

Arohata Prison

Introduction	<p>Arohata Prison is one of New Zealand's three women's prisons and accommodates 154 minimum to high-medium security female prisoners. The Prison also accommodates prisoners on remand.</p> <p>The prison was built in 1944 and was originally a women's borstal. It became a youth prison in 1981 and a women's prison in 1987.</p> <p>The name Arohata means 'the bridge' in Maori and reflects the prison's wish to provide a bridge between past offending and a future in the community.</p> <p>The prison is located in Tawa, near Wellington, and employs 73 staff. It is part of Prison Services' Southern Region.</p>
Security	<p>Protecting the public is the Department's highest priority and this is accomplished through the secure incarceration of prisoners.</p> <p>The level of physical security at each prison varies and is dependent on the type of prisoner accommodated. Because Arohata is a medium security prison, the level of physical security at the prison is high.</p> <p>The prison is surrounded by a highly secure perimeter fence topped with razor wire and equipped with lighting and surveillance devices.</p> <p>Arohata has a single point of entry. Everyone entering the prison, including staff, passes through a metal detector and may be searched at any time. The Prison uses a drug dog team to search vehicles, cells and prison grounds. This helps to prevent contraband being smuggled into the prison.</p> <p>Electronic security devices and cameras and closed circuit TV are also used at the prison.</p>
Reducing re-offending	<p>Reducing re-offending is critical to meeting the Department's overriding objective of improving public safety. Reducing re-offending means fewer offenders commit crime after completing their sentence – resulting in fewer victims, a reduction in the cost of crime and safer communities.</p> <p>Arohata Prison provides prisoners with a range of programmes and interventions that are designed to address the primary causes of their offending and prepare them for release.</p> <p>The most intensive interventions are targeted at prisoners who are assessed as being a high-risk of re-offending, that have severe needs that caused their offending and are motivated to make positive changes in their lives.</p> <p>Every prisoner entering Arohata Prison develops an offender plan with their case manager, which they are expected to comply with. The focus of the offender plan is on reducing re-offending on release and is developed following an assessment of a prisoner's risk, needs and motivation. This ensures they are placed on the most appropriate and timely programmes and interventions to address the underlying causes of their offending.</p> <p>Rehabilitation programmes and interventions provided at Arohata Prison fall into four main categories: motivational, cognitive-behavioural, employment and education, and reintegrative.</p>
Motivational	<p>Motivational programmes are designed to increase motivation and to encourage</p>

Programmes	<p>and prepare prisoners to confront the causes of their offending.</p> <p>The Tikanga Maori Programme provided at Arohata Prison uses Maori philosophy, values, knowledge and practice to help prisoners increase their understanding of their Maori identity and their values and improve their self-esteem so they become motivated to address the causes of their offending.</p>
Cognitive-Behavioural Programmes	<p>Cognitive-behavioural programmes reduce re-offending by helping prisoners address the causes of their offending and teach them to identify, analyse and solve problems and make decisions to better their lives. Prisoners also learn how to understand the consequences of their actions and gain control over their own behaviour.</p> <p>Arohata Prison provides the Kowhiritanga Rehabilitation Programme to prisoners. Kowhiritanga ('Making Choices') is specifically for female prisoners and addresses their unique needs – many female prisoners have suffered from abuse during childhood and in their current relationships. Most of the programme is based on cognitive-behavioural therapy, dialectical behaviour therapy, group psychotherapy, recreational psychology and a narrative approach to therapy.</p>
Drug Treatment Unit	<p>Arohata Prison has one of New Zealand's 8 Drug Treatment Units. The unit provides a specialist 24-week residential drug and alcohol programme, which includes one-to-one and group cognitive-behavioural therapy, education on addiction and change, along with education about building new skills – especially social skills.</p>
Prisoner Employment	<p>Prisoner employment, managed by Corrections Inmate Employment (CIE), plays an integral part in the rehabilitation of prisoners as it provides prisoners with essential work skills and habits. The last prison census in 2003 found that over half of all prisoners were not in paid employment prior to sentencing.</p> <p>Prisoner employment increases the chance a prisoner will find sustainable work on release and research shows this will result in fewer prisoners being reconvicted.</p> <p>Arohata Prison offers two main types of employment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internal activities such as cleaning, laundry and food preparation • industries such as sewing, commercial laundry, food preparation, grounds-keeping and painting <p>Prisoners are able to earn credits under the National Qualification Framework, allowing them to work towards qualifications whilst they are engaged in employment and training.</p> <p>Minimum security prisoners who are nearing release may also be eligible to participate in Release to Work, a form of temporary release that allows prisoners to be in paid work in the community during the day. It provides prisoners with a stable work record and the job is often carried on after a prisoner's release from prison.</p>
Education	<p>There is a strong relationship between a lack of education and criminal behaviour. At the time of the last prison census in 2003, 51.7 per cent of all prisoners had no formal qualifications.</p> <p>Educational achievement and participation can equip prisoners for self-sufficiency and reduce the barriers to living an offence-free life. A prisoner can enrol in any subject or education programme they consider themselves capable of achieving.</p> <p>There are five main types of education offered to prisoners at Arohata Prison:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations Skills – develops prisoners' reading, writing, speaking, listening, critical thinking, numeracy and problem solving skills • National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA) – run in conjunction with the Correspondence School

- **Trade and Technical National Certificates** – offered by Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics and delivered in prisons
- **Industry Training Qualifications** – earned on-the-job with Corrections Inmate Employment
- **Self-Directed Tertiary Study** – distance learning initiated by prisoners and supported by the Department.

In addition, computer and hobby classes are also available.

Reintegration

Reintegration programmes aim to reduce re-offending by addressing problems likely to increase a prisoner's risk of re-offending on release.

Being imprisoned can have significant social consequences for a prisoner. They are likely to have lost their job and accommodation, they are unlikely to be able to support their families and their relationships can be adversely affected in other ways. Combined, this can lead offenders into a cycle of institutionalisation.

Arohata Prison provides two reintegrative programmes:

- **Living Skills** – a broad-based programme to give prisoners skills and knowledge on how to function effectively in society on their release
- **Parenting Skills** – a group programme designed to teach parenting and relationship skills.

Case managers also work with high-need prisoners at Arohata Prison to address their specific reintegrative needs and help them prepare for release in the community.

Arohata Prison also has **Self-Care Units** where longer-serving prisoners may be eligible to spend time as they near release, and some prisoners with babies may be eligible to live. These are residential-style units inside the prison that let prisoners get used to living in a flatting type environment and give prisoners an opportunity to learn and practise the skills they will need to live independently after release. The Living Skills Programme is also delivered in the Self-Care Units.

Prisoners who find sustainable employment on release are less likely to re-offend. Permanently based at Arohata Prison, **Work and Income work brokers and case managers** help prisoners nearing release find suitable work before they are released.

Working with the community

The community has an important role to play in the rehabilitation and transition of prisoners back into the community by supporting and encouraging prisoners to live an offence-free life.

Many sectors of the community are involved in rehabilitating offenders and helping them move back into the community.

Arohata Prison works with a number of support agencies, including the Prisoner's Aid and Rehabilitation Trust (PART), Prison Fellowship and the Salvation Army, to support the successful reintegration of prisoners back into the community.

A large number of people also regularly donate their time, energy and expertise as volunteers at Arohata Prison. Volunteers provide invaluable support for prisoners and their families and give prisoners the opportunity to spend their free time constructively through music, art and sport.

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