



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

PRISONERS REVIEW BOARD WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Annual Report 2024/2025



IN LINE WITH STATE GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS, THE PRISONERS REVIEW BOARD ANNUAL REPORT IS PUBLISHED IN AN ELECTRONIC FORMAT WITH LIMITED USE OF GRAPHICS AND ILLUSTRATIONS TO HELP MINIMISE DOWNLOAD TIME

Foreword

**THE HON. DR TONY BUTI MLA
ATTORNEY GENERAL**

To the Attorney General,
The Hon. Dr Tony Buti MLA

In accordance with section 112 of the *Sentence Administration Act 2003* (WA), I present to you the Annual Report of the Prisoners Review Board for the year ending 30 June 2025.



The Honourable Jeremy Curthoys
Chairperson
Prisoners Review Board

September 2025

Chairperson's Overview



I am pleased to present the annual report of the Prisoners Review Board (the Board) for the reporting period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

The Board is primarily responsible for considering and determining whether a prisoner is suitable to be released and be placed on a parole order in the community for the remainder of their Court imposed sentence. The Board also considers whether to impose post sentence supervision orders upon liable offenders.

The Board has a number of other functions conferred on it by the *Sentence Administration Act 2003* (WA) including, but not limited to:

- Amending an existing parole order
- Considering breaches of parole orders
- Denying release
- Considering reapplications for parole
- Considering reviews of decisions of the Board
- Making a re-entry release order
- Making recommendations to the Attorney General about re-socialisation programmes or parole (in relation to life and indefinite offenders).

Many factors are taken into account by the Board in making these decisions, in accordance with the requirements of the *Sentence Administration Act 2003* (WA). The paramount consideration for the Board in any of its decision making is the safety of the community.

The number of meetings convened, and the number of cases considered in this financial year is comparable to the previous financial year. However, I highlight that the Board considered 6,583 cases which is a significant workload for the Members and support staff of the Board to manage.

This financial year has seen an increase in breaches of parole requiring consideration by the Board. This is a statistic which has been steadily increasing over the years with common contributing factors including lack of suitable accommodation and the prevalence of substance misuse in the community. Owing to the number of breaches considered by the Board each month, for some time the Board has convened a dedicated 'breach' hearing, which occurs generally once per week, to ensure a more consistent approach is taken to deal with parolees who breach their early release orders.

The number of post sentence supervision orders imposed by the Board has significantly increased this financial year. Post sentence supervision orders were introduced in 2017 as a mechanism for community protection following a prisoner's completion of their parole order or custodial sentence. The supervision period imposed cannot be less than six months or more than two years. The Board has long held the view that it is preferable that prisoners are supervised on release on parole rather than serving their full term and being released without supervision, provided they can be released having regard to the safety of the community. This is the likely reason for the increased number of post sentence supervision orders imposed by the Board where additional measures are considered integral to adequately uphold the safety of the community and support the prisoner as they reintegrate into the community.

There have been several legislative amendments which have impacted the workload of the Board during this financial year, particularly the amendments to the *Sentence Administration Act 2003* (WA) with respect to the family violence legislative reform that commenced in December 2024. This has presented some challenges for the Board, despite the Board being amenable to monitoring the movements of parolees in the community. The effect of these changes, from the Board's perspective, is that where an eligible prisoner or parolee is being considered for a relevant order, and the Board determines that prisoner or parolee is suitable for release, that person must be subject to a mandatory electronic monitoring condition unless exceptional circumstances exist. The issues that have subsequently arisen regarding the technological, equipment and resourcing limitations in regional areas for the use of electronic monitoring are not factors to which the amendments had regard. Fundamentally, the Board's understanding is that the emphasis of the new provisions is the protection of the victim in the context of the safety of the community. Subsequently, the Board will continue to base its decisions on the paramount consideration specified in the *Sentence Administration Act 2003* (WA) namely, the safety of the community.

Professional Development for Members continues to be an integral area aimed at enhancing Members' knowledge of a variety of areas related to the work of the Board. During the financial year, the Board held five Professional Development sessions and heard from a range of presenters on relevant topics, including the role of the Victim Engagement Unit; electronic monitoring; drug and alcohol programmes – specifically the Wungening Aboriginal Corporation, Communicare and the Whitehaven Clinic; Disability Justice Services, and the Yiwarra Kuju – Martu Western Desert Justice Program. Several Members of the Board also visited the Karnet Prison Farm and Wandoo Rehabilitation Prison to speak to prison assessment staff, as well as prisoners, about the how the Board works, considerations of parole and other relevant matters. The visits also allowed Board Members to view firsthand the new programmes and facilities on offer to prisoners. These visits were beneficial to developing members' understanding of how prison staff support prisoners with applications for parole and general prison operations with regard to preparing prisoners for supported release.

The work of various agencies and organisations, particularly the work of the Corrective Services division of the Department of Justice, the Western Australia Police Force and the office of the Commissioner for Victims of Crime, is invaluable to the Board. I appreciate the difficulties these areas experience and acknowledge the collaborative efforts in the management of prisoners and parolees in custody and in the community.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the dedicated support staff provided by the Department of Justice who operate to an excellent standard. The support staff play an important role in ensuring the Board meetings are thoroughly prepared for and that decisions are accurately communicated to those involved with each case.

I take the opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the members of the Board who work diligently to consider and produce decisions for a substantial number of cases, many of which are very complex and can become the subject of significant public scrutiny.

Looking forward, the diversity in membership of the Board will continue to be strengthened in the new financial year with the appointment of several new Members and Deputy Chairpersons, as well as the appointment of a new Registrar of the Board. These new appointees bring a fresh perspective to the team, and I look forward to the insights they offer into the work of the Board augmented by stable policies and practices. The efforts of all Board members are critical to the proper fulfilment of the functions conferred on the Board under the provisions of the *Sentence Administration Act 2003* (WA).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Curthoys', with a stylized flourish at the end.

The Honourable Jeremy Curthoys
Chairperson
Prisoners Review Board

September 2025

Statistical Requirements

PURSUANT TO SECTION 112 OF THE ACT, THE BOARD IS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE THE MINISTER WITH A WRITTEN REPORT ON THE FOLLOWING:

A SNAPSHOT OF FACTS

THE PERFORMANCE OF THE BOARD'S FUNCTIONS DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR;

During 2024/25 the Board held 589 meetings (including Registrar meetings) and considered 6583 matters. The number of meetings convened in the 2024/25 financial year is comparable to the previous financial year, however, the number of cases considered at each hearing has increased.

FINANCIAL YEAR	CASES CONSIDERED	NO. OF BOARD MEETINGS
2024/25	6583	589
2023/24	6392	589
2022/23	6334	599
2021/22	6725	591

"Cases Considered" includes all matters listed before the Board including listings in relation to the administration of Parole Orders. Individual prisoners can have more than one listing over a 12-month period.

	2023/24	2024/25	CHANGE (%)
PAROLE ORDERS MADE BY THE BOARD AND GOVERNOR	1189	1073	9.75% ↓
PAROLE ORDERS CANCELLED OR SUSPENDED	285	209	26.6% ↓
PAROLE APPLICATIONS DENIED BY THE BOARD AND GOVERNOR	1489	1804	21.2% ↑
PAROLE CONSIDERATION DENIED AT REQUEST OF PRISONER	602	767	27.4% ↑
TOTAL PAROLE APPLICATIONS DENIED BY THE BOARD AND GOVERNOR	2091	2571	22.95% ↑

The total number of parole applications denied by the Board has been broken down to delineate between where prisoners have denied their own parole and where parole has been denied by either the Board or the Governor.

THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS WHO BECAME ELIGIBLE TO BE RELEASED UNDER A PAROLE ORDER DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR;

	2023/24	2024/25	CHANGE (%)
TOTAL NUMBER	2266	2511	10.8% ↑

A prisoner's eligibility for parole is determined by the Court as part of their sentence.

THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS WHO APPLIED TO BE RELEASED UNDER A RE-ENTRY RELEASE ORDER DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR;

	2023/24	2024/25	CHANGE (%)
TOTAL NUMBER	3	0	100% ↓

Prior to 2007, prisoners eligible for parole could also apply for early release under a Re-entry Release Order, pursuant to Part 4 of the Act. Those prisoners sentenced after 2007 may only be released via a Re-Entry Release Order if the sentencing Court determined not to make an order that an offender was eligible for parole.

THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS WHO WERE REFUSED AN EARLY RELEASE ORDER BY THE BOARD OR THE GOVERNOR DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR;

	2023/24	2024/25	CHANGE (%)
TOTAL	1941	2404	23.85% ↑

THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS RELEASED UNDER AN EARLY RELEASE ORDER BY THE BOARD OR THE GOVERNOR DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR;

	2023/24	2024/25	CHANGE (%)
TOTAL	1189	1073	9.75% ↓

A BREAKDOWN OF TOTAL PRISONERS RELEASED UNDER AN EARLY RELEASE ORDER

THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS WHOSE COOPERATION WAS CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD FOR THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 66B(1)(a) DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR;

Section 66b1 provides the Board not to release or recommend release unless prisoner cooperates or victim’s remains located.

- (1) *The Board must not make a release decision, or take release action, in relation to a relevant prisoner in custody for a homicide offence or homicide related offence unless the Board is satisfied that —*
- (a) *the prisoner has cooperated with a member of the Police Force in the identification of the location, or last known location, of the remains of the victim of the homicide offence; or*
 - (b) *a member of the Police Force knows the location of the remains of the victim of the homicide offence.*

	2023/24	2024/25	CHANGE (%)
TOTAL	2	1	50% ↓

THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS REFERRED TO IN PARAGRAPH (EA) WHO WERE RELEASED UNDER AN EARLY RELEASE ORDER BY THE BOARD OR THE GOVERNOR DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR;

	2023/24	2024/25	CHANGE (%)
TOTAL	0	0	0%

THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS WHO COMPLETED AN EARLY RELEASE ORDER DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR;

	2023/24	2024/25	CHANGE (%)
TOTAL	905	769	15.02% ↓

“Completed” means the prisoner’s Parole Order was neither suspended nor cancelled during the parole period.

SUSPENSION & CANCELLATION OF PAROLE ORDERS IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/2023

THE NUMBER OF EARLY RELEASE ORDERS SUSPENDED OR CANCELLED DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR AND THE REASONS FOR SUSPENSION OR CANCELLATION¹;

	2023/24	2024/25	CHANGE (%)
PAROLE ORDERS CANCELLED	269	201	25.27% ↓
PAROLE ORDERS SUSPENDED	16	8	50% ↓
TOTAL	285	209	

¹ Decisions to suspend/cancel parole should not be compared to the number of prisoners released on parole for the same reporting period as the decision to suspend/cancel can relate to an offender who was granted parole in a previous reporting period. Figures reflect decisions of the Board and do not include Adult Community Corrections decisions to suspend parole.

THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS WHO WERE THE SUBJECT OF A REPORT UNDER SECTION 74C OF THE *SENTENCE ADMINISTRATION ACT 2003* (WA);

	2023/24	2024/25	CHANGE (%)
TOTAL	678	714	5.3% ↑

THE NUMBER OF PERSONS RELEASED SUBJECT TO PSSO'S DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR;

	2023/24	2024/25	CHANGE (%)
TOTAL	151	183	21.2% ↑

THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS FOR WHOM PARTICIPATION IN A RE-SOCIALISATION PROGRAMME WAS APPROVED BY THE BOARD OR THE GOVERNOR DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR;

	2023/24	2024/25
TOTAL	11	11

A re-socialisation programme is designed to allow long term prisoners the opportunity to be gradually reintegrated into the community in preparation for release from prison. The purpose of a re-socialisation programme is to equip a prisoner for re-entry into the general community by addressing their education, employment, family and community support networks. The aim is to improve the prisoner's ability to pursue and maintain a pro-social and law-abiding lifestyle.

THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS WHO COMPLETED RE-SOCIALISATION PROGRAMMES DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR;

	2023/24	2024/25
TOTAL	10	11

Re-socialisation programmes can run for varying durations of time, from six months to two years and can encompass multiple stages. As such, not all re-socialisation programmes commenced in a financial period will end in that same financial period.

THE OPERATION OF THIS ACT AND RELEVANT PARTS OF THE *SENTENCING ACT 1995* SO FAR AS THEY RELATE TO EARLY RELEASE ORDERS AND PSSOS AND TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CCOS IN RELATION TO THOSE ORDERS DURING THE PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR;

See “Chairperson’s Overview”.

BOARD REMUNERATION

Information relating to the remuneration of Board Members this year is contained with the Annual Report of the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice provides administrative support to the Board and is responsible for remunerating Board Members where such payment is incurred.