



HMPPS Annual Digest 2020/21

Main points

<p>The number of escapes has decreased</p>		<p>When compared with the previous year, the number of escapes in the year ending March 2021 decreased from 16 to 5.</p>
<p>The number of absconds and temporary release failures decreased</p>		<p>In the year ending March 2021, there were 101 absconds – a 29% decrease when compared with the previous 12-month period. There was an 87% decrease in temporary release failures, 11 of which were failures to return, and 4 of these were still at large after 30 days.</p>
<p>The percentage of prisoners in crowded conditions decreased</p>		<p>In the 12-months to March 2021, the crowding rate at establishments across England and Wales was 20.2%, down from 22.5% in the previous 12-month period.</p>
<p>91.2% of Foreign National Offenders referred in 10 working days</p>		<p>91.2% or 5,659 of the 6,206 total referrals of Foreign National Offenders made to the Home Office in the year ending March 2021, were made within the required 10 working days.</p>
<p>The amount raised through the PEA levy has decreased</p>		<p>£0.9 million was raised from the imposition of the levy on prisoners' earnings to be paid to Victim Support. On average, 445 prisoners per month were working out of the prison on licence and subject to the Prisoners' Earnings Act levy and had average net earnings of £1,022 per month.</p>
<p>RMDT testing was suspended across prisons resulting in a significant drop in the number of completed tests throughout 2020/21</p>		<p>In the 12-months to March 2021, there were 4,738 random mandatory drug tests (rMDT) carried out nationally across all types of drugs, of which 606 (12.8%) gave a positive result.</p>
<p>Barricade/prevention of access incidents and incidents at height decreased</p>		<p>In the 12-months to March 2021, the number of barricade/prevention of access incidents decreased by 35% when compared with the previous year. The number of incidents at height decreased 33% in the same time period.</p>
<p>Finds of drugs, mobile phones and weapons have decreased</p>		<p>There were decreases of 6%, 25% and 36% in finds incidents of drugs, mobile phones and weapons between the year ending March 2020 and the year ending March 2021, although finds of alcohol increased 6% in the latest year.</p>
<p>The proportion of prisoners with an Enhanced incentive status increased</p>		<p>The proportion of prisoners with an Enhanced status increased to 50% (39,738 on annual average) in March 2021, compared with the year ending March 2020 when the proportion was 45% (37,452 on annual average).</p>

The number of women and babies received into Mother and Baby Units dropped	↓	In the year ending March 2021, 27 women were received and 19 babies were received into MBUs; compared with 49 women and 39 babies in the previous reporting year.
On average there were 26 pregnant women in prison per week in the nine months up to March 2021		The lowest number of pregnant women in prisons was 21 in September 2020 and the highest number was 34 in mid-October 2020.
There were 31 births to women in prison in the nine months up to March 2021		94% (29) of these births took place at a hospital and a further two in transit to a hospital.
The number of subjects actively monitored with an EM device increased by 34%	↑	At 31 March 2021, the total number of subjects actively monitored with an Electronic Monitoring (EM) device and open EM order was 13,963.
The number of BASS referrals decreased by 1% in the last year	↓	There were 3,891 referrals for Bail Accommodation and Support Services in in the year ending March 2021, a decrease of 1% on the 3,925 made in the previous year.
10.9% of HMPPS Staff who declared their race, were classified as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic	↑	This is slightly lower than the latest published overall MOJ representative rate and represents an increase of 0.5 percentage points compared with the previous year. Public Sector Prison (PSP) staff as a whole had the lowest BAME representation in HMPPS likely driven by the underlying regional population composition.
HMPPS staff lost an average of 7.4 working days to sickness absence (excluding Covid sickness)	↑	In 2020/21, YCS staff had the highest sickness absence rate at 10.2 Average Working Days Lost (AWDL), followed by PSPs (7.7 AWDL), NPS (7.4 AWDL). Absence rates are substantially lower in HMPPS HQ and area services overall compared with the operational parts of NOMS (4.8 AWDL).
Confirmed COVID-19 cases in HMPPS staff		15,387 HMPPS staff have tested positive for COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic. Of which, 11,288 are directly employed staff from Prisons and Youth Custody Service

This publication covers reporting up to and including the 2020/21 financial year. Data for the current reporting year covers the period between the 1st of April 2020 and the 31st of March 2021; and is referenced as the 12-months or year ending March 2021.

The technical guide for the HMPPS Annual Digest 2020/21 can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hmpps-annual-digest-april-2020-to-march-2021>

Statistician's comment

In this year's edition of the HMPPS Annual Digest, we can see the effect the COVID-19 pandemic has had in prisons. The average prison population was 79,043 in the 12-months ending March 2021, down 5% compared with an average of 83,130 in the year ending March 2020. This is in line with the effects of COVID-19 on the Criminal Justice System – in particular, delays in court hearings (evidenced by the increasing court caseload reported in the latest Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly release). The effect of this on the prison population is that the normal system flow of individuals from the remand to the sentenced population (after sentencing at court) has been disrupted; resulting in more people held on remand, and fewer sentenced prisoners. In March 2020 changes to the prison regime were introduced to limit the spread of the virus and to protect the lives of those who live and work in our prisons.

The lower average prison population, combined with a reduction in operational capacity and implementation of the compartmentalisation strategy (the isolation of all prisoners with symptoms, the shielding of vulnerable prisoners in the system and all new arrivals being quarantined for 14 days), has contributed to a decrease in the crowding rate which was 20.2% this year down from 22.5% in the previous year.

Numbers of pregnant women and women in Mother and Baby Units (MBUs) also decreased. On the 31st March 2020, the Government announced that pregnant women and women in MBUs would be the first tranche of prisoners considered for temporary release from prison, to protect them and their children from COVID-19. In the year to March 2021, 27 women and 19 babies were received into MBUs compared with 49 women and 39 babies received in the year ending March 2020. In this digest we have published for the first time data on the number of pregnant women in prison and of births. On average, there were 26 pregnant women in prison each week and a total of 31 births over the nine-month period to March 2021, with 29 taking place in hospital and two in transit to hospital; no births took place in prison.

In the latest year, the number of escapes fell (to 5 compared with 16 in March 2020) and there was a 29% decrease in the number of absconds. The number of temporary release failures fell by 87% this year, following the suspension of release on temporary licence (ROTL) for all but key workers and releases on compassionate grounds.

As the usual activities of prisoners have been disrupted by altered operations, prisoners' earnings have also been affected by the suspension of ROTL for non-key workers. Earnings this year for an average of 445 working prisoners each month was down by 45% to £6.3 million, compared with an average monthly 811 prisoners working and earning £11.5 million in the previous financial year. The amount raised for the Prisoners' Earnings Act (PEA) levy was also affected, decreasing from £2.2 million last year to £0.9 million in the 12-months to March 2021.

The impact of restricted regimes prisons put in place to safely manage the risks of infection during the Covid-19 pandemic has contributed to falls across the board for protesting behaviour and most finds. Incidents of barricade/prevention of access decreased by 35% and hostage incidents fell by 56% to their lowest level in ten years. Concerted indiscipline incidents decreased by 40%, while volumes of incidents at height fell by one-third. In the 12-months to March 2021, finds for drugs, tobacco, mobile phones, SIM cards and incidents where weapons were found all decreased. The exception was finds involving alcohol, which rose by 6%.

The criminal justice system is carefully and safely returning to normal operations and it might take some time before we see volumes settle.

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Products published to accompany the HMPPS Annual Digest 2020/21

The following products are published as part of this release:

- A statistical bulletin, containing commentary on key trends over time in prison performance measures and probation.
- A technical guide, providing further information on how the data are collected and processed; alongside relevant legislative or operational information relating to the topic area.
- A set of tables for each chapter, giving national and local level trends over time; and covering key topic areas in this bulletin.

Introduction

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice; with the goal of helping prison and probation services work together to manage offenders through their sentences. HMPPS replaced the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) on 1 April 2017.

The HMPPS Digest is published on an annual basis to support the Annual Report and Accounts, and in October of each year, details of Costs per place and costs per prisoner. The Prison Performance Ratings publication is also supported, however the 2020/21 release is cancelled due to COVID-19 allowing prisons to implement Exceptional Delivery Models and recovery plans to manage the pandemic.

This HMPPS Annual Digest includes several new items on:

- **Electronic Monitoring:** A new table has been added (Table 12.8), which shows the order type breakdown of Alcohol Monitoring tags. Alcohol Monitoring began in Wales in October 2020 and was launched live in England on 31 March 2021.
- **Mother and Baby Units, Pregnant Prisoners and Births:** For the first time, data for the number of self-declared pregnant women in prison each week are available, as are data relating to the number of births to women in prison and where those births took place.
- **Staff Sickness Absence:** Two new tables have been added which show the number of HMPPS staff absent due to COVID-19 sickness in England and Wales, firstly by overall structure (Table 15.3) and then by Prison Regions (Table 15.4).

Data presented in this report have been drawn from administrative IT systems. Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the level of detail collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale recording system.

A note on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on statistics included in this bulletin

The statistics in this release include the period from March 2020 when COVID-19 restrictions were introduced in prisons to limit and control the spread of the virus. These statistics therefore reflect the exceptional circumstances caused by Covid-19 lockdown which led to prisons having to put restricted regimes¹ in place in order to safely manage the risks of infection during the pandemic. It is therefore very likely that these circumstances will have had an impact on the recent statistics, and this limits meaningful comparisons between this and the previous year's data.

Topics that are not included in this report

Information on protected characteristics of offenders are not reported here but will be published in the Offender Equalities Annual Report 2020/21 on 25 November 2021.

Information on Accredited Programmes in prisons has not been published in this report. The intention is to publish a special release of this data and accompanying commentary in Autumn

¹ Details of current operation changes: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-prisons-and-other-prescribed-places-of-detention-guidance/covid-19-prisons-and-other-prescribed-places-of-detention-guidance>

2021. Data for accredited programmes in prisons up to the 12-months ending March 2020 is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hmpps-annual-digest-april-2019-to-march-2020>

Probation measures have not been included in the Digest since 2014/15. As part of Transforming Rehabilitation, probation trusts were replaced by the National Probation Service (NPS), which manages the most high-risk offenders across seven divisions; and 21 new Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs), who manage medium and low-risk offenders. Since the introduction of the Offender Rehabilitation Act (ORA), the National Probation Service (NPS) and Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) have been monitored against new performance frameworks.

These performance frameworks were introduced in February 2015 (for CRCs) and April 2015 (for NPS) to enable effective performance monitoring. The performance frameworks measure delivery throughout the offender journey, including:

- Court Work and Allocation (NPS only).
- Starting the Sentence.
- Completion and Compliance with the sentence of the court.
- Delivery of Programmes and Requirements.
- Through the Gate.
- Enforcement and Risk Escalation.
- Assurance Metrics and Other Custodial Services.

Management Information (MI) against these performance frameworks is published on a regular basis by MoJ in the "Community Performance Annual MI release". The publication covers all performance metrics from both frameworks, at a national level and broken down to lower levels of geography where appropriate.

Previous and current publications, can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/prison-and-probation-trusts-performance-statistics#community-performance-statistics>

Information on starts and completions of Accredited Programmes in the community is incomplete for the 12-months up to March 2021. As a result, the information is not included in this Official Statistics Report.

Related publications

Offender management statistics quarterly² provides detailed information on offenders held in prison custody and on probation. They include detailed breakdowns of the prison population, prison receptions and releases. They also cover statistics on adjudications and license recalls.

² Offender Management Statistics Quarterly is available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>

1. Escapes, Absconds, Failure to Return from ROTL and Releases in Error

The number of escapes has decreased

There were 5 escapes in the 12-months to March 2021, 1 of which remained still at large 30 days after escape. This is a decrease from 16 escapes the previous year, 8 of which were recaptured within 30 days of escape.

The number of absconds has decreased

There were 101 absconds in the year to March 2021, a 29% decrease from 143 absconds in the previous 12-months. Of the 101 prisoners who absconded, 34% (34 prisoners) remained at large for over 30 days, a decrease from 42% the previous 12-months (60 out of 143 prisoners).

The number of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) failures has decreased

There were 87 temporary release failures in the year to March 2021, of which 11 were failures to return, and 4 of these were still at large after 30 days.

The number of temporary release failures decreased by 87% from the year ending March 2020. In the same period, ROTL decreased overall by 74%.

The number of releases in error has decreased

There were 46 prisoners released in error in the latest year, a decrease of 8% compared with the year ending March 2020.

Public protection is core to the successful and effective delivery of offender management. In managing offenders in custody and in the community, HMPPS has the protection of the public, including victims, children and vulnerable adults, as an overriding aim in all its activity. HMPPS takes public protection and escapes from prison extremely seriously. An immediate investigation, independent of the prison, is completed following any escape to determine what went wrong and to learn lessons for the future. The majority of those who escape are quickly re-captured by the police, then charged and prosecuted. On return to prison, they are normally re-categorised and may be moved to a higher security establishment.

Unlawfully-at-large incidents are categorised by the level of security measures the prisoner had to overcome to gain their liberty:

- **Escape:** A prisoner **escapes from prison** if they unlawfully gain their liberty by breaching the secure perimeter of a closed prison. An incident is deemed to be an escape and included in the annual total if the prisoner is at liberty for at least 15 minutes before recapture or an offence is committed during an escape lasting less than 15 minutes. A 'Category A escape' means the escape of a Category A prisoner. Category A prisoners are those whose escape would be highly dangerous to the public, the police or the security of the State. A prisoner **escapes from an escort** if they are able to pass beyond the control of escorting staff and leave the escort, the vehicle or the premises (such as a court or hospital).
- **Abscond:** An abscond is an escape that does not involve overcoming a physical security barrier or restraint, such as that provided by a wall or fence, locks, bolts or bars, a secure vehicle, handcuffs or the direct supervision of staff. It is only possible to abscond from open prison conditions.

- A **temporary release failure** occurs when a prisoner fails to adhere to any condition written into the licence that permits their temporary release. Such conditions include the date and time by which the prisoner is required to return to the prison, how they may behave and what they may do, where they may go and who they may contact during the period of release.
- **Failures to return** after release on temporary licence are the subset of temporary release failures, where an offender has not returned to the establishment by midnight on the designated return date. In this case, the police will be notified that the offender is unlawfully at large, and appropriate contingency plans are activated. If the offender returns after the designated return time but on the right date, this is recorded as a late return instead of a failure to return.

A prisoner is **released in error** if they are wrongly discharged from an establishment or court when they should have remained in custody and the prisoner has not deliberately played a part in the error. Examples include misplaced warrants for imprisonment or remand, recall notices not acted upon or sentence miscalculation. If it is believed that the situation was manipulated by the prisoner, for example by taking the identity of another person, then this will be classified as an escape, and not a release in error.

The number of escapes decreased from 16 to 5 in the 12-months to March 2021 (Figure 1.1, Tables 1.2 to 1.5)

In the 12-months ending March 2021, there were a total of 5 escapes, all of which occurred from contractor escorts. This is a decrease of 11 when compared with the year ending March 2020. 1 of the 5 escapees in the latest year remained at large 30 days after their escape.

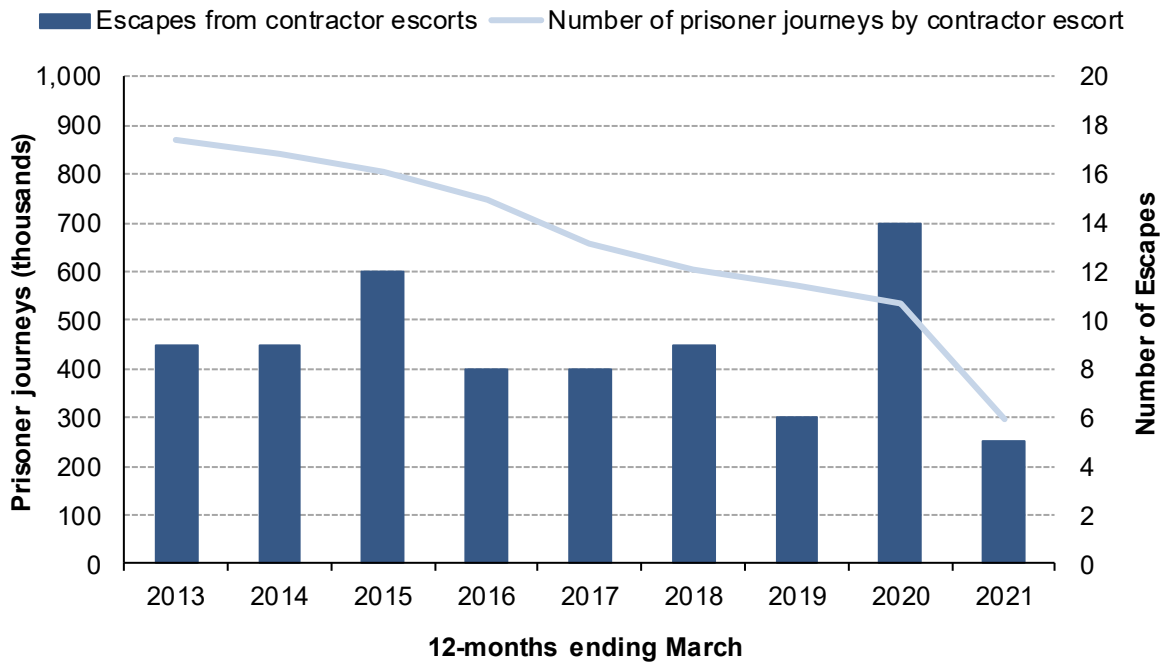
There were no Category A prisoner escapes from prisons or HMPPS escorts. In the last 25 years (since the financial year ending March 1997), there have been two Category A escapes, occurring in the 12-months ending March 2012 and 2013.

There were no escapes from prison in the latest year. The number of escapes from prison has remained very low, not exceeding 4 in any financial year since the 12-months ending March 2005.

There were no escapes from a HMPPS escort in the latest year. The number of escapes from HMPPS escorts has remained very low, not exceeding 4 in any financial year since the year ending March 2007.

Figure 1.1 shows the number of contractor escort journeys and escapes from contractor escorts. The number of prisoner journeys by contractor escort has been steadily decreasing, due to increasing use of video link technology for court appearances. Additionally, as a result of COVID-19 related operational changes there were only 297,096 contractor escort journeys in the financial year to March 2021, a decrease of 45% from 535,416 contractor escort journeys in the previous year. Of the 297,096 journeys, 5 resulted in an escape.

Figure 1.1: Contractor escort journeys and escapes from contractor escorts, the 12-months ending March 2013 to the 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 1.9)



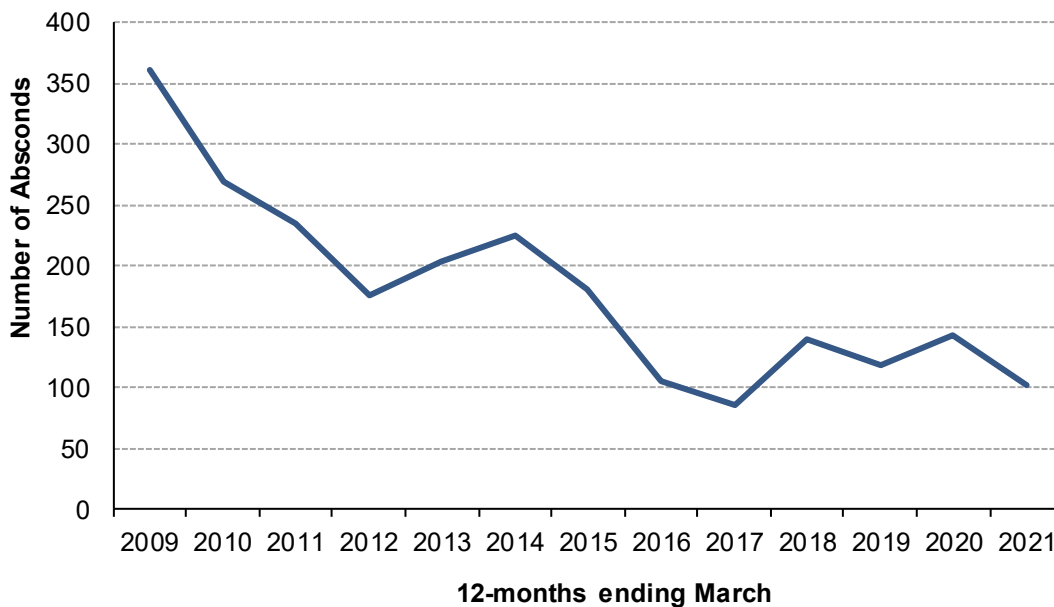
The number of absconds decreased in the 12-months to March 2021, when compared with the previous year (Tables 1.11 to 1.12)

There were 101 absconds in the year ending March 2021, a decrease of 29% from 143 absconds in the previous year. The number of absconds has remained relatively stable over the last 5 years, following a steady decrease from 361 absconds in the 12-months ending March 2009.

Of those who absconded in the 12-months to March 2021, 34 were still at large after 30 days. The percentage of prisoners who were still at large after 30 days decreased from 42% in the previous year to 34% in the latest year.

Most abscond incidents in the 12-months to March 2021 were for prisoners whose main offence was violence against the person (33%) or theft offences (27%).

Figure 1.2: Absconds, the 12-months ending March 2009 to the 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 1.11)



Failures to return from release on temporary licence (ROTL) decreased to 11 from 60 in the previous 12-month period (Figure 1.3, Tables 1.13 to 1.15)

In the year ending March 2021, there were 114,856 incidents of ROTL, a decrease of 74% from 438,117 incidents in the previous year. Of those 114,856 incidents of ROTL, 87 resulted in temporary release failures, where prisoners who have been released on temporary licence fail to fulfil all of the conditions of their release. This was an 87% decrease from 686 temporary release failures in the year ending March 2020. In March 2020, most ROTL was suspended, except for key workers and compassionate releases, as part of a range of measures to help to limit the transmission of Covid-19 across prisons.

Of the 87 temporary release failures, 11 were failures to return, resulting in prisoners being unlawfully at large, which represented 13% of temporary release failures. This was a decrease of 49 incidents from 60 failures to return in the year ending March 2020, which represented a smaller proportion of temporary release failures (9%).

Of the 11 failures to return in the year ending March 2021, 4 prisoners were still at large after 30 days.

Figure 1.3: Temporary release failures and failures to return, the 12-months ending March 2005 to the 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Tables 1.13 and 1.14)

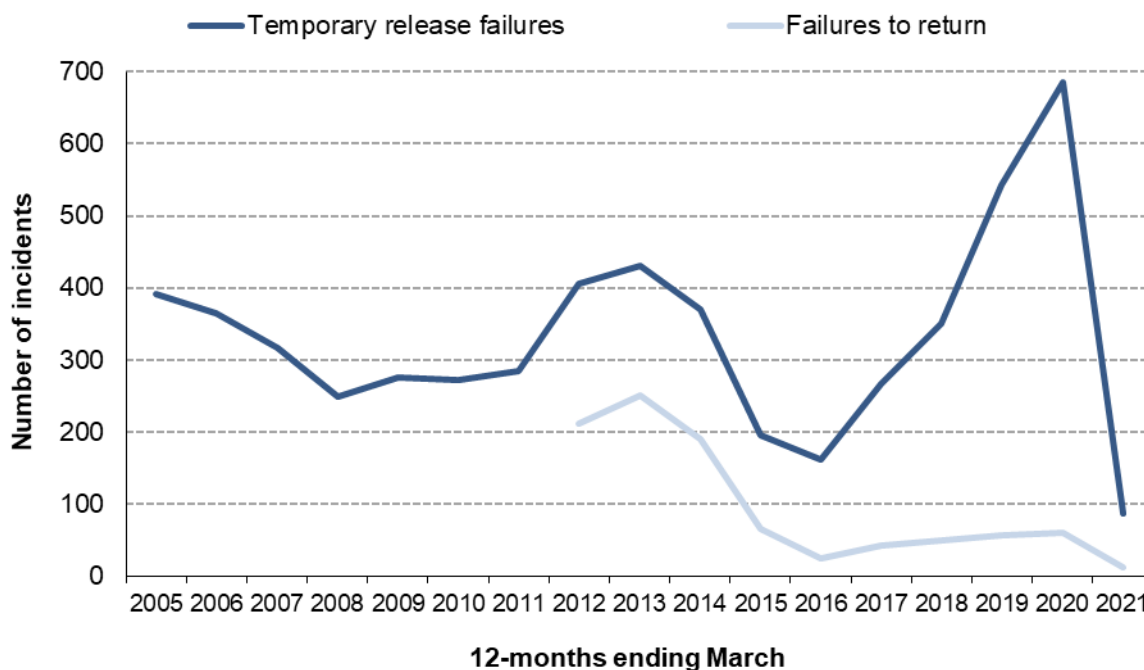


Figure 1.3 shows that while the number of prisoners who fail to return from ROTL generally mirrors the trend for all temporary release failures, they account for a decreasing proportion of all failures, falling from 52% (211 out of 405) in financial year 2011/12 to 13% (11 out of 87) in the 2020/21 financial year.

Most failure to return incidents³ in the year ending March 2021 were for prisoners whose main offence was violence against the person (36%), theft offences (27%) or robbery (18%).

Between 2013 and 2015 a series of changes were made to tighten ROTL policy, with the result that incidences of release fell dramatically. In 2019, the MOJ issued a new ROTL policy framework, which aimed to allow prison governors to consider ROTL earlier and more frequently because of its resettlement benefits. A large-scale MOJ study published in 2018 showed that increased use of ROTL in suitable cases was associated with a small but statistically significant reduction in reoffending.

These policy changes are reflected in both incidences of release and failure. The number of incidences of release on temporary licence was 333,286 in the calendar year 2015, rising to 436,531 in the calendar year 2019 and dropping to 184,465 in the calendar year 2020. The proportion of releases completed successfully without failure remains well over 99%⁴.

³ More detail is provided in Tables 1.13 to 1.15.

⁴ Data on the number of incidences of temporary release and individuals released, and the number of failures are reported within the Offender Management Statistics Quarterly bulletin: www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly

The number of releases in error fell in the 12-months to March 2021 (Tables 1.16 and 1.17)

In the 12-months to March 2021, 46 prisoners were released in error. This is an 8% decrease from 50 the previous year, and a 36% decrease from a peak of 72 in the year ending March 2017.

In the year to March 2021, 42 releases in error occurred from prison establishments, while 4 were released in error at the courts. Releases in error from establishments could also be a result of errors by the court.

Due to the relatively low numbers, year-on-year changes should be interpreted with caution. The number of releases in error should be compared with the total number of releases in the same time period⁵.

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly

2. Prison Crowding

The average⁶ prison population fell by 5% compared with last year

In the year to March 2021, the average prison population in England and Wales was 79,043, compared with 83,130 in the previous year; a drop of 5%.

The crowding rate decreased to 20.2%

In the 12-months to March 2021, the crowding rate at establishments across England and Wales was 20.2%, down from 22.5% in the previous 12-month period.

Crowding rates were highest in Male Local prisons

Crowding rates have continued to be the highest in Male Local prisons. The rate was 45.6% for the latest 12-month period.

Crowding is measured as the number of prisoners who, at unlock on the last day of the month, are held in a cell, cubicle or room where the number of occupants exceeds the uncrowded capacity of the cell, cubicle or room. This includes the number of prisoners held two to a single cell, three prisoners in a cell designed for two and any prisoners held crowded in larger cells or dormitories⁷.

The level of crowding for each prison is set by senior operational managers in HMPPS in agreeing the operational capacity⁸ of each establishment. In the 12-months to March 2021, Useable Operational Capacity of the estate has been the sum of all establishments' operational capacity less a set figure for the "operating margin". This figure was set at 2,000 places during April and 3000 places between May and March. The "operating margin" allows for the fact that prisoners are managed separately by sex, risk category and conviction status and that the population will not exactly match the distribution of places available across the country. The increase to operational capacity was to enable the requirement to manage prisoners separately in response to Covid-19. No prison will be expected to operate at a level of crowding beyond that agreed by a senior operational manager.

Crowding levels have been affected throughout the 12-months to March 2021 by Covid-19, which has resulted in a decrease in the total prison population and deployment of infection control measures, as a result, the total number of prisoners held in crowded conditions has reduced.

The crowding rate for public prisons is lower than the "all prisons" crowding rate (Figure 2.1, Tables 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4)

In the 12-months to March 2021, the average population in prison was 79,043, down by 5% from the previous year when the population was 83,130. In the year to March 2021, 15,941 prisoners were held in crowded accommodation conditions, which represents a crowding rate of 20.2%⁹. This compares with 18,672 (22.5% crowding rate) in the previous year and is the lowest rate since 2001 at 18.2%.

⁶ The average prison population is based on the number of months each prison is open the reference financial year. The annual national total is the average of each monthly total.

⁷ For example, if 12 prisoners occupy a dormitory with an uncrowded capacity of 10, then the 12 prisoners are counted as crowded.

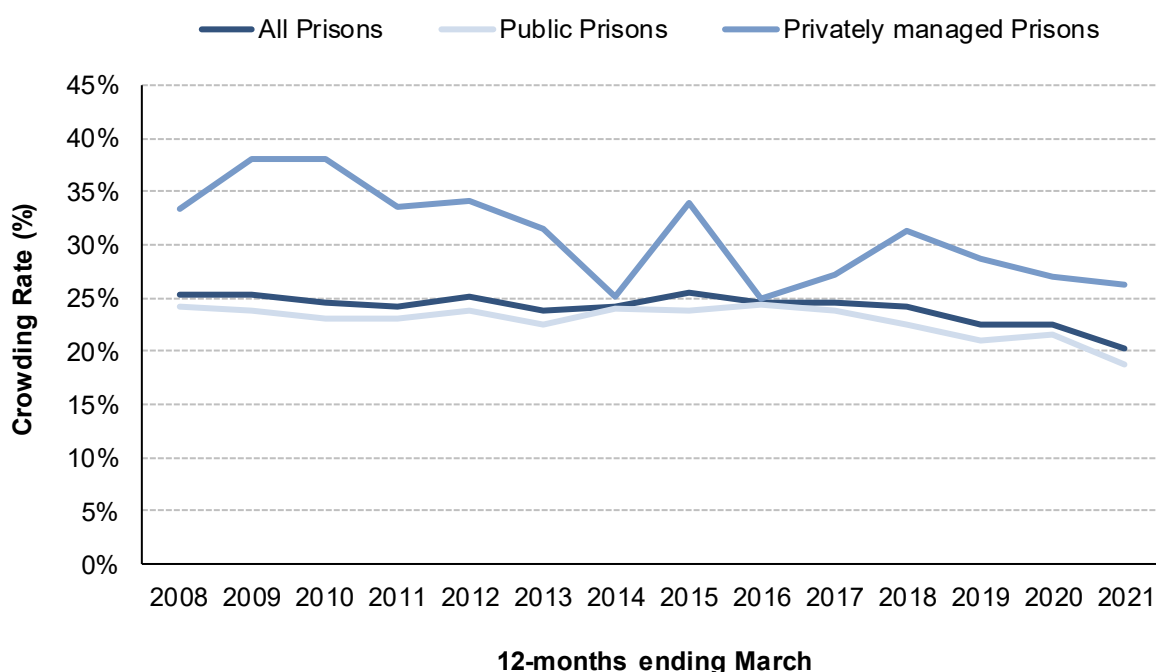
⁸ The operational capacity of a prison is the total number of prisoners that an establishment can hold, taking into account control, security and the proper operation of the planned regime.

⁹ Expressed as a proportion of the total prison population.

The crowding rate in public prisons was 18.8% in the year to March 2021, compared with 21.5% in the previous year. In privately managed prisons, the crowding rate in the latest year was 26.3%, a fall from 27.0% in the previous year.

Of all prisoners held in crowded conditions, the vast majority were held in doubled¹⁰ accommodation. This year, 98% of prisoners in crowded conditions were held in doubled accommodation (15,589 prisoners). The doubled crowding rate, as a proportion of the total prison population, was 19.7% in the current reporting year. This is a decrease from the 21.8% figure of the previous year.

Figure 2.1: Percentage of prisoners held in crowded conditions across Public and Privately-managed Prisons in England and Wales, 12-months ending March 2008 to 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 2.2)



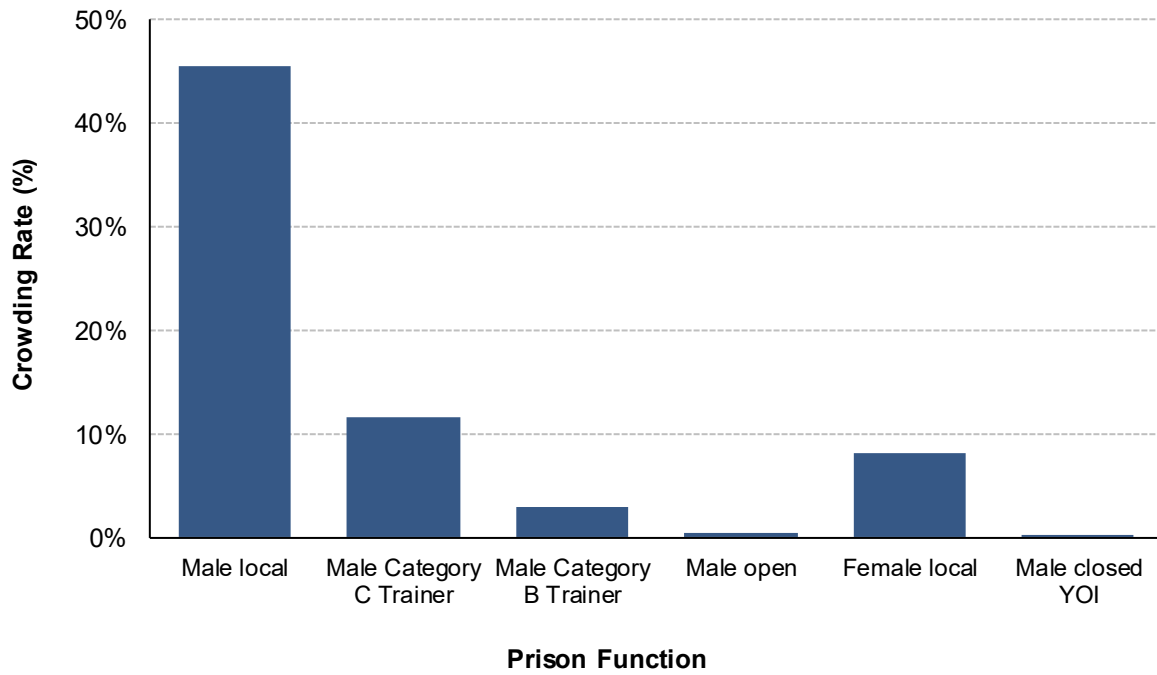
The highest crowding rates are in Male Local prisons¹¹ (Figure 2.2, Table 2.5)

Rates of crowding vary by prison function¹², and in the 12-months to March 2021, levels were highest in Male Local prisons; where 45.6% (11,687) prisoners¹³ were held in crowded accommodation.

In Male Category C prisons¹⁴, the crowding rate was 11.6% in the latest year. The crowding rate in Female Local prisons was 8.2% in the year to March 2021.

¹⁰ Doubled accommodation is defined as two prisoners being held in a cell designed for one prisoner.
¹¹ Crowding is not evenly dispersed across the prison estate; it is particularly concentrated in male local prisons, which are those that serve the courts of a specific area and which predominantly hold remand and short sentenced prisoners.
¹² Prison function is determined using the 2019/20 financial year list of functions.
¹³ Expressed as a proportion of the total prison population in Male Local prisons, which was 26,880 in the latest financial year. The total prison population across all estates in England and Wales was 79,043.
¹⁴ Crowding is less in Category B and C prisons as many of these are training prisons where activities are targeted at reducing re-offending by providing constructive regimes which address offending behaviour and improve opportunities on release.

Figure 2.2: Crowding rate in prisons by prison function, England and Wales, 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 2.5)



3. Foreign National Offender Referrals

91.2% of Foreign National Offenders were referred within 10 working days

91.2% (5,659) of the 6,206 total referrals of Foreign National Offenders made to the Home Office were made within 10 working days; meeting the 90% target.

The total number of referrals of Foreign National Offenders decreased by 22.3%

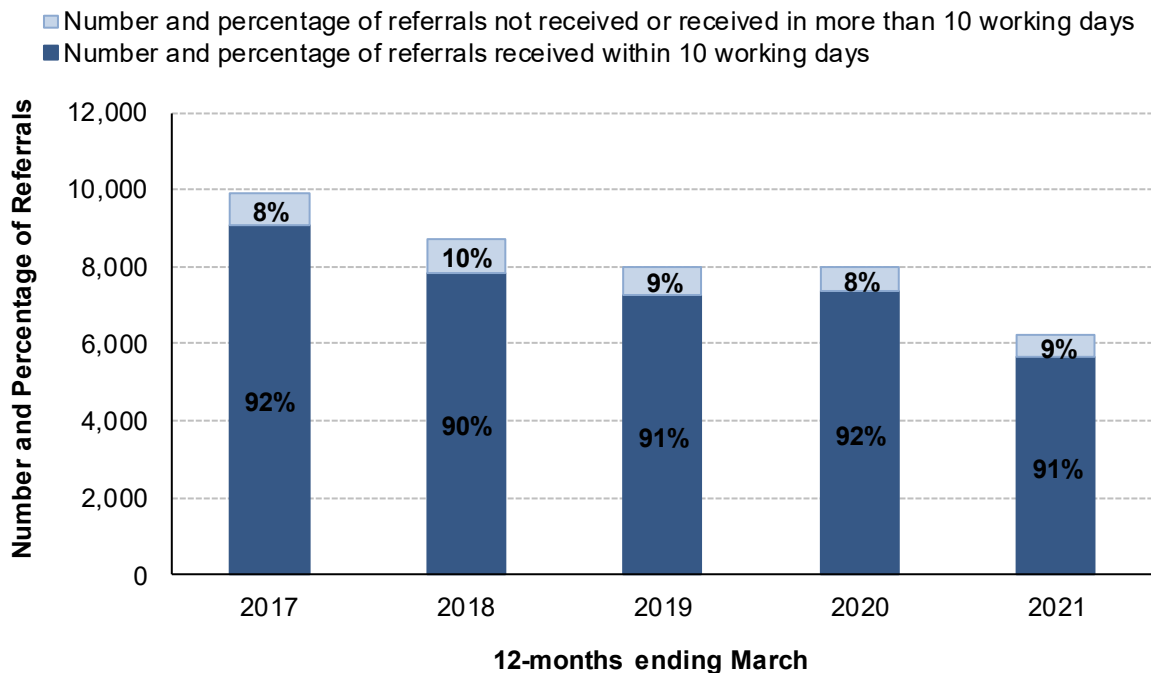
In the 12-months to March 2021, 6,206 referrals were made to the Home Office, this is a decrease of 22.3% when compared with the same period last year, when the number was 7,989.

Prisons are required to refer Foreign National Offenders (FNOs) to Home Office Immigration Enforcement within 10 working days of receiving a custodial sentence. If release is due within one calendar month, the referral must be made immediately. This is to ensure FNOs receive due consideration for deportation/removal by the Home Office before their release.

The referral rate within ten working days met the 90% Home Office target (Table 3.1)

From April 2020 to March 2021¹⁵, 6,206 Foreign National Offenders were referred to the Home Office. The number of referrals decreased by 22.3% compared with last year, when the number of referrals was 7,989. This year, 91.2% (5,659) of referrals were received within 10 working days; meeting the Home Office target referral rate of 90%.

Figure 3.1: Number of and proportion of referrals received within 10 working days and in more than 10 working days, 12-months ending March 2017 to 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 3.1)



¹⁵ Changes to the metric were introduced in 2019; to include prisoners without a specific nationality (e.g. blank or Stateless) and prisoners registered as Irish.

4. Prisoners Working in Custody

Information relating to prisoners working in custody will not be published with this edition of the HMPPS Annual Digest 2020/21.

Due to operational changes by the prison in response to the Covid-19 pandemic the quality of data available for prisoners working in custody was too poor and incomplete to publish. We plan to include prisoners working in custody data for 2021/22 in the next version of the HMPPS Annual Digest as usual.

The latest available information on prisoners working in custody up to the 12-months ending March 2020 is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hmppps-annual-digest-april-2019-to-march-2020>

5. Prisoners Earnings subject to the Prisoners' Earnings Act 1996

In the 12-months to March 2021, a net¹⁶ sum of £6.3 million was earned before the Prisoners' Earnings Act (PEA) levy was applied.

During the 12-months ending March 2021, a total of £6.3 million was earned before the Prisoners' Earnings Act levy was applied. This is a decrease of 45% compared with the same period last year, when £11.5 million was earned.

In the 12-months to March 2021, an average of 445 active prisoners were working in custody and subject to the PEA

In the 12-months ending March 2021, an average of 445 prisoners worked each month and were subject to the PEA. This represents a decrease of 5% on the previous year, when the number was 811 per month.

A total of £0.9 million was raised through the Prisoners' Earnings Act levy

An average of £166 per prisoner per month was raised through the levy; totalling £0.9 million raised for the year ending March 2021. Net earnings amounted to £1,022 per prisoner per month after the levy was applied.

The Prisoners' Earnings Act (PEA) commenced on 26 September 2011. It enables prison governors to impose a levy of up to and including 40% on net wages over £20 per week for prisoners who have been assessed as being of low risk of absconding or re-offending and allowed to work outside of the prison on temporary licence, in order to prepare for their eventual release. Monies raised from the levy are sent to Victim Support, an independent charity in England and Wales that provides specialist practical and emotional support to victims and witnesses of crime.

For much of the past 12-months, most release on temporary Licence (ROTL) has been suspended, except for key workers and compassionate releases, as part of a range of measures to help to limit the transmission of Covid-19 across prisons. This is reflected in both the number of prisoners working outside of prisons and the amount raised under the levy.

Total net earnings and monies raised through the levy continues to rise (Table 5.1)

In the year to March 2021, prisoners' net earnings under the Prisoners' Earnings Act (1996) amounted to £6.3 million, with £0.9 million raised through the levy. Net earnings before the levy decreased by 45% (£5.2 million) from the previous year. This in part is due to the suspension of some ROTL cases.

Prisoners earned an average of £1,188 per month before the levy in the 12-months ending March 2021, up from £1,178 earned in the previous year.

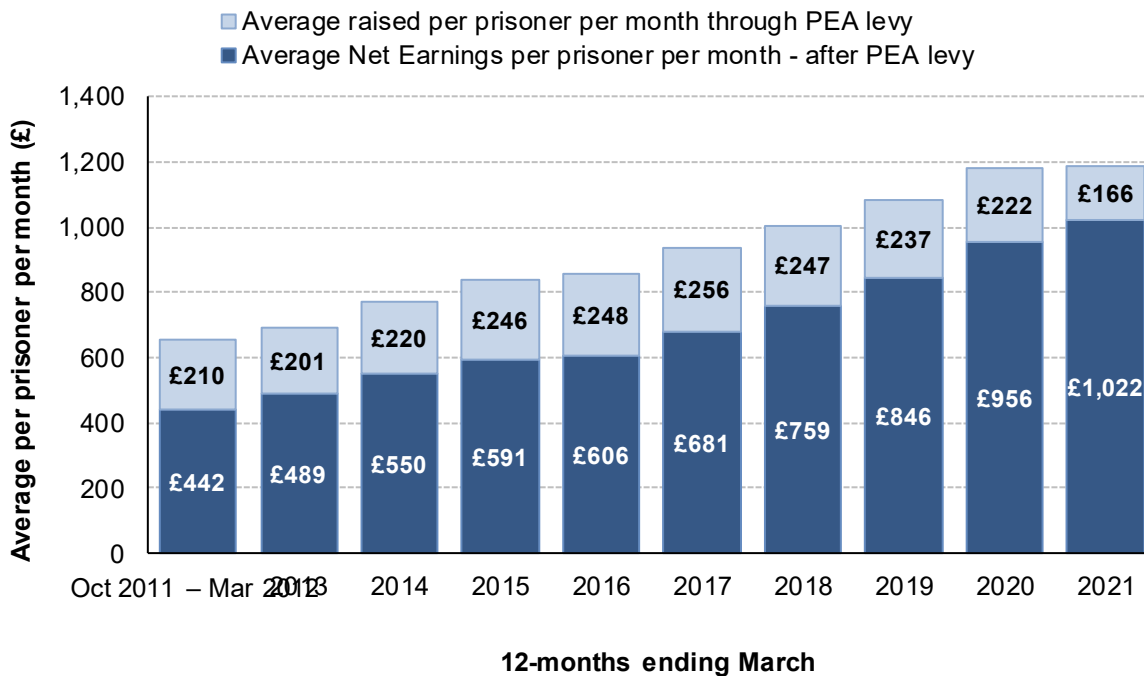
¹⁶ Net earnings are those after tax, national insurance, any court ordered payments or child maintenance payments.

Average net earnings per prisoner per month after the levy increased, but the average amount raised for the levy per prisoner per month fell (Figure 2.1, Table 5.2)

After the levy deduction through the Prisoners’ Earnings Act (1996), prisoners earned an average of £1,022 per month in the 12-months ending March 2021; a decrease in earnings of £66 on average per prisoner, per month compared with the same period in the previous reporting year (when average earnings totalled £956 per prisoner).

Through the levy deduction, £166 per prisoner per month was raised on average for the levy. The amount raised decreased by £56 per month for each prisoner in the latest year compared with the year ending March 2020, when an average of £222 was raised per prisoner per month through the Prisoners’ Earnings Act levy. In the 12-months to March 2021, the average number of active prisoners per month was 445, a decrease of 45% from last year when the number was 811.

Figure 5.1: Average net prisoner earnings after Prisoners’ Earnings Act levy deduction, and average raised through the levy per prisoner per month, the 6-months ending March 2012 to the 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 5.2)



6. Accredited Programmes

The number of starts for Accredited Programmes in custody fell

In the 12-months to March 2021, there were 744 Accredited Programme starts, an 87% decrease when compared with the previous 12-month period.

The number of completions¹⁷ for Accredited Programmes in custody fell

In the 12-months to March 2021, 833 accredited programmes were completed by offenders, representing an 84% fall compared with the previous 12-month period.

Accreditation is a system for ensuring that treatment programmes offered to offenders, which aim to reduce reoffending, have a proper theoretical basis, and are designed in accordance with the 'What Works' literature.

HMPPS commissions a range of accredited programmes¹⁸; varying in length, complexity and mode of delivery. Programmes have been developed to target the particular risks and needs for different types of offending behaviour. To achieve accreditation, programmes must be assessed to make sure they are targeting the right people, focusing on the right things, and being delivered in a way that is most likely to reduce reoffending. All HMPPS-commissioned accredited programmes are subject to quality assurance processes to ensure programme integrity is maintained and developed.

Changes to the delivery of Accredited Programmes¹⁹ in custody has resulted in a fall in volumes for starts and completions (Figures 6.1 and 6.2, Tables 6.1 to 6.3)

In the year to March 2021, the number of starts decreased by 87% and completions fell by 84% compared with the same period in 2020. Since 2010, volumes of starts and completions have fallen due to changes in Accredited programme delivery in custody. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted on the delivery of accredited programmes in custody. Delivery was mostly paused in March 2020 and where delivery was able to resume under safe systems of work and infection control, it was significantly curtailed to one-to-one or small group delivery. This impacted on the numbers able to progress. Priority was given to completing for those whose programmes were paused during 2019/20, hence more completions than starts in this reporting period.

Accredited programme delivery in custody has changed significantly since 2010. New programmes have been introduced: Building Better Relationships (BBR), Healthy Sex Programme (HSP), Resolve, Horizon; with Kaizen introduced in 2017. Kaizen and Horizon have replaced all of the delivery of Core and Extended Sex Offender Treatment Programmes in custody. This transition to newer programmes accounted for some of the decrease in sex offender treatment programmes.

¹⁷ Total volumes over the financial year for starts and completions will not necessarily match. This is because an offender who completed in the current financial year might have started the programme in previous years.

¹⁸ A complete list of accredited programmes for offenders in custody can be found at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/883024/descriptions-accredited-programmes.pdf

¹⁹ In this publication, programmes are grouped into one of six categories: Domestic Violence, Extremism, General Offending, Sexual Offending, Substance Misuse or Violence. For monitoring purposes, Offender Behaviour Programmes (OBPs) in custody include domestic violence, violence and general offending completions but exclude sexual offender treatment and substance misuse programmes, which are reported separately.

The longer-term decrease in Accredited Programme starts and completions has been primarily driven by the change of programme ownership – and responsibility for running substance misuse accredited programmes - from HMPPS to NHS. As of 1 April 2011, local NHS partnerships assumed these responsibilities and have opted to deliver an increasing proportion of substance misuse programmes which are not CSAAP accredited. The large decreases seen reflect the fact that more offenders are completing programmes run by the NHS, rather than HMPPS.

There has also been a reinvestment from shorter, moderate intensity programmes in favour of longer, higher intensity programmes. The number of commissioned completions have therefore decreased despite maintaining investment.

Starts^{20,21} for Accredited Programmes²² delivered in custody continue to fall (Figure 6.1, Table 6.1)

Starts in HMPPS-commissioned accredited programmes delivered in custody fell by 87%, when compared with 2020. The decline since 2019/20 is due to the impact on programme delivery brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Accredited Programme starts have decreased year on year, since 2010, when the timeseries began.

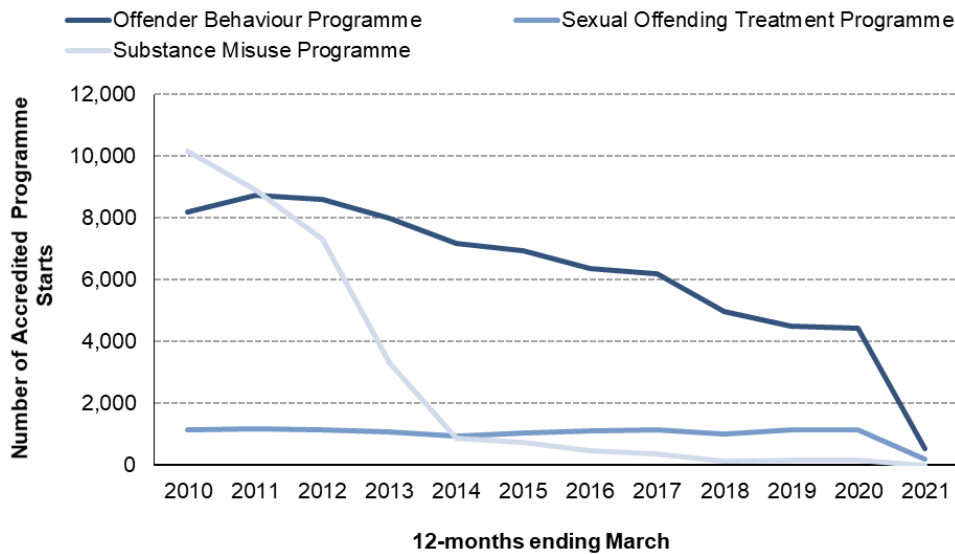
When looking at programme types, General offending was by far the most common, with 43% of starts from this category. This was followed by sexual offending programmes and Violence programmes, at 27% and 23% respectively. Domestic Violence, Extremism and Substance misuse programmes accounted for a much lower proportion of starts in 2021, at 4%, 2% and 1% respectively.

²⁰ Under exceptional circumstances, offenders in custody can start more than one accredited programme in any financial year. The figures presented in this chapter refer to the number of starts and might not equal the number of offenders who started any given programme during the same financial year.

²¹ From 23rd March 2020, changes to usual operations of accredited programme delivery were implemented in response to the impact of COVID-19 in prisons. In most cases, no new programme starts occurred from this date and these were scaled down in accordance to local infection control requirements. Delivery began to recovery in mid-2020 as prisons began to commence delivery again however the number of starts remained significantly lower due to only being able to deliver one to one or small group activity.

²² Programmes relating to domestic violence and sexual offending are available for male prisoners only. Certain programmes relating to general offending (KAINOS and New Me Strengths) and violence (Kaizen Violence, Identity Matters and Becoming New Me) are available for male prisoners only.

Figure 6.1: Number of starts for accredited programmes in custody, 12-months ending March 2010 to 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 6.1)

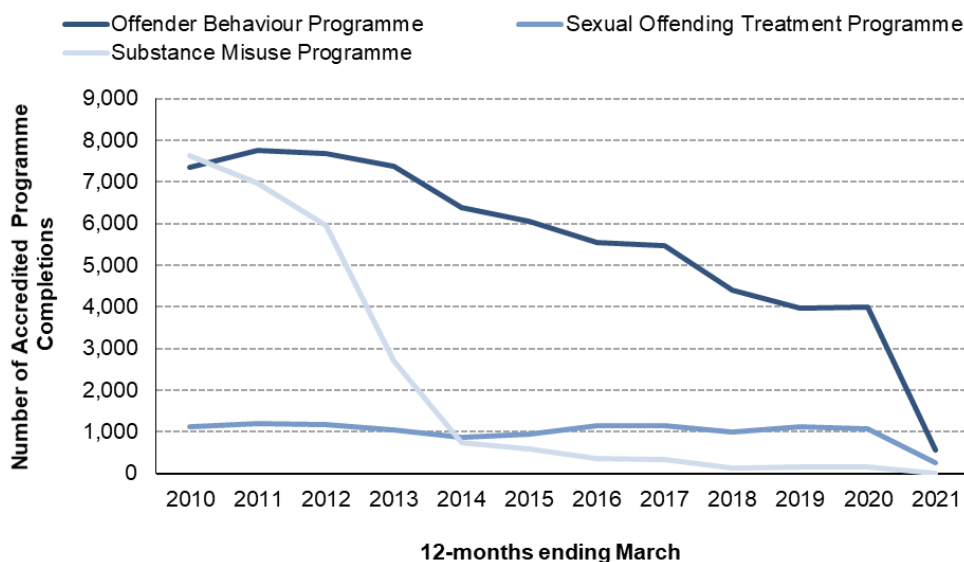


Accredited Programmes completed in custody remained stable in the last year (Figure 6.2, Tables 6.2 and 6.3)

The effects of programme delivery resulting in changes to prison operating regimes during the COVID-19 pandemic meant that there was a sharp fall in the number of completions this year compared with the last. There were 833 completions in the year ending March 2021, down from 5,216 during the same period in 2020; representing a fall of 84%. This follows a period of relative stability with only a 5% decrease in the number of programme completions between the year ending March 2018 and the year ending March 2020.

When looking at types of programme, the most common programme type was General Offending, with 40% of completions in this category, last year this was also the most common programme completion type. The next most common type of programme completion was sexual offending programmes at 31%.

Figure 6.2: Number of completions for accredited programmes in custody, 12-months ending March 2010 to 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 6.2)



7. Random Mandatory Drug Testing

In the 12-months to March 2021, there were 4,738 random mandatory drug tests (rMDT) carried out nationally across all types of drugs, of which 606 (12.8%) gave a positive result

In normal circumstances, as part of HMPPS' comprehensive drug testing regime, a random sample of prisoners (5%, or 10% in prisons with under 400 prisoners) are subject to RMDT each month. This translated to more than 55,000 attempted tests in the year to March 2020, across all prisons. However, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, in the latest year testing was suspended across prisons resulting in a significant drop in the number of completed tests throughout 2020-21.

Due to the large reduction in the numbers of tests performed since March 2020 during the pandemic, it is not possible to make meaningful comparisons with the figures for previous years. Drug testing has not been carried out across all prisons over the past year, so we have also not published tables showing prison level breakdowns for the latest year.

Please see Chapter 7 along with the Chapter 7 tables of the HMPPS Annual Digest: April 2019 to March 2020 edition to see more in-depth data on random mandatory drug testing for previous time periods and a more detailed explanation of how RMDT operates. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hmppps-annual-digest-april-2019-to-march-2020>).

8. Protesting Behaviour

Barricade/prevention of access incidents decreased

In the 12-months to March 2021, the number of barricade/prevention of access incidents decreased to 1,217, a decrease of 35% compared with the previous 12-month period.

Hostage incidents have decreased and are at the lowest level in the past 10 years

In the 12-months to March 2021, the number of incidents where prisoners took someone hostage decreased 56% to 38.

Incidents of concerted indiscipline decrease

In the 12-months to March 2021, the number of incidents of concerted indiscipline decreased by 40% to 159. The number of these incidents which are counted as active, incidents involving aggression or violence, decreased by 61% over the same period to 63 (40% of all concerted indiscipline incidents).

Incidents at height decrease

In the 12-months to March 2021, the number of incidents at height in prisons decreased by 33% to 4,081.

Prisons use contingency planning to deal with incidents of disorder. The objective of the contingency planning is to ensure incidents are resolved with the minimum risk of harm to staff, prisoners and the public, and that there is a return to normal operations and regime as swiftly as possible.

Barricade / prevention of access, hostage, concerted indiscipline and incident at height are all sub-types of protesting behaviour incident. The following is a list of definitions used for these sub-types²³:

- **Barricades/prevention of access:** Where one or more offenders deny access to any part of a prison, by use of a physical barrier, to those lawfully empowered to have such access.
- **Hostage incidents:** Where one or more persons are, unlawfully, held against their will by one or more individuals (either static or on the move). For the purpose of this metric this excludes unlawful detention by HMPS but does include hostage incidents where collusion was suspected or confirmed.
- **Concerted indiscipline:** An incident where two or more prisoners act together in defiance of a lawful instruction or against the requirements of the regime of the establishment. The act of indiscipline can be either active or passive (e.g. for passive a sit down protest) and the protagonists do not necessarily need to be acting in a common cause.
- **Incidents at height:** An incident at height is defined as any incident that is occurring at a place above or below ground level where a person could be injured if they fell from that place. This category can come in many forms including, but not limited to, prisoners on the netting, climbing up bars or on the roof, or where there is a risk of falling into an opening in a floor or a hole in the ground.

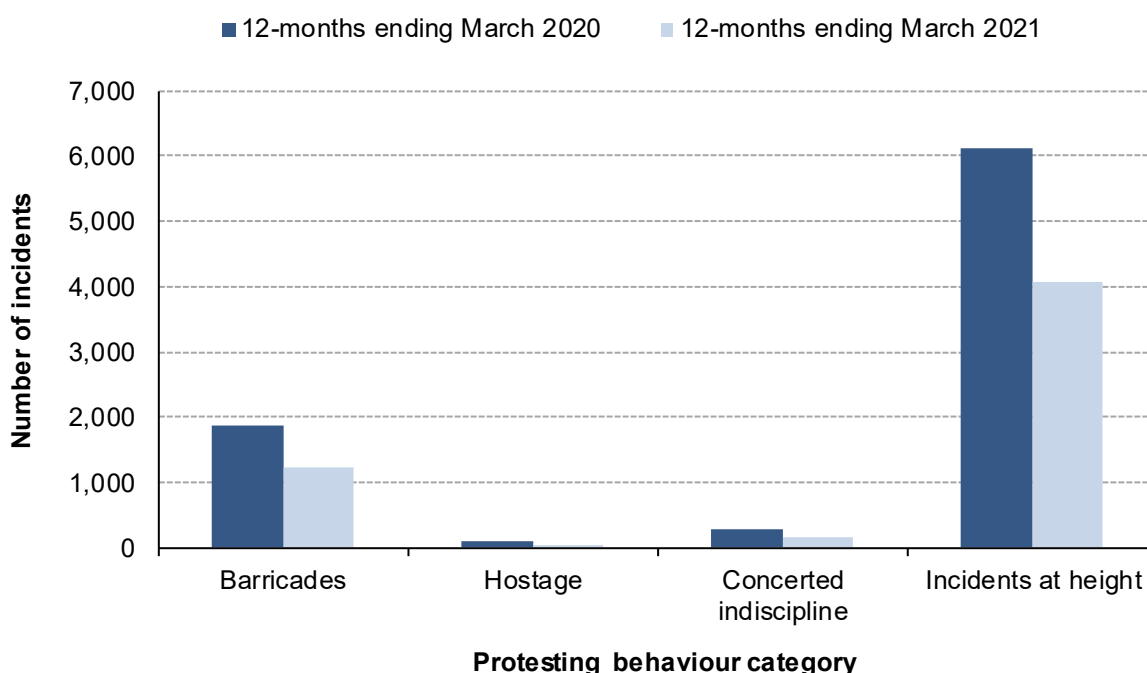
²³ The reporting system used for incidents does not enable us to report multiple incident types for the same incident. Where there an incident covers more than one incident category (i.e. hostage and assault) then we expect to have two separate incidents created. Where multiple sub-types of an incident occur during the same incident this would be recorded as a single incident, against the most appropriate sub-type (normally the most serious)

Generally, an increase in protest activity (e.g. protesting incidents, complaints about the regime, petitions, etc) will provide an early and strong indication that there has been a shift in prison thinking. HMPPS continuously monitors regime delivery, incident activity, intelligence assessments and complaints to gauge stability tolerances across the Prison estate. Should the position change HMPPS will be able to identify this quickly and use the intelligence to inform incident management strategy moving forward. HMPPS continue to perform regular reviews of their tactical resources to ensure they have sufficient staff available to deploy for incident resolution and have strengthened previous arrangements with the military and police.

Incidents at height continue to be the most common form of protesting behaviour (Figure 8.1, Table 8.1)

In the 12-months to March 2021, the most common type of incidents of protesting behaviour were incidents at height (4,081 incidents), followed by barricades or prevented access (1,217 incidents), concerted indiscipline (159 incidents) and hostages (38 incidents). All types of incidents of protesting behaviour decreased substantially in the 12-months to March 2021 compared to the 12-months to March 2020 due to the impact of restricted regimes prisons put in place in order to safely manage the risks of infection during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Figure 8.1: Number of incidents in each category of protesting behaviour, 12-months ending March 2020 to 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 8.1)



The number of incidents of prisoners using barricades or preventing access decreased (Table 8.2)

There were 1,217 incidents in the 12-months to March 2021, where prisoners used barricades or prevented access. This represents a decrease of 35% from a peak of 1,882 in the previous year. Prior to the latest year, the number of incidents of prisoners using barricades increased each year from the 12-months ending March 2013.

The number of hostage incidents has declined (Table 8.3)

The number of incidents where prisoners took someone hostage in prisons decreased by 56% in the 12-months to March 2021, from 86 incidents in the previous year to 38 incidents in the latest year. The number of hostage incidents gradually increased each year to a peak of 129 in the 12-months to March 2016, and have been decreasing each year since then.

The number of incidents of concerted indiscipline decreased by 40% (Table 8.4)

The number of incidents of concerted indiscipline decreased by 40%, from 267 incidents in the 12-months to March 2020, to 159 incidents in the 12-months to March 2021.

The number of incidents of concerted indiscipline described as active decreased by 61%, from 162 in the 12-months to March 2020, to 63 incidents in the 12-months to March 2021 (Table 8.5). The proportion of incidents of concerted indiscipline described as active decreased from 61% to 40% in the latest year.

The number of incidents at height decreased (Table 8.6)

The number of incidents at height decreased in the 12-months to March 2021 by 33% to 4,081 incidents, compared with 6,114 in the previous 12-month period. Previously, the number of incidents at height gradually increased each year, peaking in the 12-months to March 2020.

9. Finds in Prison

Number of finds decreased across the majority of categories

Most categories of finds saw a decrease in the number of incidents in the 12-months to March 2021 compared to the previous 12-month period as a result of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The exception is finds involving alcohol which increased from 8,376 to 8,919 in the year ending March 2021, an increase of 6%.

Number of drug finds in prisons decreased

In the 12-months to March 2021, the number of incidents where drugs were found in prisons decreased to 20,295 from 21,575 in the previous 12-month period, a decrease of 6%.

Number of mobile phone and SIM card finds decreased

In the 12-months to March 2021, there were 8,793 incidents where mobile phones were found in prisons and 3,991 incidents where SIM cards were found. These are a 25% and 28% decrease respectively, compared with the previous 12-month period.

Number of incidents where weapons were found decreased

There were 7,178 incidents where weapons were found in the 12-months to March 2021. This is a decrease of 36% compared to the previous year.

Number of tobacco finds decreased

In the 12-months to March 2021, there were 3,752 incidents where tobacco was found in prisons. This is a decrease of 36% compared to the previous year.

This chapter covers incidents where illicit items have been found in prisons.

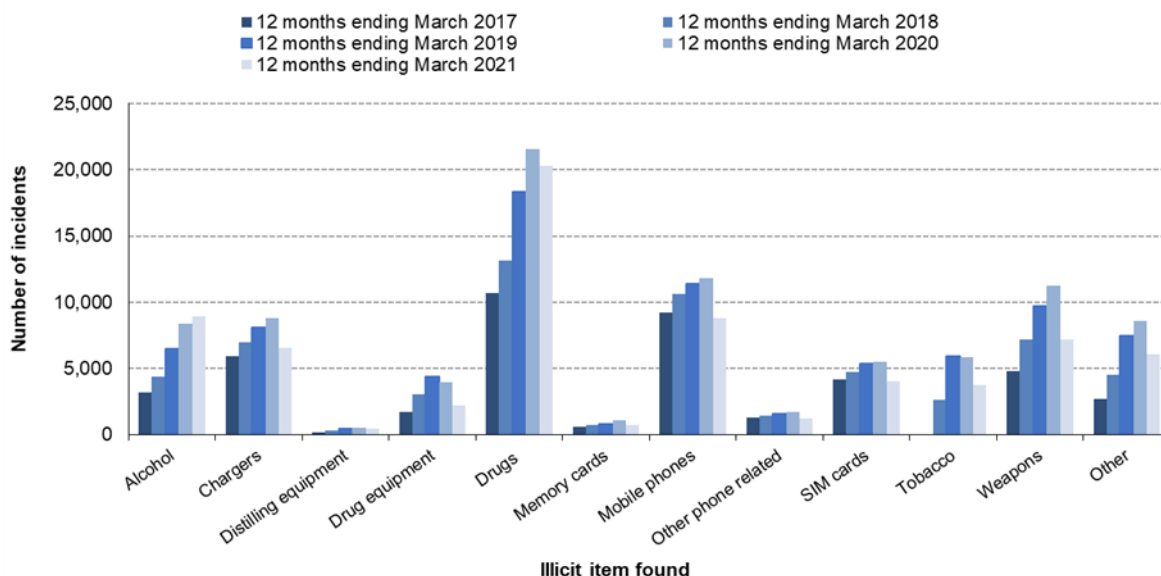
It is the priority of HMPPS to ensure prisons are places of safety and reform, including by removing the supply of illicit drugs. Since the publication of the White Paper Prison Safety and Reform in 2016, HMPPS has taken additional steps to disrupt the supply of illicit items, such as drugs, into prisons. For example, in 2018 we announced the rollout of specialist search teams to conduct body, property, cell and area searches across the estate. In April 2019 HMPPS published its National Prison Drug Strategy. One of its key pillars covers how prison staff can restrict the supply of drugs into their prisons.

In August 2019 a £100m investment in prison security was announced. This investment will enhance our ability to detect attempts to bring drugs and mobile phones into prisons by prisoners, visitors and staff, while mobile phone detection and blocking technology stops illicit phones from working in prisons and enables them to be retrieved. HMPPS is also expanding its Counter Corruption Unit and strengthening intelligence-led operations and investigations with law enforcement partners to disrupt organised crime, including the conveyance of drugs and mobile phones, into prisons.

It is important to consider with incidents of finds in prisons, that an increase in numbers may be as a result of more items being found although not necessarily attributable to any one particular security counter-measure, rather than more items being present in prisons.

In the year to March 2021 the most common types of illicit items found in prisons were drugs (20,295 incidents of finds); alcohol (8,919); mobile phones (8,793); weapons (7,178); and chargers (6,564). For all find types other than alcohol, the number of incidents fell in the latest year, following an increase in recent years; this is believed to be associated with changes in regimes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (for further discussion of the response to COVID-19 please refer back to the introduction).

Figure 9.1: Number of incidents where illicit items were found in prisons, 12-months ending March 2018 to 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 9.1)



The number of finds of drugs decreases in public prisons but continues to rise in contracted out prisons (Figure 9.1, Table 9.2a)

In the 12-months ending March 2021, there were 20,295 finds of drugs in prisons; a decrease of 6% from the 21,575 in the 12-months to March 2020. In the 12-months ending March 2021, there were 15,665 finds of drugs in public prisons; a decrease of 11% from the 17,661 in the 12-months to March 2020. Conversely, in the 12-months ending March 2021, there were 4,630 finds of drugs in contracted out prisons; an increase of 18% from the 3,914 in the 12-months to March 2020.

The drug type accounting for the largest number of incidents where drugs were found in the 12-months to March 2021 were psychoactive substances (Table 9.2b)

Psychoactive substances (PS), as defined in the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016²⁴, were found in 9,114 incidents in the 12-months to March 2021, more incidents than any other drug category in this time period. Psychoactive substances (PS) also represented the largest increase from the previous 12-months, increasing from 8,192 incidents in the 12-months ending March 2020.

²⁴ In this Act “psychoactive substance” means any substance which is capable of producing a psychoactive effect in a person who consumes it, and is not an exempted substance. Exempted substances are: controlled drugs, medicinal products, alcohol or alcoholic products, nicotine, tobacco products, caffeine or caffeine products or any substance which is ordinarily consumed as food, and does not contain a prohibited ingredient. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/2/contents>

Drug finds decreased across most drugs types in the 12-months ending March 2021, when compared with the 12-months ending March 2020. There was no change in the number of Class A drug finds with 2,840 finds in both the 12-months ending March 2020 and March 2021

The number of incidents where drug equipment was found in prisons decreased by 44% from 3,922 in the 12-months to March 2020, to 2,177 incidents in the 12-months to March 2021.

The number of incidents where mobile phones were found decreased in the 12-months to March 2021 (Figure 9.1, Table 9.4a and 9.4b)

The number of incidents where mobile phones were found in prisons decreased by 25% from 11,792 in the 12-months to March 2020, to 8,793 incidents in the 12-months to March 2021.

The quantity of mobile phones found in prisons fell to a slightly lesser extent, by 20% over this time period, from 15,789 in the 12-months to March 2020 compared with 12,673 in the 12-months to March 2021.

The number of incidents where SIM cards were found decreased in the 12-months to March 2021 (Figure 9.1, Tables 9.5a and 9.5b)

The number of incidents where SIM cards were found in prisons decreased by 28% from 5,510 in the 12-months to March 2020, to 3,991 incidents in the 12-months to March 2021.

The quantity of SIM cards found has decreased in this period by 13%, with 7,715 SIM cards found in the 12-months to March 2021, compared with 8,891 in the previous 12-months.

The number of incidents where chargers, memory cards or other mobile phone related items were found decreased (Figure 9.1, Tables 9.6, 9.7 and 9.8)

The number of incidents where chargers were found in prisons dropped by 25%, from 8,771 in the 12-months ending March 2020 to 6,564 in the 12-months ending March 2021.

The number of incidents where memory cards were found in prisons dropped by 33%, from 1,111 in the 12-months ending March 2020 to 741 in the 12-months ending March 2021.

The number of incidents where other mobile phone related items were found in prisons dropped by 29%, from 1,744 in the 12-months ending March 2020 to 1,245 in the 12-months ending March 2021.

The number of incidents where alcohol was found has risen (Figure 9.1, Table 9.9 and 9.10)

The number of incidents where alcohol was found in prisons rose by 6%, from 8,376 in the year ending March 2020 to 8,919 in the year ending March 2021.

The number of incidents where distilling equipment was found decreased by 15%, from 547 in the year ending March 2020 to 465 in the year ending March 2021.

The number of incidents where tobacco was found decreased (Figure 9.1, Table 9.11)

In the 12-months ending March 2021 there were 3,752 finds of tobacco in prisons, a decrease of 36% from 5,872 incidents the previous year.

The number of incidents where weapons were found went down (Figure 9.1, Table 9.12)

The number of incidents where weapons were found in prisons dropped by 36% from 11,267 in the year ending March 2020 to 7,178 in the year ending March 2021.

10. Incentives

The proportion of prisoners with a Standard incentive status increased

Compared with the previous 12-months, the proportion of prisoners with a standard increased, to 49% (an annual average of 38,646 prisoners).

The proportion of prisoners with a Basic incentive status fell by 88%

In the year to March 2021, the proportion of prisoners with a Basic status was less than 1% (an annual average of 559 prisoners); falling by 88% when compared with the same proportion in the previous year.

The proportion of prisoners with an Enhanced incentive status increased

The proportion of prisoners with an Enhanced status increased by 5% to 50% (39,738 on annual average) of prisoners in March 2021, compared with the year ending March 2020 when the proportion was 45% (37,452 on annual average).

An incentives scheme (formerly known as Incentives and Earned Privileges - IEP) was introduced in 1995 with the expectation that prisoners would earn additional privileges through demonstrating responsible behaviour and participation in work or other constructive activity. They allow prisoners to earn privileges through good behaviour and engagement in the regime and rehabilitation. Privileges can also be lost through poor behaviour. The IEP scheme operated on four levels: Basic, Entry, Standard and Enhanced, until August 2019 when Entry level was abolished. A small number of establishments continued to report against the Entry regime after this date and this is reflected in the data for 2019 and 2020. It was replaced by the Incentives Policy Framework in January 2020. The new policy has a greater focus on incentivising positive behaviour, providing consistency in key areas, whilst giving governors greater flexibility to tailor incentives to the local needs and challenges in their prison.

Prisoners typically start on Standard level, and positive behaviour can be rewarded with progression to Enhanced²⁵, while poor behaviour can result in prisoners being placed on Basic – with the associated increase or reduction in privileges. Basic level provides access to the safe, legal and decent requirement of a normally running regime.

The proportion of prisoners with a Standard incentive status increased (Tables 10.1 and 10.2, Figure 10.1)

In the 12-months to March 2021, an annual average of 38,646 (49%) prisoners had a Standard incentive status, compared with the previous year when 40,279 (48%) prisoners had a standard status. The proportion of prisoners with a standard incentive has remained broadly similar since the year ending March 2018.

²⁵ Some prisons use levels higher than enhanced, these higher levels are not distinguished in the data and they appear as enhanced.

The percentage of prisoners with a Basic incentive status fell (Tables 10.1 and 10.2, Figure 10.1)

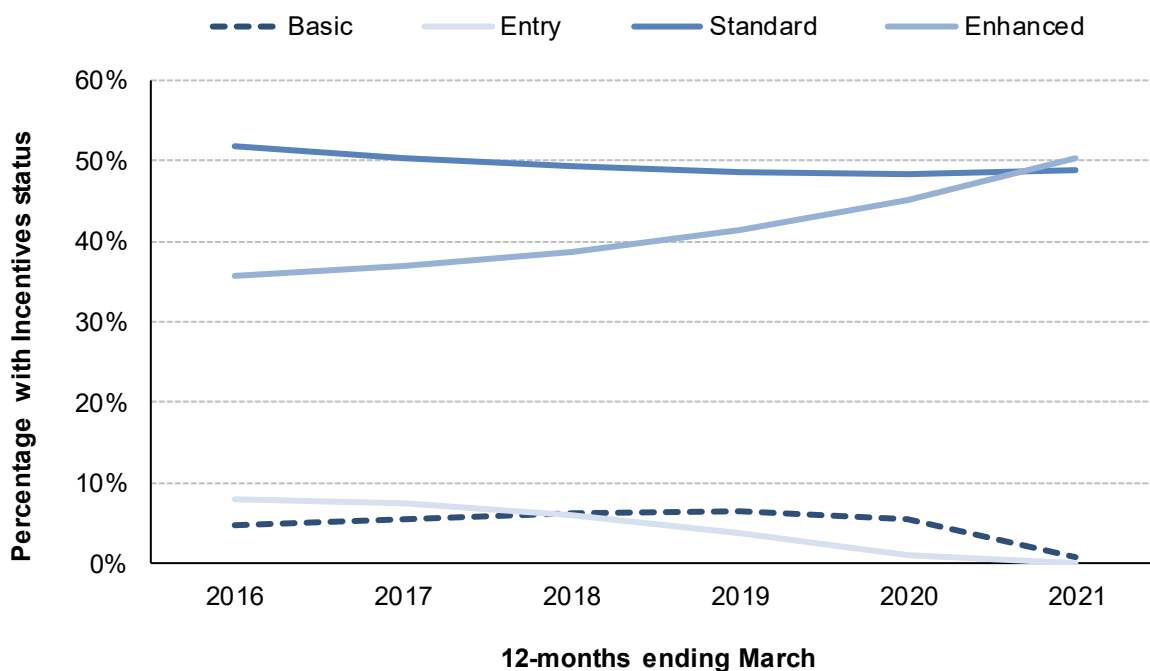
In the year ending March 2021, an annual average of 559 prisoners had a Basic incentive status, which was a decrease of 88% from the year ending March 2020 when an average of 4,597 prisoners had a basic status.

The decrease is due to the effect of a regime mitigation that was put into place in order to mitigate the impacts of restricted regimes during Covid-19. There was a national instruction on 15th April 2020 to temporarily rescind the use of Basic incentive level other than in exceptional circumstances. Governors were instructed to move all Basic prisoners to Standard incentive level where those exceptional circumstances did not apply.

The percentage of prisoners with an Enhanced incentive status increased (Tables 10.1 and 10.2, Figure 10.1)

In the 12-months to March 2021, 39,738 prisoners on average had an Enhanced incentive status. The proportion of prisoners with an enhanced incentive status rose from 45% to 50%. This proportion has been increasing since the year ending March 2016.

Figure 10.1: Percentage of Prisoners on each incentives level, in the 12-months ending March 2016 to March 2021 (Source: Table 10.2)



The percentage of prisoners with an Entry level incentive status decreased to less than 1% (Tables 10.1 and 10.2, Figure 10.1)

As part of the implementation of the new Incentives Policy Framework, Entry level incentive status was abolished on 16 August 2019. A small number of establishments continued to report against the Entry regime after this date.

Male Category B had the largest proportion of prisoners with a Basic incentive status (Table 10.4)

The proportion of prisoners assigned to each type of incentive status varies by type of establishment. In the 12-months to March 2021, Male Category B had the largest proportion of prisoners with a Basic incentive status with 1.4% of their populations having a Basic status. Immigration and Removal Centres (IRCs), Female open prisons and Male open prisons had the largest proportion of prisoners with an Enhanced incentive status, 100%, 95% and 93% respectively.

11. Mother and Baby Units (MBUs), Pregnant Prisoners and Births

The total number of MBU applications declined when compared with 2019/20

During the latest 12-month period, 62 applications²⁶ were made for a place within an MBU compared with 95 in the year to March 2019. 26 applications were approved and 17 refused.

The number of women and babies received into MBUs decreased

In the year to March 2021, 27 women and 19 babies were received into MBUs; compared with 49 women and 39 babies in the previous reporting year.

On average there were 26 pregnant women in prison per week in the nine months up to March 2021

The lowest number of pregnant women in prisons was 21 in September 2020 and the highest number was 34 in mid-October 2020.

There was a total of 31 births to women spending time in custody in the nine months up to March 2021

94% (29) of these births took place at a hospital and two took place in transit to hospital. There were zero births within a prison.

A Mother and Baby Unit (MBU) is a designated accommodation unit within a women's prison which enables mothers, where appropriate, to have their children with them. Women who are pregnant or who have children under the age of 18 months can apply for a place in an MBU. Details of the process are given in the Guide.

There are currently six MBUs in operation across the women's estate in England (there are no women's prisons in Wales) which provide an overall total capacity of 64 places for mothers. There are 70 places for babies to allow for twins and multiple births. Capacity has never been exceeded.

During the Covid-19 pandemic the prison population decreased. In addition, on the 31st March 2020 the Government announced that pregnant women and women in Mother and Baby Units (MBUs) would be the first tranche of prisoners considered for temporary release from prison, to protect them and their children from coronavirus. More details on the number of women being released are available from here: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hm-prison-and-probation-service-covid-19-statistics.

²⁶ Applications received in one year may be approved or refused in a following year.

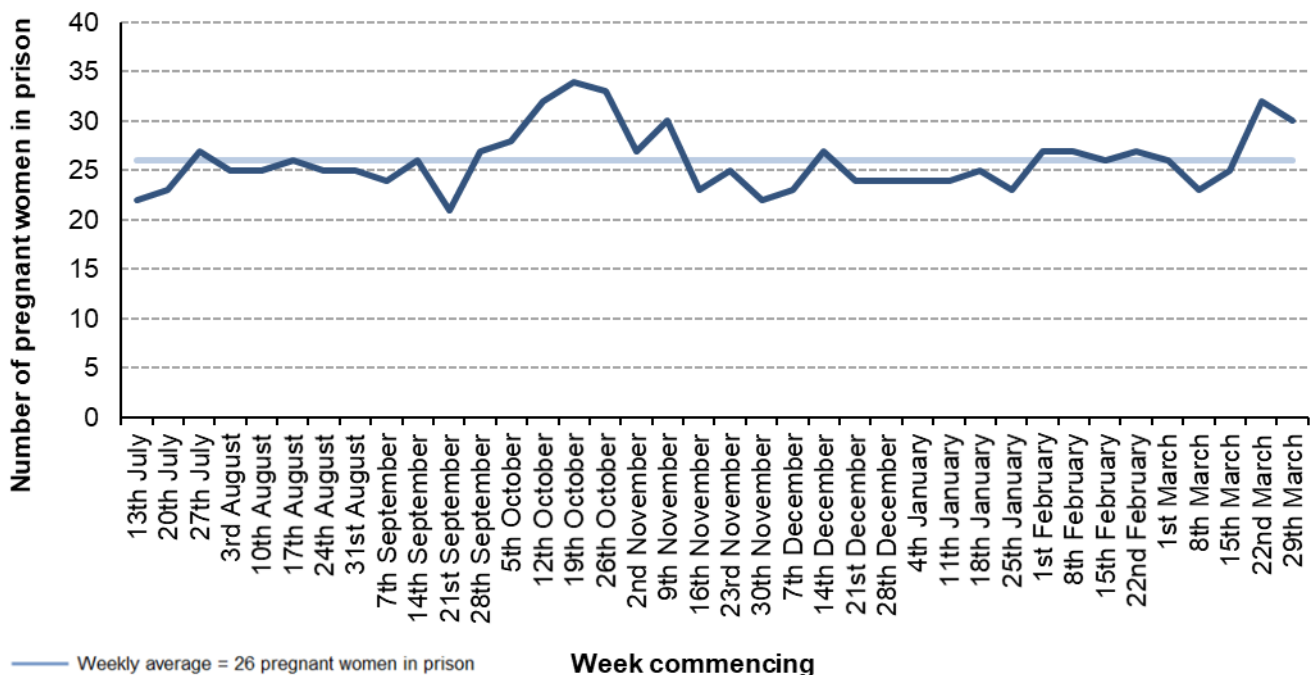
This report contains new statistics for self-declared pregnant prisoners and births for the nine months from July 2020 to the end of March 2021. These data are in development due to the dynamic nature of policy development in this area and in future publications, the full 12-months will be covered. The snapshots represent women who have self-declared as pregnant and consent to sharing this information, having been made aware why their personal data is being monitored and how it will be used. HMPPS publish these data anonymously as part of aggregate totals²⁷, preventing identification of individuals and infringement of the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. It does not represent women who have reserved their right not to disclose this personal data to HMPPS, or who might have disclosed this data to healthcare providers in confidence. Self-declared data cannot be quality assured, and therefore accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

On average there were 26 pregnant women in prison per week in the nine-months up to March 2021 (Tables 11.1 and 11.2)

The number of pregnant women in prisons was fairly constant through the nine months for which we have data. The lowest number of pregnant women in prisons was 21 in September 2020 and the highest number was 34 in mid-October 2020.

There were 31 births in the nine months leading up to the end of March 2020 with 94% of these (29) taking place at a hospital. There were two births in transit to hospital and zero took place in prisons.

Figure 11.1: Number of pregnant women in prison each week, for the nine²⁸-months from July 2020 to the end of March 2021 (Source: Table 11.2)



²⁷ Where figures are so low that they risk identifying individuals, we have marked them as less than 3 to avoid identification.

²⁸ This is the first year data on pregnant prisoners has been collected centrally. Data quality was improved to be of a publishable standard in July 2020 and therefore data are published for that point onwards.

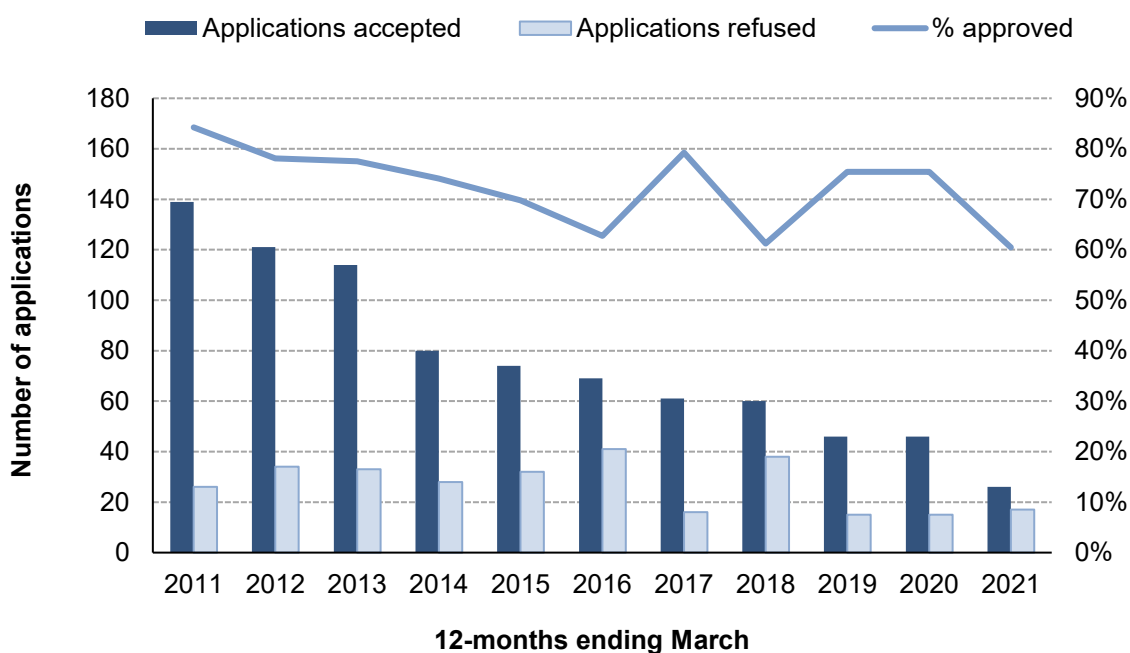
Total applications, approved applications and refused applications remained constant when compared with the previous year (Figure 11.2, Table 11.1)

In the 12-months ending March 2021, there were 62 applications^{29,30} for a place within an MBU, compared with 95 applications in the previous year. Multiple applications can be submitted by women, for example if they serve two separate sentences and have eligible children on both occasions.

Of the 43 applications which resulted in a recommendation 60% (26 applications) were approved and 40% (17 applications) refused. Not all applications to MBUs will receive a recommendation as they do not proceed for other reasons, for example because a woman is on remand and does not receive a custodial sentence, or because Children’s Services cannot support an application due to a care order being put in place by the Family Courts.

75% of applications were also approved in the 12-months to March 2020. Over the last 10 years the highest percentage of applications approved was in 2011 when 84% of applications that received a recommendation were approved. In 2021 we have seen the lowest proportion of approvals since 2011 at 60%, however similar proportions of approval have been seen in 2016 (63%) and 2018 (61%).

Figure 11.2: Number of applications approved and refused³¹ to an MBU, the 12-months ending March 2011 to the 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 11.1)



²⁹ Multiple applications can be submitted by women over the duration of the financial year period; therefore, application volumes will usually be higher than counts for individual mothers.

³⁰ An application approval does not always mean a woman and her baby/babies will be received into an MBU, as alternative arrangements could be made for care after the application is submitted.

³¹ The percentage of approved applications is as the proportion of those who received a recommendation in the year (of approvals or refusals).

The number of women and babies received into MBUs decreased over the year (Table 11.1)

During the latest financial year, 27 women and 19 babies were received into a MBUs in England and Wales³². This compares with 49 women and 39 babies in the 12-months ending March 2019. There has been a general trend of falling volumes since March 2011.

At the 31st of March 2020, 21 women and 15 babies were accommodated in MBUs across the estate; compared with 32 women and 30 babies in the previous financial year.

The decrease in the number of women and babies received onto MBUs is likely due to the overall decrease in the number of women in custody, in addition to other constant factors such as the distance from home for women suitable for an MBU placement.

³² The number of women received into an MBU does not necessarily equal the number of approvals within a financial year period. This is because an application for a woman can be approved in the previous financial year, but she does not enter the MBU until the current financial year.

12. Electronic Monitoring

Overall, the number of subjects actively monitored³³ with an EM device has increased by 34% in the last year

At 31 March 2021, the total number of subjects actively monitored with an Electronic Monitoring (EM) device and open EM order was 13,963. The rise in the past 12-months goes against the previous downward trend in preceding years.

The number of subjects actively monitored with EM bail orders has increased by 84%

The number of subjects actively monitored with an Electronic Monitoring (EM) device and open EM bail order was 6,001 on 31 March 2021. This represents an increase of 84% when compared with the previous year, when the number was 3,261.

The total number of new starts remain similar to that of the previous year, but completions has decreased this year

In the year ending 31 March 2021, there were 54,075 new notifications of an EM order and 49,190 cases of an EM order being completed. New notifications are almost identical, yet completions have fallen 9% compared with the previous year due to orders lasting longer.

There were 1,628 subjects³⁴ actively monitored with a location monitoring device at 31 March 2021

At 31 March 2021, there were 1,628 subjects actively being monitored using GPS technology, which was introduced in November 2018.

There were 54 subjects actively monitored with an alcohol monitoring device at 31 March 2021. These subjects have been excluded from total EM figures.

At 31 March 2021, there were 54 subjects actively being monitored using alcohol tagging, which was introduced in October 2020 in Wales and March 2021 in England.

Electronic monitoring was introduced in 1999 to support the police, courts, prisons and wider justice system in England and Wales.

It is a way of remotely monitoring and recording information on an individual's whereabouts or movements, using an electronic tag which is normally fitted to a subject's ankle. Information about the compliance of an individual's order is monitored.

Electronic monitoring may be used:

- as a condition of court bail;

³³ Monitored subjects are unique individuals with a live EM order and with a tag fitted and Home Monitoring Unit (HMU) installed.

³⁴ These figures do not include those monitored as special cases

- as a requirement of a court sentence, primarily community orders and suspended sentences;
- as a licence condition following release from custody, primarily Home Detention Curfew;
- as a condition of immigration bail, managed by the Home Office; and
- to intensively monitor a small number of subjects including: some of the highest risk offenders managed under Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA); those granted bail by the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC); and those made subject to Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (TPIMs).

The national roll out of satellite enabled (GPS) location monitoring tags from November 2018 has made GPS tags widely available to sentencers and decision makers as an option for court and post-custody cohorts. This is in addition to the use of GPS tags to monitor a small number of specialist cases. The tags use satellite technology to record an individual's movements 24 hours a day. There was a regional phased roll-out to ensure each region was sufficiently supported. This was completed in September 2019 for adults and March 2021 for under 18s.

Location monitoring tags are available alongside the electronic monitoring of curfew requirements, which remains an important tool for the management and supervision of offenders and defendants. Location tags provide additional functionality, allowing the monitoring of:

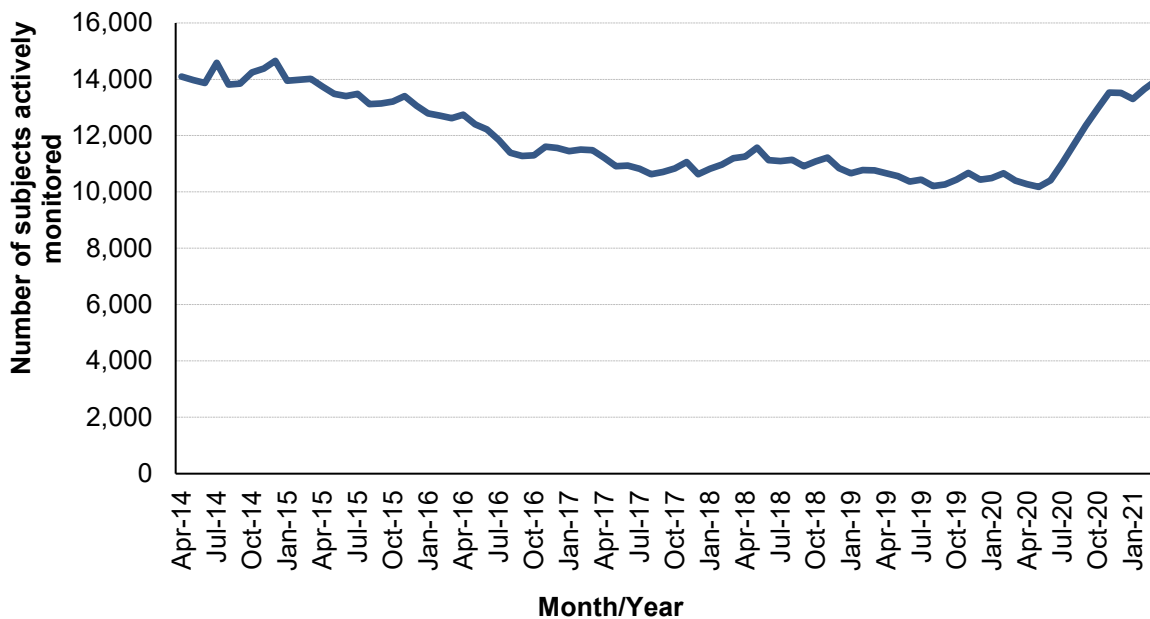
- Compliance with exclusion zones.
- Attendance at a required activity or appointment.
- An offender's whereabouts, known as trail monitoring. This can provide offender managers with data about an individual's whereabouts to support rehabilitative conversations. (This is not available for court bail or a Youth Rehabilitation Order.)
- Multiple conditions or requirements if necessary, such as a combination of exclusion zones, curfew, monitored attendance and trail monitoring.

Electronic monitoring services have always been provided by private sector companies. Since the financial year 2014/15, Electronic Monitoring Services (EMS), part of the Capita group, has supplied the electronic monitoring field and monitoring service under contract to the Ministry of Justice.

At 31 March 2021, the total number of subjects actively monitored with an Electronic Monitoring (EM) device and open EM order was 13,963, a rise of 34% compared with the same point in the previous year. Figure 12.1 shows that there has been a general upward trend in the number of subjects actively monitored in the past 12-months after a few years of downward trend.

The rising EM caseload mostly coincides with increases in the court bail caseload and to a lesser extent court sentence. As court orders (bail and court sentence) with an EM requirement make up 79% of the Electronic Monitoring caseload, then rises in court cases would likely cause increases in the overall EM caseload. Most of the EM total increase occurred between June 2020 and November 2020. The biggest rise for bail orders came in the 3 months between March and June 2020 (Figure 12.2 and Table 12.4) and has continued to rise since but at a reduced pace. In contrast, Court sentence fell by half in the 3 months from March 2020 to June 2020 and then began to increase in the following months.

Figure 12.1: Overall Number of Subjects with an Active Electronic Monitoring Order, as at 30 April 2014 to 31 March 2021 (Source: Table 12.4)



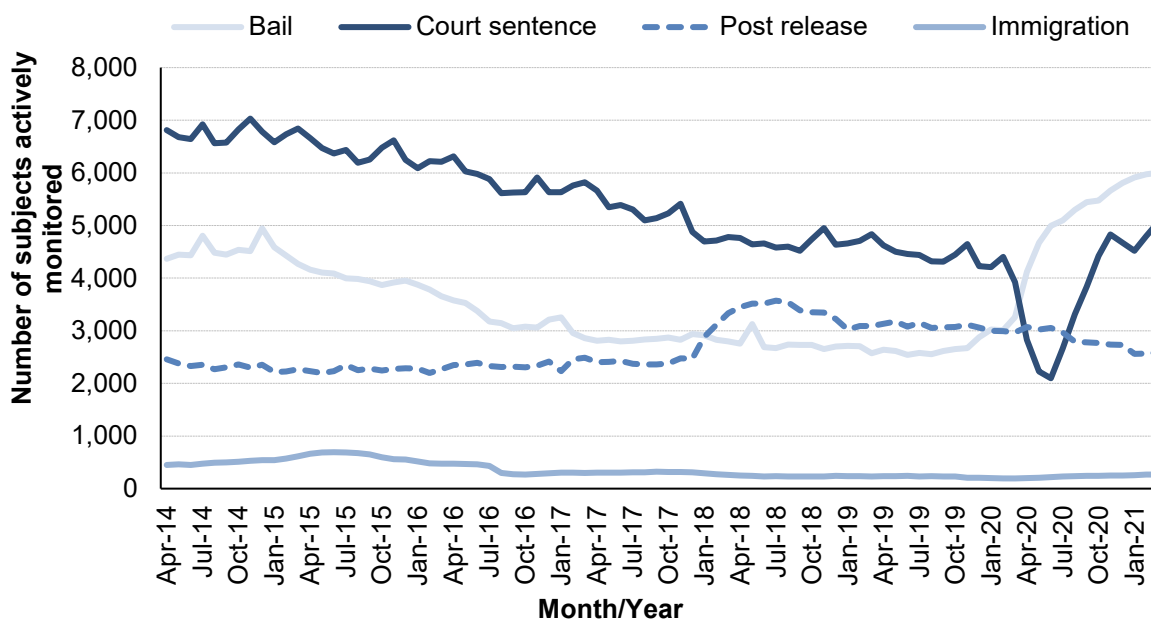
Court Bail account for 43% of order types for those receiving Electronic Monitoring (Table 12.1 and Figure 12.2)

The EM caseload differs considerably by type of order³⁵ in both absolute number and trend over time:

- Court bail order make up the largest proportion of EM orders for individuals on the caseload, (43% of the caseload). At 31 March 2021, 6,001 subjects had court bail as their first order, the highest on record, up by 84% on the previous year.
- Court sentences was the second largest group with 5,065 subjects (36% of caseload), up by 29% on the same point in the previous year after a big dip in the period March to June 2020.
- Post release was the third largest group with 2,582 subjects (18% of caseload), falling by 13% when compared with the previous year. Post release orders had previously been increasing year on year, with an increase of 47% between the years 2015 and 2018.
- Immigration order type increased, with 269 subjects (2% of the caseload), up by 39% on the previous year.
- Specials caseload made up a small (46) part of the caseload and numbers have always been low since 2015.

³⁵ Occasionally a subject may have multiple active orders, possibly of different types. In the figures above, subjects are counted under the order type which started first.

Figure 12.2: Electronic Monitoring Subjects, by Order Type (excluding Specials), as at 30 April 2014 to 31 March 2021 (Source: Table 12.4)



Notifications of new orders have decreased (Table 12.2)

In the 12-months to the end of March 2021, there were 54,075 EM notifications of new orders³⁶, almost identical to the number compared with the same period in the previous year. There has been a falling trend over the previous 6 years (2014-2020) for new notifications and although the number of subjects on EM on any given day has increased in last 12-months, the number of new orders has not, indicating subjects are being tagged for longer periods.

There have been falls in notifications of new orders for court sentence, post release and a slight decrease for specials. Immigration increased moderately though the biggest increase was for court bail which increased by 40% when compared with the previous year. Court sentence remains the most common order type (41% of all new orders), between the year ending March 2020 and year ending March 2021, though the number of court sentence orders fell by 13% to reach 22,276. Court bail orders accounted for 35%, Post release 24%, with immigration and specials being less than 1% of new orders. The number of court sentence new starts was lowest in the months April 2020 to June 2020 which coincided with lowest overall EM new starts on record

The total number of completions was 49,190, 9% lower than in the previous year (Table 12.3)

In the year ending March 2021, there were 49,190 cases of an EM order being completed. This is a decrease of 9% compared with the previous year due to average order length increasing.

When examined by order type, for the year ending March 2021, the distribution of completions by order type is different to the caseload. Court sentences represent 43% of completions, Bail is 30%, post release is 27% and immigration is less than 1% of completions in the year ending March 2021. There are also a small number of specials. Completions were lower than average in the months April and May 2020 particular for court bail orders.

³⁶ A subject can have more than one notification of an order over the year.

Not all completed orders are successful, for example, some completions result in a recall to prison or an order not being continued.

At 31 March 2021, the total number of subjects (excluding specials) actively monitored with a Location Monitoring (GPS) device and open EM order was 1,628, compared with 618 at the same point in the previous year. These figures are shown in table 12.7 but also included in the previous tables (12.1 – 12.6).

Alcohol monitoring has been introduced in October 2020 and went live throughout England and Wales on 31 March 2021. There were 54 subjects actively monitored on an alcohol tag. These figures have not been included in the overall EM caseload numbers.

13. Bail Accommodation and Support Services

The number of BASS referrals decreased slightly by 1% in the latest year

There were 3,891 total referrals for the Bail Accommodation and Support Service in the 12-months to March 2021; a decrease of 1% on the 3,925 referrals made in the previous year.

Home Detention Curfew referrals fell by 8% in the 12-months to March 2021

The number of Home Detention Curfew (HDC) referrals decreased by 8% in the latest year, from 3,123 referrals in the year to March 2020 to 2,868 referrals this year.

Additional Licence Conditions and Bail referrals rose by 50% and 20% respectively

The number of Additional Licence Conditions referrals increased by 50% from 196 to 294 referrals between the years ending March 2020 and March 2021, and referrals relating to Bail increased by 20% from 606 to 728 over the same period.

BASS referrals made at Male Local prisons accounted for the highest volume of known prison referrals

43% (1,455) of all referrals made in the year to March 2021 (where the prison name was known), were from Male Category C prisons.

Bail Accommodation and Support Services (BASS) is a contracted service which provides short-term accommodation for those who have no suitable accommodation and may otherwise be held in custody. The service is available for those on Bail, Home Detention Curfew, released from a custodial sentence of less than four years and of no fixed abode, on licence and at risk of recall due to loss of accommodation or on an Intensive Community Order with a residential requirement.

Establishments were affected by the Covid-19 Track'n'Trace in the autumn, which impacted on the staffing levels at prisons. With less staff available, prisons had to focus on critical activities, this may have impacted BASS figures in this chapter.

In the 12-months to March 2021, most BASS referrals were made by prisons (88%).

Figure 13.1: Percentage of BASS referrals made, by referring organisation type, England and Wales, 12-months to March 2020

Referring Organisation Type	Percentage of Referrals made
Prisons	87.7%
Courts	9.3%
Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs)	1.4%
Young Offender Institutes (YOIs)	1.7%

BASS were first commissioned in June 2007³⁷, and the contract is currently being provided by NACRO, having succeeded Stonham Home Group on 18th June 2018 as the BASS provider.

The number of BASS referrals declined slightly in the 12-months to March 2021 (Table 13.1)

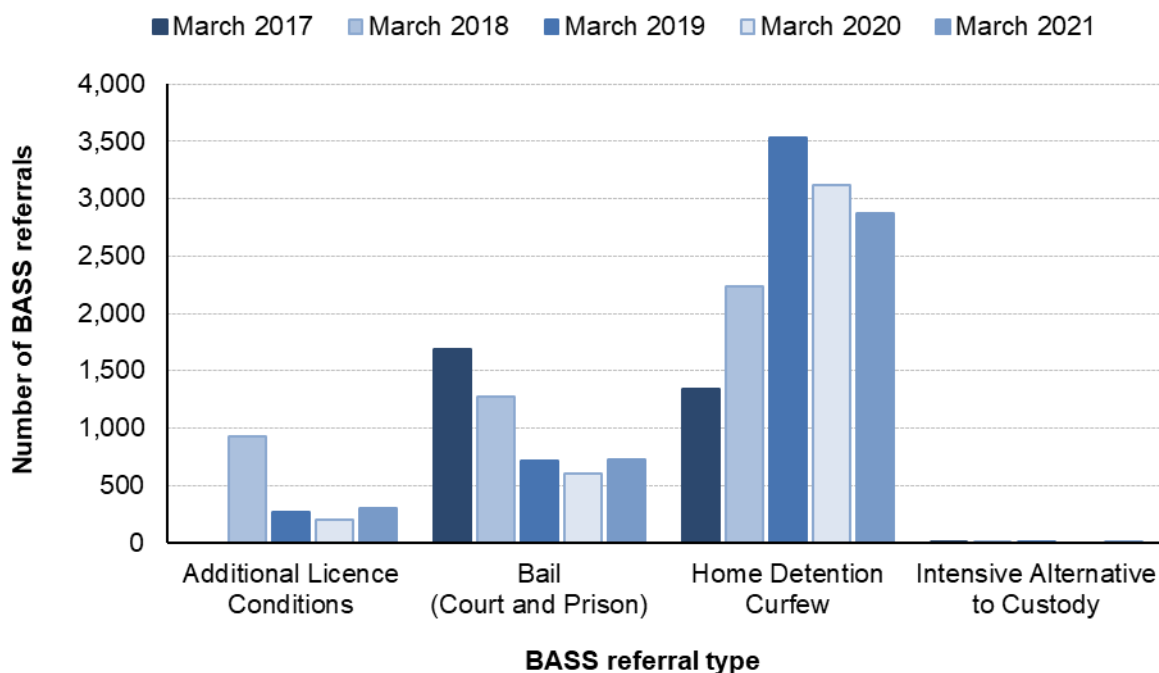
In the year ending March 2021, there were 3,891 referrals to BASS; a decrease of 1% on the 3,925 made in the year to March 2020. In the year to March 2019, there was a large increase in referrals after the implementation of a new HDC policy instruction in January 2018, which increased demand for this service. However, in the two financial years since, HDC volumes fell; by 12% and 8% respectively.

74% of the BASS referrals made in the year to March 2021, were for Home Detention Curfew (HDC) (Figure 13.2, Table 13.1)

HDC referrals accounted for 74% (2,868) of the total number of referrals. This is a decrease in volume of 8% (255 fewer) compared with the previous year.

At the same time, there were increases in referrals relating to both Additional Licence Conditions and Bail (court and prison) referrals. Between the years ending March 2020 and March 2021, these types of referrals rose by 50% and 20% respectively.

Figure 13.2: Number of BASS referrals by referral type, the 12-months ending March 2017 to the 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 13.1)



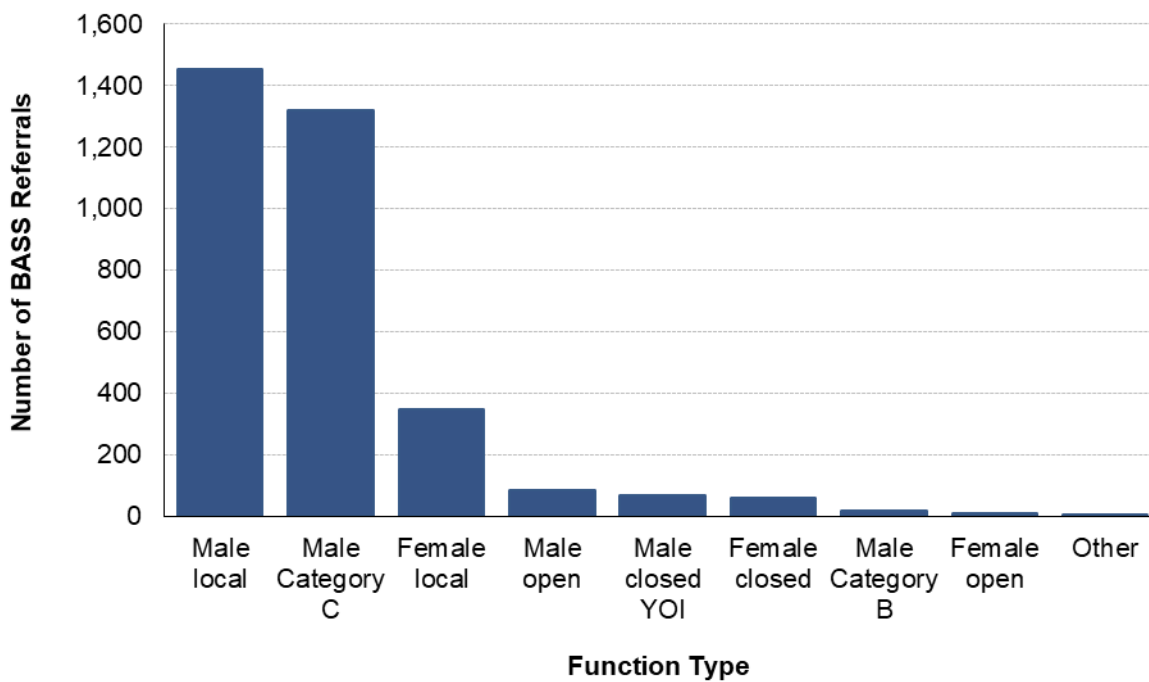
³⁷ The BASS contract was previously supplied by Stonham, part of Home Group, from June 2010 until 17 June 2018. NACRO have supplied the BASS contract since 18 June 2018. This means information for the year to March 2019 has come from two suppliers. As the contracts overlapped, there may be a small number of duplicate referrals.

Male Local prisons had the highest volume of BASS referrals (from known prisons) in the year to March 2021 (Figure 13.3, Table 13.2)

43% (1,455) of BASS referrals by known prisons were from Male Local prisons, in the year to March 2021.

BASS referrals made by Male Category C Trainer prisons accounted for 39% of the total number of known prison referrals made in the year to March 2021.

Figure 13.3: Number of referrals made to BASS by selected Prison Category³⁸, the 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 13.2)



³⁸ Other Prison Function includes Male YOI – Young People, Male open YOI, IRC, Male Dispersal and STC.

14. Staff in Post

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff

54,296 (headcount) staff in post at HMPPS

As at 31 March 2021, there were 54,296 (headcount) staff in post at HMPPS, 85.8% of whom had declared their ethnicity.

Overall, 10.9% of individuals who declared their ethnicity were classified as BAME

This represents an increase of 0.5 percentage points compared with the previous year.

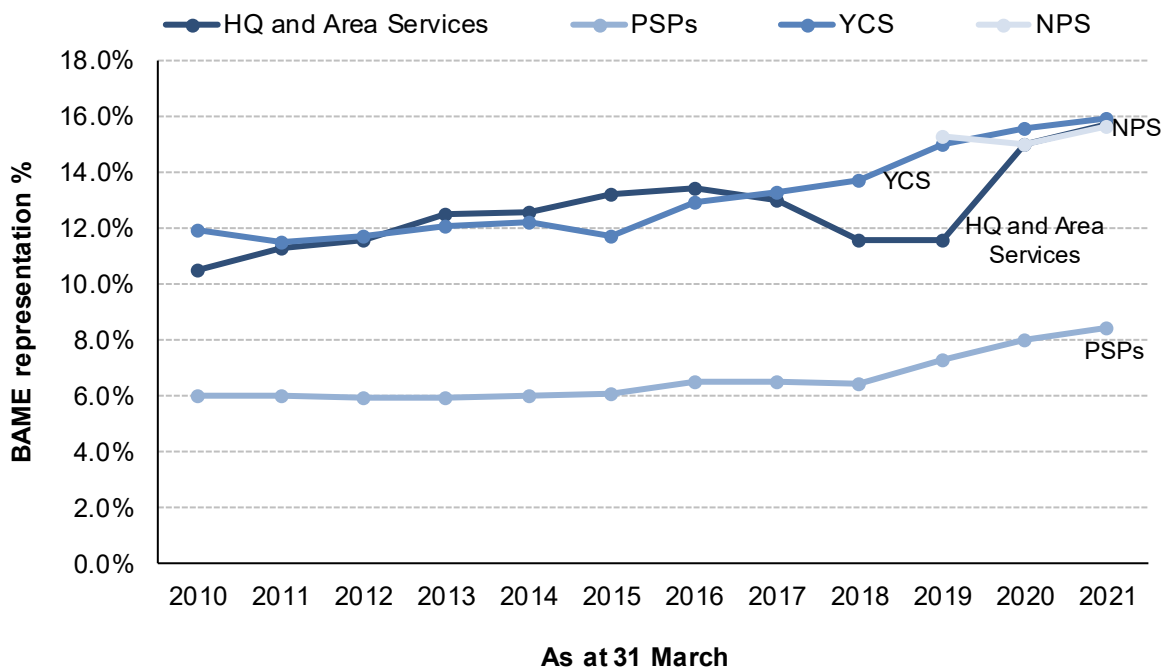
Declaration rates have increased since 31st March 2020 (Table 14.2)

Across HMPPS overall, declaration rates have increased by 1.7 percentage points (from 84.1% as at 31 March 2020 to 85.8% as at 31 March 2021). National Probation Service (NPS) staff had the highest ethnicity declaration rate (88.4%), representing a 0.8 percentage point increase since the previous year. Over the same period, a 2.2 percentage point declaration rate increase was observed amongst staff in PSPs (from 82.7% as at 31 March 2020 to 84.9% as at 31 March 2021). The declaration rate decreased by 0.6 percentage points amongst staff at the Youth Custody Service (YCS) as at 31 March 2020 from 84.0% to stand at 83.4% as at 31 March 2021. The ethnicity declaration rate amongst HQ and Area Services staff decreased to 87.1% as at 31 March 2021, a decrease of 0.1 percentage points compared with the previous year.

Public Sector Prisons have the lowest BAME representation (Figure 14.1, Table 14.2)

	BAME Representation Rate	Change since 31 March 2020
PSP	8.4%	Increase of 0.4 percentage points
YCS	15.9%	Increase of 0.3 percentage points
HQ & Area Services	15.7%	Increase of 0.7 percentage points
NPS	15.6%	Increase of 0.6 percentage points

Figure 14.1: BAME representation rates amongst HMPPS staff^{39,40}, as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2021 (Source: Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service workforce statistics publication)



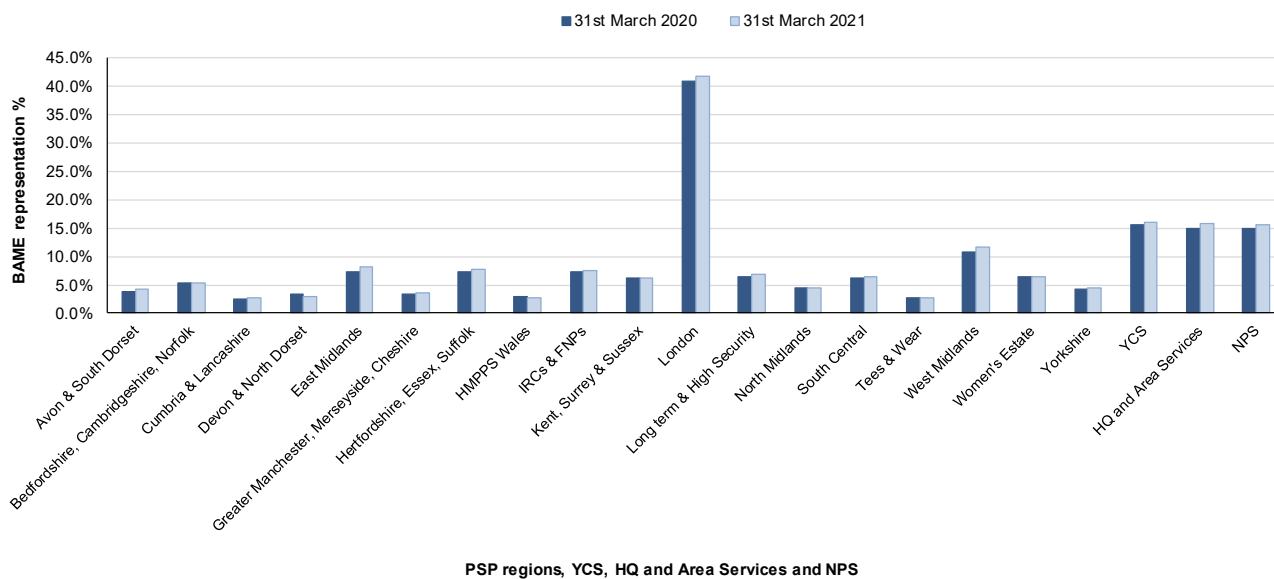
The region with the highest BAME representation was London (Figure 14.2, Table 14.2)

Figure 14.2 shows the proportion of BAME declared staff in PSP regions, the YCS, HQ & Area Services and the NPS. Prison establishments within London had the highest BAME representation rates with 41.8% of staff declaring their ethnicity as BAME as at 31 March 2021. In contrast, establishments in Cumbria & Lancashire, HMPPS Wales, and Tees and Wear had the lowest joint BAME representation rate of 2.8%. From 31 March 2020 to 31 March 2021, most PSP regions had seen their BAME representation rates increase, where the largest increase was seen in East Midlands and London from 7.2% to 8.2% and 40.8% to 41.8% respectively. On the other hand, the region with the largest decrease in BAME representation rate was seen in Devon & North Dorset where the rate dropped from 3.3% as at 31 March 2020 to 3.0% as at 31 March 2021.

³⁹ The NPS was created on 1st June 2014, however BAME representation rates prior to 2019 for the NPS are not shown due to declaration rates being too low for these years.

⁴⁰ Although the YCS was not formed until April 2017, historical and latest figures for the Youth Custody Estate have been separated out from the wider PSP category to allow comparisons to be made and to establish the trends over time.

Figure 14.2: Percentage of BAME staff by PSP regions⁴¹, the YCS, HQ and Area Services and the NPS, as at 31 March 2020 and 2021 (Source: Table 14.2)



⁴¹ Information reflects the regional management structure implemented in April 2018. These structures do not necessarily reflect geographical border areas.

15. HMPPS staff: sickness absence⁴²

In the year ending 31 March 2021, HMPPS staff lost an average of 7.4 working days to sickness absence.

Compared with the year ending 31 March 2020, this was a decrease of 2.5 working days lost. However, it should be noted that days lost to COVID-19 related sickness are not included in these figures, and that COVID-19 would likely have had an impact on other sickness reasons.

YCS staff had the highest sickness absence rate at 10.2 Average Working Days Lost (AWDL)

This was followed by the PSPs (7.7 AWDL), NPS (7.4 AWDL). Absence rates are lower in HMPPS HQ and Area Services overall compared with the operational parts of HMPPS (4.8 AWDL).

The indicator of staff sickness looks at the Average Working Days Lost (AWDL) through sickness absence in HQ and Area Services, PSPs, the YCS and the NPS. Data are not presented for privately managed prisons and the Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) as HMPPS has no responsibility for sickness in private companies.

It should be noted that sickness absence due to COVID is not included in the core publication AWDL estimates. The manually collected data is currently under review and analysis, and once completed COVID sickness data will be included in future published AWDL reporting. Figures relating to the number of staff absences due to effect of the coronavirus (COVID-19) are published in the extra tables with experimental statistics on COVID-19 and HMPPS staff, which provides information about staff absent due to COVID on given days.

All HMPPS business areas experienced decreases in AWDL compared with the previous year (Figure 15.1, Table 15.1).

COVID sickness aside, in the year ending 31 March 2021, HMPPS staff lost an average of 7.4 working days to sickness absence. Rounded to the nearest one decimal point, this was a decrease of 2.5 days compared with the previous year when it stood at 10.0 AWDL.

YCS staff had the highest sickness absence rate at 10.2 AWDL, followed by PSPs (7.7 AWDL), NPS (7.4 AWDL), and HMPPS HQ & Area services (4.8 AWDL) (Figure 15.1). Compared with the year ending 31 March 2020, these represent decreases of 4.4 days, 2.3 days, 3.8 days and 0.5 days for the YCS, NPS, PSP and HMPPS HQ & Area staff respectively.

⁴² Between January and March 2017, during migration of data to the Single Operating Platform, an under-recording of sickness absence records occurred. Therefore, there is likely to be an undercount of working days lost for the 12-months to 31 March 2017 and subsequent under-estimating of average working days lost.

Figure 15.1: Average Working Days Lost (AWDL) due to sickness absence by HMPPS business area ⁴³, the 12-months ending March 2014 to the 12-months ending March 2021 (Source: Table 15.1)

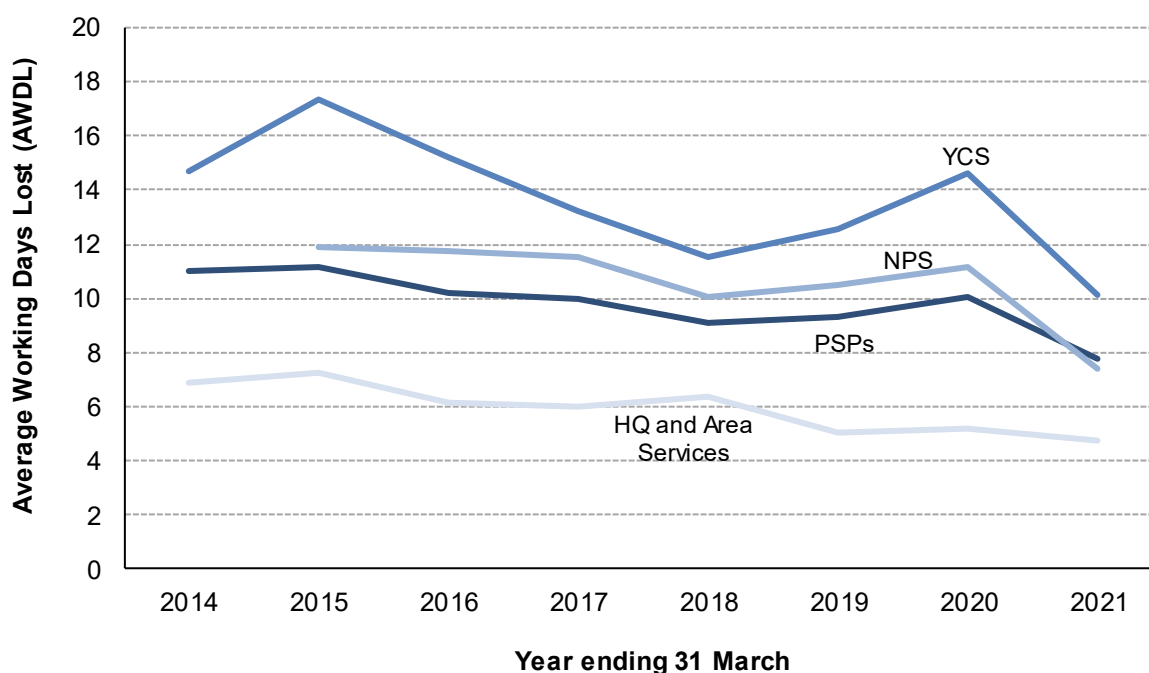


Table 15.2 sets out the distribution of AWDL through sickness absence across the PSP regions, the YCS, HQ and Area Services as well as NPS divisions over the last two years.

All PSP regions and all NPS divisions, aside from one, saw decreases to their AWDL over the last year (Table 15.2).

In terms of PSP regions, Yorkshire had the lowest AWDL amongst staff whilst London had the highest, standing at 5.3 days and 10.5 days respectively for the year ending 31 March 2021. Compared to the previous year, the greatest decrease in AWDL amongst PSP regions was in Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire (a decrease of 6.1 days) whilst no regions saw an increase.

Within NPS, the London Probation Service had the highest rate of sickness absence with an average of 9.1 working days lost in the year ending 31 March 2021. The division which had the largest decrease in rates when compared to the year ending 31 March 2020 was West Midlands Probation Service (a decrease of 5.2 days). East of England Probation Service had the lowest rate of sickness absences with an average of 5.3 working days lost. The only NPS division that saw an increase in AWDL when compared to the previous year was Kent, Surrey and Sussex Probation Service (an increase of 0.3 days).

⁴³ The YCS was not formed until April 2017. Therefore, historical and latest figures for the Youth Custody Estate have been separated out from the wider PSP category to allow comparisons to be made and to establish the trends over time.

Staff absences due to Coronavirus (Tables 15.3 and 15.4)

These figures refer to the total number of staff recorded as not working due to sickness absence for suspected COVID-19 on the last working day of the month. This does not necessarily reflect the number of symptomatic staff members; if a symptomatic staff member was able to work from home they would not be captured in these figures. Staff sickness is reported by the manager and the reliability of this data depends on this information being reported accurately.

Of the ten dates published for April 2020 to April 2021, the highest number of staff absent due to COVID-19 sickness was recorded on 29 January 2021, where 1,961 staff were absent. Staff absent due to COVID-19 sickness have decreased in the 3 months since this peak. On 30 April 2021, the most recent published date, there were 270 staff absent due to Covid-19 sickness. Of these staff absence cases, 222 were for directly employed staff and of these, 194 were staff from Prisons and Youth Custody Service (including both public and private establishments). This trend reflects the broader decrease in COVID-19 cases seen in the country at the time.

These figures include all members of staff who are not marked as working from home and where the absence category selected is '1. Sickness Absence - Respiratory System Epidemic/Pandemic'. If an invalid absence option has been assigned to a staff member then that individual has not been included in these figures. We are working to identify how many of these invalid data points should be included within the sickness absence category, we do not believe that many records are affected.

Staff members are recorded as 'directly employed' if they are included in the HQ, National Probation Service or Approved Premises data collection. Staff members recorded in the data collection from both public and private prisons are recorded as directly employed if they have been flagged as directly employed within the dataset.

Further information

General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from:

statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system

Ministry of Justice publishes data relating to offender management in England and Wales.

Equivalent statistics for Scotland and Northern Ireland can be found at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice

www.dojni.gov.uk/index/statistics-research/stats-research-publications.htm

Contact

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office:

Tel: 020 3334 3536

E-mail: newsdesk@justice.gov.uk

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to the Data and Evidence as a Service Division of the Ministry of Justice:

Noah Uhrig, Responsible Statistician and Service Users Equalities Performance Lead,
using the following e-mail address: statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

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