-court action). Similarly, future changes in legislation and operation practice could have major impacts on inflows into the pipeline and how cases proceed through the pipeline.

As a proportion of all proceedings, court action fell from about 72 percent in 2009–2010 to about 63 percent in 2012–2013, as Police made greater use of alternative resolutions, such as warnings. Since then the court action proportion has increased again.



Note that there was a sharp increase in the number of non-court action proceedings in June 2016. This should be interpreted with caution, as Police updated records ahead of the fiscal year end, with the June 2016 number including earlier proceedings. Most court actions against offenders were already up-to-date, so the update primarily affected non-court warnings for adult offenders and other non-court actions for youth offenders.

Court volumes have flattened

Prosecution volumes have flattened, following five years of decline

Falling recorded crime and the Policing Excellence initiatives that kept many offenders out of court led to a large fall in the number of criminal court cases disposed from the 2009 peak until 2014. Since then volumes have declined only slightly – to 42 percent below the 2009 peak.

Criminal Cases	Disposed cases				Active cases on hand	
	Current quarter		Last 12 months		Current quarter	
	Cases	Change c.f. last year	Cases	Change c.f. last year	Cases	Change c.f. last year
Category 1	3,400	-3%	13,400	-5%	2,331	-5%
Category 2	16,800	+7%	63,500	-6%	11,889	+6%
Category 3 & 4	10,900	+11%	40,200	+4%	17,830	+14%
Total	31,100	+7%	117,100	-3%	32,050	+9%

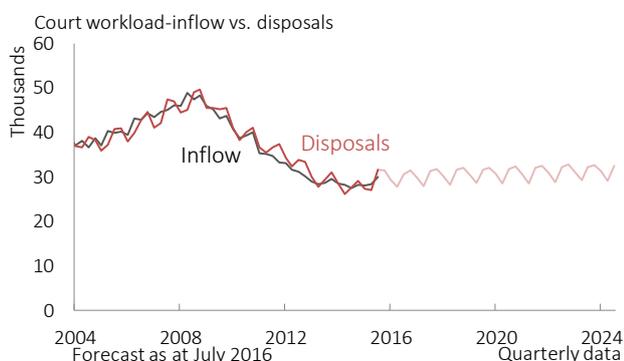
The recent increase in Category 3 cases (and a small number of Category 4 and ‘other’ pre-Criminal Procedure Act cases) is driven by an increase in violence cases – especially family violence – from a low point 12 months earlier. The increase in active cases is likely to lead to increased flows further along the pipeline over the next few months.

Forecast court volume is slowly rising

The number of cases disposed has broadly matched the inflow of new cases, though disposals always show greater seasonal variation (due to court scheduling, especially around Christmas).

In the years leading up to 2009, the number of disposed cases was generally lower than the inflow of new cases. Since then, disposals have generally exceeded inflows. Consequently, the number of cases on hand grew before 2009 but had fallen by 36 percent by June 2014. There has been a rise of 11 percent in cases on hand since then.

The future number of court case disposals is forecast to rise over the next decade¹, though at a rate that is slower than the population growth rate (consistent with court volume changes in the decade up to around 2005).



¹ This forecast has been revised. Previously the number of court case disposals was assumed to be flat over the next decade.

Crown Law case volumes are projected to be flat

Crown Law handles serious court cases that require the participation of Crown solicitors. Crown Law cases include: District Court jury trials, judge-alone trials in either the High Court or District Court, High Court jury trials, Court of Appeal cases and High Court appeal cases.

The quarterly number of Crown Law cases is small and volatile, especially for High Court jury, Court of Appeal and High Court Appeal cases, leading to large percentage changes. The 55% increase in High Court Appeal cases compared to the same quarter last year, is due to variation in seasonality. We have a very short historic time series after the implementation of Criminal Procedure Act in 2013, which limits our ability to identify and forecast longer-term trends.

Disposals by case type	Current quarter				Last 12 months	
	Forecast cases	Actual cases	Change c.f. last year	Difference c.f. forecast	Actual cases	Change c.f. last year
District Court jury trial	631	751	+28%	+19%	2693	+13%
Judge-alone	210	185	-11%	-12%	806	+3%
High Court jury	29	52	+373%	+79%	182	+39%
Court of Appeal	132	153	+3%	+16%	530	+18%
High Court appeal	145	220	+55%	+52%	874	+3%
Total	1147	1361	+24%	+19%	5085	+11%

* Forecast as at March 2016.

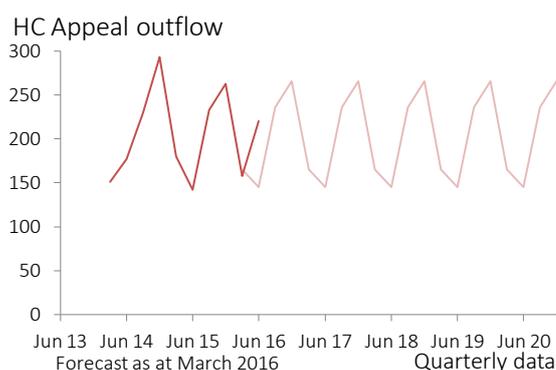
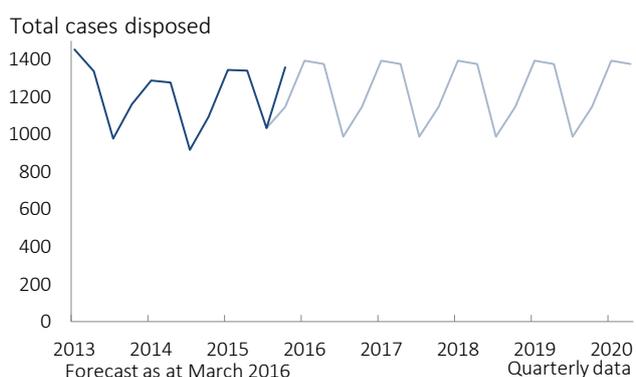
Crown Law outflows have risen from last year

The recent focus on family violence is resulting in more serious charges, on average, and more Crown Law cases.

Crown Law case disposals are projected to be flat

The Crown Law forecast:

- Projects a slight upward trend overall in case disposal volume, due to more serious cases (mainly District Court jury trials), then flat thereafter.
- There is a small increase in violent offending largely due to family violence.
- The key assumption is a continuation of recent trends, given completion of Policing Excellence and the absence of other significant proposals for legislative or operational change.



Legal aid expenditure has risen

Legal aid expenditure for private lawyers covers six court jurisdictions, with the largest being criminal and family cases.

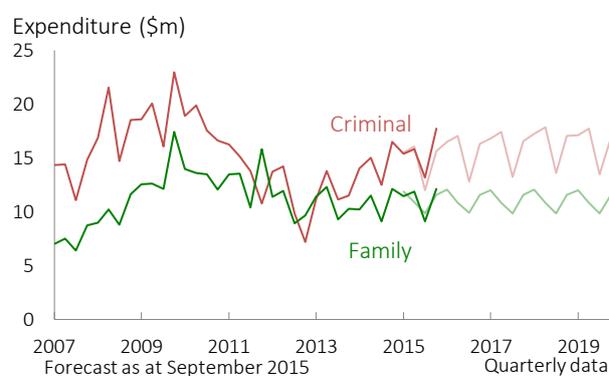
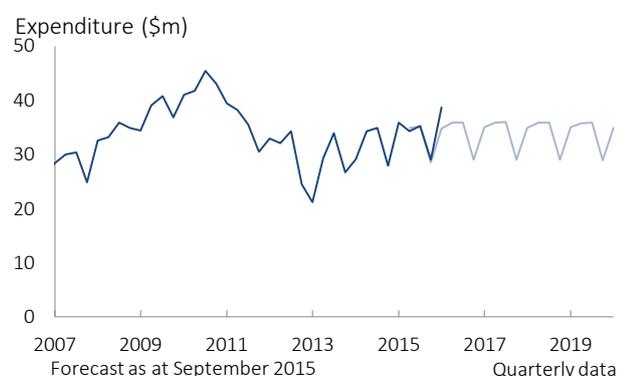
Jurisdiction*	Current quarter				Last 12 months	
	Forecast (\$000)	Actual (\$000)	Change c.f. last year	Difference c.f. forecast	Actual (\$000)	Change c.f. last year
Criminal	\$16,000	\$18,000	+8%	+13%	\$62,100	+7%
Family	\$12,000	\$12,000	0%	0%	\$44,600	+4%
Civil	\$1,400	\$1,700	+25%	+21%	\$6,200	+14%
Waitangi Tribunal	\$3,400	\$4,200	+31%	+24%	\$13,700	-2%
Duty lawyer scheme	\$2,600	\$2,800	+8%	+8%	\$10,600	+9%
PDLA scheme	\$99	\$99	+4%	0%	\$400	-5%
Total legal aid	\$35,000	\$39,000	+8%	+11%	\$137,500	+5%

* The Public Defence Service (PDS) has a fixed budget, so it is excluded from this analysis.

* Forecast as at September 2015.

Criminal, family and civil expenditures are rising

Legal Aid expenditure for the year to June 2016 was \$137.5m, 3% below its appropriation value of \$141.9m. Legal aid expenditure has risen compared to last year, especially in the criminal jurisdiction. This is due to resource constraints on the number of cases taken by the Public Defence Service (PDS), an increase in the number of offences resulting in court action and more serious charges for family violence offending.



After peaking in 2009–2010, legal aid expenditure fell substantially, as a result of fewer criminal prosecutions, expansion of the PDS, and new operational policies. Since the Family Court Proceedings Reform Act was implemented in March 2014, there has been a 19 percent reduction in the number of Care of Children Act applications. However, overall legal aid expenditure in the family jurisdiction has increased due to more applications for protection orders.

Total forecast legal aid expenditure is projected to be flat

Total legal aid expenditure is forecast to remain at current levels through to 2019. However:

- There is a risk that expenditure in the family and criminal jurisdictions, although forecast to remain flat, could increase with greater Police focus on family violence.
- Waitangi Tribunal legal aid expenditure is forecast to decline as historic claims are resolved, while contemporary claims are expected to be less costly. As contemporary claims are relatively new, this assumption is quite uncertain.

Sentencing mix continues to change

There are four broad types of sentences: prison, community-based, monetary, and other (such as driving disqualification). The proportions below are based on the most serious sentence type imposed on convicted offenders, and therefore do not represent all sentences.

Community-based sentences have risen while fines have fallen

The introduction of additional types of community-based sentences in 2007 (Home Detention, Community Detention and Intensive Supervision) resulted in an increase in use of community-based sentences and a decrease in fines and prison sentences.

Sentence type	Current quarter	Forecast	Same quarter last year	Last 12 months	Previous 12 months
Prison	10%	12%	10%	11%	10%
Community	40%	43%	41%	43%	40%
Monetary	36%	33%	35%	33%	36%
Other	14%	14%	13%	13%	14%

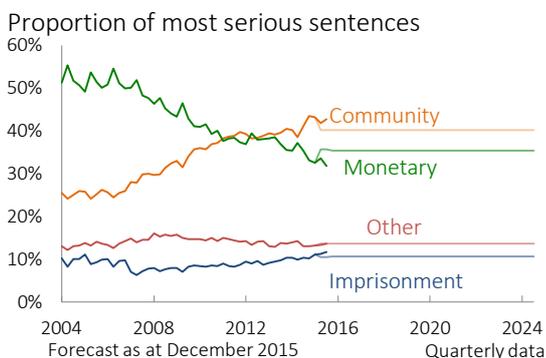
* Forecast as at December 2015.

Those trends have broadly continued up to the latest quarter, but for changing reasons:

- The relative growth in more serious sentences types (community-based sentences and imprisonment) after 2009 is likely driven by the changing mix of offence types coming up for sentencing.
- The Policing Excellence initiatives and related changes resulted in large decreases in prosecutions for minor offences, especially public order and traffic offences. Offenders for those offence types have increasingly been dealt with out of court or without a sentence being imposed. Many of those offences would previously have resulted in monetary sentences.

Forecast sentence mix is flat

The mix of sentences in the future will depend to a large extent on the types of offences that are dealt with by court action, and the conviction history of offenders coming up for sentencing.



Court-imposed fines are broadly flat

Total dollar amount imposed is levelling off after a decline from last year

The total dollar amount of court-imposed fines imposed has decreased markedly since peaking in 2009, even though a decrease in the number of court-imposed fines has been partly outweighed by an increase in average fine amount. For the year to June 2016, court-imposed fines are:

- Up 1 percent compared with the previous year.
- Down 26 percent compared with the year to June 2009.

Monetary penalty	Current quarter				Last 12 months	
	Forecast	Actual	Change c.f. last year	Difference c.f. forecast	Actual	Change c.f. last year
Imposed	\$11m	\$11m	+2%	0%	\$45m	+1%
Paid	\$9m	\$9m	-3%	0%	\$35m	-9%
Remittals	561	561	-23%	0%	2,527	-25%

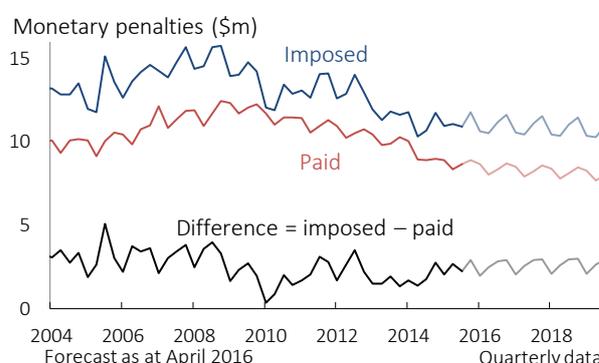
* Forecast as at April 2016.

The Policing Excellence initiative resulted in fewer fines being imposed, as minor offences that otherwise would have attracted low-value fines were increasingly kept out of court.

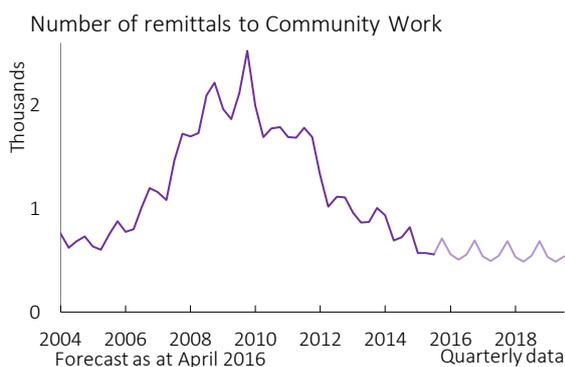
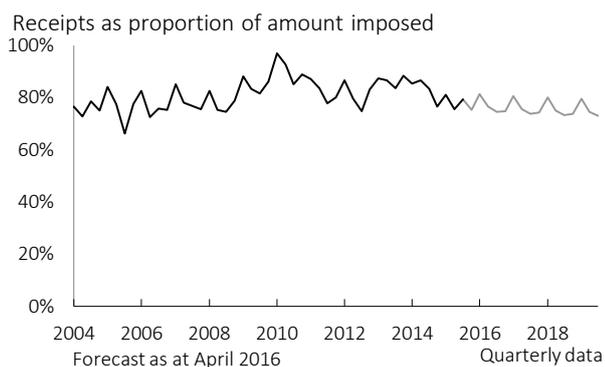
Refreshed forecast: Fines to slowly decrease

The Fines and Remittals forecast was refreshed this quarter:

- A continuing slow fall in the usage of fines means that both impositions and receipts are forecast to decline.
- A greater focus on payment arrangements for fines means the ratio of receipts to impositions is also expected to decline slowly.
- The establishment of payment arrangements also means an expectation of fewer instances of fines being remitted to community work sentences.



The key assumption is a continuing slow decline in the usage of monetary penalties, coupled with the impact of new payment arrangements as managed by Collections.



Numbers of community sentences are falling

The number of community-based sentence starts has fallen, though they have become a larger proportion of sentences (see page 11). This fall in starts is mainly due to a decrease in Community Work sentences, which are about half of all community sentences. Community Work starts have fallen due to a trend towards more serious charges and more serious sentence types.

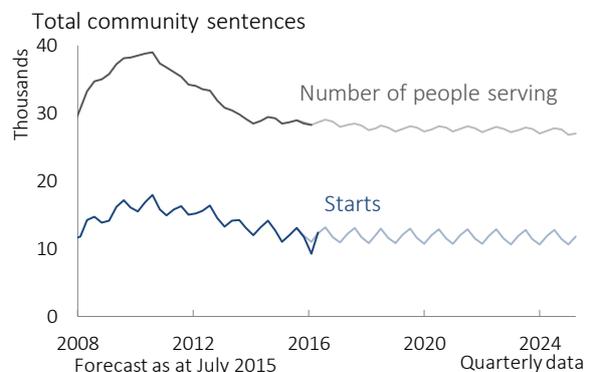
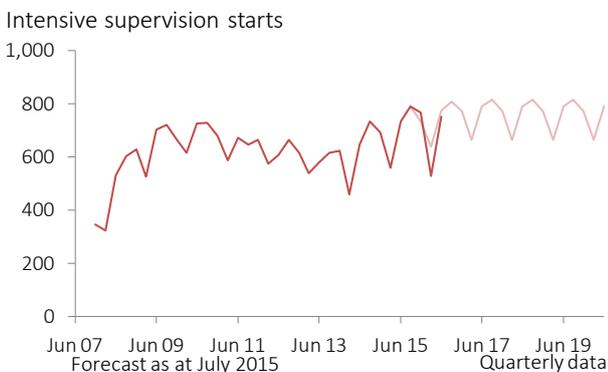
The number of Intensive Supervision starts increased by 21 percent in the two years from 2014 to 2016. The number of people serving Intensive Supervision sentence has increased by 23 percent over the same time. These increases are consistent with a trend towards using more serious sentences.

Community sentence type	Current quarter				Last 12 months	
	Forecast starts	Actual starts	Change c.f. last year	Difference c.f. forecast	Sentence starts	Change c.f. last year
Home Detention	800	900	+12%	+13%	3,328	+2%
Community Detention	1,300	1,300	+8%	0%	4,970	-3%
Intensive Supervision	800	800	+3%	0%	2,839	+4%
Supervision	2,700	3,000	+14%	+11%	10,863	+3%
Community Work	6,600	6,400	-2%	-3%	24,460	-13%
Total	12,200	12,400	+4%	+2%	46,000	-7%

* Forecast as at July 2015.

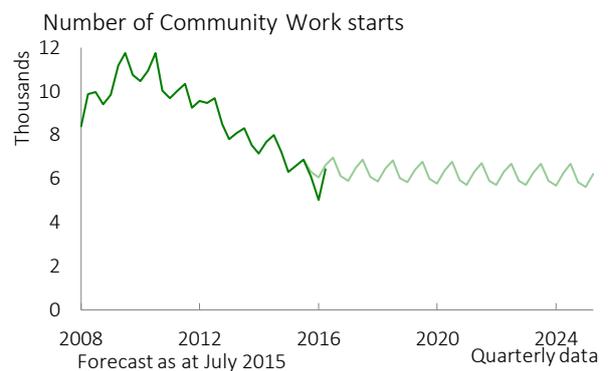
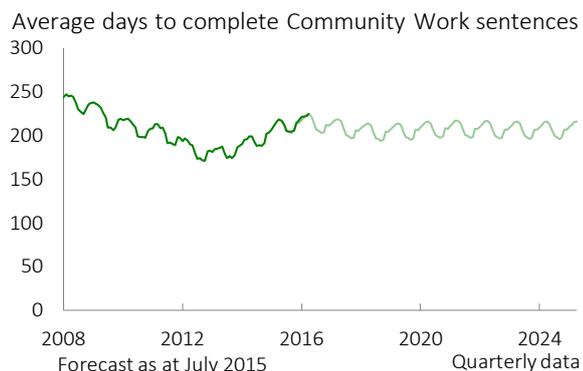
Community sentences forecast is flat

The forecast for all community-based sentences is broadly flat, reflecting the expected stable number of offenders passing through the pipeline, though there is substantial variation from quarter to quarter.



Time to complete Community Work sentences has increased

Over the past two years the number of Community Work sentences has been falling but the time taken to complete those sentences has been increasing. Those two trends have approximately cancelled out so that the number of people serving a Community Work sentence has remained stable.



Prison population is at an all-time high

Remand population is continuing to increase

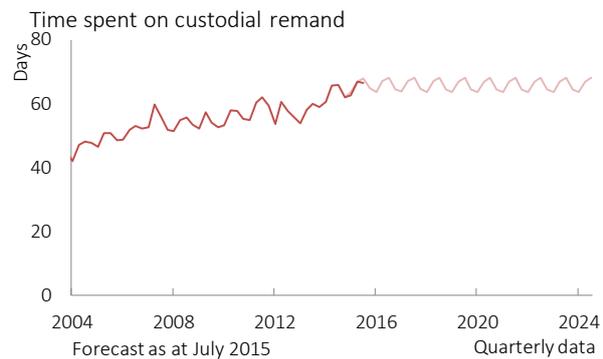
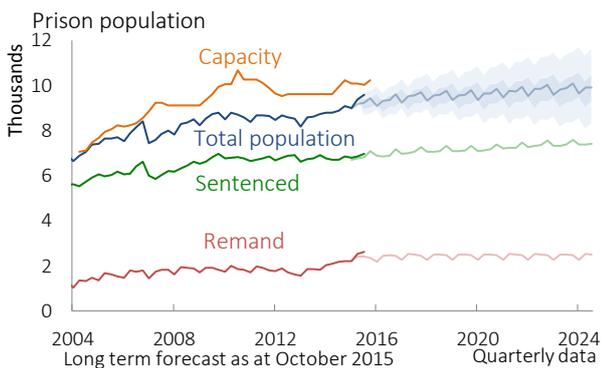
Over the past year the prison population has risen by 8 percent, taking the population to an all-time high. That rise is nearly all due to the growing remand population (up 19 percent).

Prison population	Current quarter				Last 12 months	
	Forecast*	Actual	Change c.f. last quarter	Difference c.f. forecast	Actual	Change c.f. last year
Remand	2,660	2,610	+3%	-2%	2,200	+19%
Sentenced	6,970	6,990	+2%	0%	6,710	+4%
Total	9,630	9,600	+2%	0%	8,910	+8%

* 1-year forecast as at May 2016.

Reasons for the rise in remand:

- The Bail Amendment Act 2013 continues to cause more offenders to be remanded. That legislation made it less likely that some types of offenders will be granted bail.
- Length of time spent on remand has increased. One contributor to the length of remand is restorative justice (RJ). Pre-sentence RJ has been used much more extensively since December 2014 and for some offenders that has resulted in longer periods in remand.



Sentenced population is starting to increase, following the remand increase

The major component of the prison population – sentenced prisoners – has remained level at about 6700 to 6900 for the past five years. However, since 2015 the sentenced population has increased by 4% following the increase in remand population.

Forecast prison population is gradually increasing

The total prison population is forecast to rise at around 1 percent per year for the next nine years. The main drivers of that rise are:

- A continuing increase in the remand population partly due to an increase in family violence prosecutions.
- A long-term increase in the sentenced population due to those prisoners serving time without parole under the 'three strikes' legislation.
- The change in arrangements regarding offenders deported from Australia will also contribute.

This forecast rise will put additional pressure on the prison system that is already close to capacity.

Glossary of terms

Crown Law case disposals: Measures the number of cases that are handled by Crown Law and Crown solicitors. These include, for example, all Category 4 cases, and appeals. We count disposals to align with Crown Law's workload assessments. The measure is obtained by combining projections of disposals for each of the different types of case handled by Crown Law.

Community Detention: Punitive sentence for low level of risk offenders who have patterns of offending at specific times of the day or week. Community Detention restricts an offender's movements during their curfew, and requires the offender to remain at an approved residence at certain times specified by the court. Community Detention length ranges between 14 days and six months.

Community Work: Punitive sentence that gives offenders an opportunity to take responsibility for their offending and learn new skills and work habits. Offenders do unpaid work in the community to pay something back for the offence they have committed. Community Work hours range between 40 and 400 hours (at up to 40 hours per week).

Criminal justice pipeline: Working as a justice sector recognises that there is a pipeline across the criminal justice system, which extends from the investigation of crime to arrest and prosecution, through to courts, sentencing, sentence management and rehabilitation. The numbers of offenders in the main parts of the pipeline are shown on page 4. Policies and approaches in one part of the system can have significant effects on others. Joining up our services allows agencies to identify these sector-wide effects, and implement changes that have the best outcomes for the sector as a whole.

Duty lawyer scheme: Provides a lawyer at the start of the court process for criminal defendants who would otherwise lack legal representation.

Home Detention: Punitive and rehabilitation sentence that is an alternative to imprisonment for short prison sentences (two years or less). It requires an offender to remain at a suitable and approved residence at all times, and be monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Home Detention length ranges between 14 days and one year. Home Detention allows an offender to seek or maintain employment, complete a sentence of Community Work if imposed, access programmes to address their offending and maintain their family relationships.

Intensive Supervision: Community-based rehabilitation sentence for offenders who are convicted of more serious offending, and are more likely to reoffend. It is imposed if the court deems that a sentence of Intensive Supervision would reduce the likelihood of someone offending again, by supporting their rehabilitation needs and re-integration back into the community. Intensive Supervision length ranges from six months to two years.

Legal Aid: Legal aid is available in all jurisdictions of the court (criminal, family and civil), as well as for claims before the Waitangi Tribunal. Legal aid also supports the Duty Lawyer scheme and the Police Detention Legal Assistance.

Muster: Number of people serving a sentence, for example, Community Work muster.

Police Detention Legal Assistance (PDLA): Provides initial legal advice for persons detained by the Police.

Proceeding: A proceeding is a decision by Police to take action against an alleged offender for one or more offences. Proceedings can be by either court action, such as prosecution, or non-court action, such as a formal warning.

Public Defence Service (PDS): Provides professional, independent criminal legal aid representation to clients who are eligible for legal aid. The Public Defence Service also oversees the duty lawyer scheme.

Remand: In this document, remand means being held in custody while awaiting trial or sentencing. Remand prisoners are kept separate from sentenced prisoners (remand prisoners could be held in police cells, court cells, psychiatric facilities, or in prison). Offenders granted bail are technically remanded on bail, but do not contribute to what is called the remand population in prisons.

Time on remand: Time spent in custody while awaiting trial or sentencing. Any time spent on remand is taken off a person's total prison sentence time.

Remittals: People who do not pay fines may have them remitted to another sentence types, such as Community Work.

Supervision: Rehabilitation sentence for offenders convicted of less serious offences, with relatively straightforward rehabilitation needs and a lower risk of re-offending. Supervision provides an offender with opportunities to address the causes of their offending and motivate them to seek positive change. Offenders can be sentenced to supervision for between six months to one year.

Waitangi Tribunal: The Waitangi Tribunal is a permanent commission of inquiry charged with making recommendations on claims brought by Māori relating to actions or omissions of the Crown that potentially breach the promises made in the Treaty of Waitangi.

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