

1)

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 21 October 2025 07:47

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <CabSecforJHA@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Deputy Director Community Justice <DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary

<PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] ; HQ CE Executive Secretariat

<HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot>; Director of Justice

<DirectorofJustice@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b)

Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** Prison population 21 October [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Good morning

Please see below today's prison population:

The estate opened with **8430** this morning, which has **increase of 46** from yesterday. **This is the highest population on record.**

[Not in Scope]

Kind regards

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [

Business Support Manager - Office of the Chief Executive

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [



Helping to build a safer Scotland - Unlocking Potential - Transforming Lives

OFFICIAL

2)

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 24 October 2025 15:05

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <CabSecforJHA@gov.scot>;  
[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Minister for Victims and Community  
Safety 2024 <MinisterforVCS@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Jeanette Campbell <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; HQ CE Executive Secretariat  
<HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot>; Prison Policy Unit [Redacted: Section  
38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]  
[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b)  
Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted:  
Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal  
Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy Director  
Community Justice <DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Record Population press release [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Please find the final version below.

Many thanks,

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

### **Scotland's prison population reaches a record high**

The number of people in prison in Scotland reached its highest level ever this week.

The population in custody has continued to rise for many months.

On Tuesday, it reached 8,430, surpassing the previous record of 8,420 set in 2012.

The prison population fluctuates daily, but was consistently over 8,400 this week.

And more than 120 people handed custodial sentences are being managed in the  
community through Home Detention Curfews.

Scotland's prisons were designed to hold 7,805, meaning they are now accommodating  
more than 600 additional people.

That is enough to fill another prison the size of HMP & YOI Grampian or HMP Shotts.

One of the key reasons for the surge has been the rise in people serving long-term  
sentences of four years or more.

The long-term population has risen to 4012, which is more than 600 higher than two years  
ago.

By comparison, the short-term population is roughly 130 lower than two years ago.

This has followed a period of Emergency Early Release last summer, and the Prisoners (Early Release) Scotland Act 2025 coming into law earlier this year.

The Act changed the point of release for all eligible short-term prisoners from 50 per cent to 40 per cent of their sentence.

That provided welcome relief for prisons in the face of overcrowding, but populations have continued to rise sharply since then.

The number of individuals held on remand has also remained stubbornly high at around 2180 – 26 per cent of all those in custody – and has not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

The Scottish Government has set out plans for a new period of Emergency Early Release of some eligible short-term prisoners, which will be considered and voted on by MSPs.

Teresa Medhurst, Chief Executive of the Scottish Prison Service, said: “Our staff have been managing an extremely complex and far too high population for almost two years. Their skill, dedication, and professionalism in the face of this challenge has been outstanding.

“However, we have now reached a new record high – an unfortunate landmark which none of us wanted to see.

“The level of overcrowding in our establishments was already restricting our staff’s ability to build relationships, support rehabilitation, reduce reoffending, and help to build safer communities across Scotland.

“Now it is reaching a level that raises very serious concerns around our ability to keep people safe and secure.

“I am grateful for the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs’ leadership in this area and it is clear that further action is needed to support all those living and working in Scotland’s prisons at this time.”

ENDS

OFFICIAL

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **On Behalf Of**

[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

**Sent:** 24 October 2025 14:19

**To:** [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot); [MinisterforVCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforVCS@gov.scot)[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Cc:** [Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot); HQ CE Executive Secretariat [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** RE: Record Population press release [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

I have made Ms Constance aware. [Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs : Angela Constance MSP

M: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | E: [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

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**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 23 October 2025 14:51

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)>; Minister for Victims and Community Safety 2024 <[MinisterforVCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforVCS@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell

<[Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot)> [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b)

Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted:

Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal

Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] HQ CE Executive

Secretariat <[HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot)>; Prison Policy Unit

<[PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot](mailto:PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b)

Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy

Director Community Justice <[DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** RE: Record Population press release [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Good afternoon,

This is to update you on our plans to [Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation]

Kind regards

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Head of Communications

Office of the Chief Executive

📧: Scottish Prison Service, One Lochside, 1 Lochside Avenue, Edinburgh, EH12 9DJ

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

📧: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

OFFICIAL

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **On Behalf Of**

[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

**Sent:** 21 October 2025 16:12

**To:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot);

[MinisterforVCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforVCS@gov.scot)

**Cc:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot);

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] HQ CE Executive Secretariat

<[HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot)>; [PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot](mailto:PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot); [Redacted:

Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)

**Subject:** RE: Record Population press release [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thanks for confirming [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs : Angela Constance MSP

M: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | E: [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

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**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 21 October 2025 15:57

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)>; Minister for Victims and Community Safety 2024 <[MinisterforVCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforVCS@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell

<[Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] HQ CE Executive Secretariat <[HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot)>; Prison Policy Unit <[PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot](mailto:PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy Director Community Justice <[DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)>  
**Subject:** RE: Record Population press release [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

I've spoken to Teresa and also passed on Jeanette's points.

[Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation]

Thanks

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Head of Communications

Office of the Chief Executive

📍: Scottish Prison Service, One Lochside, 1 Lochside Avenue, Edinburgh, EH12 9DJ

📞: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

📧: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

OFFICIAL

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **On Behalf Of**

[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

**Sent:** 21 October 2025 15:04

**To:** [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot); [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[MinisterforVCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforVCS@gov.scot)

**Cc:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot);

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] HQ CE Executive Secretariat

<[HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot)>; [PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot](mailto:PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot); [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)

**Subject:** RE: Record Population press release [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

I have discussed with Ms Constance.

[Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation]

Many thanks.

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs : Angela Constance MSP

M: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | E: [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

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**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024

**Sent:** 21 October 2025 14:37

**To:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)>; Minister for Victims and Community Safety 2024 <[MinisterforVCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforVCS@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell <[Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] HQ CE Executive Secretariat <[HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot)>; Prison Policy Unit <[PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot](mailto:PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy Director Community Justice <[DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** RE: Record Population press release [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thanks, will come back to you ASAP

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs : Angela Constance MSP

M: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | E: [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

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**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 21 October 2025 14:33

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)>; Minister for Victims and Community Safety 2024 <[MinisterforVCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforVCS@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell <[Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] HQ CE Executive Secretariat <[HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot)>; Prison Policy Unit <[PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot](mailto:PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy Director Community Justice <[DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** RE: Record Population press release [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL


Not yet [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] about to.


[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Head of Communications

Office of the Chief Executive

 Scottish Prison Service, One Lochside, 1 Lochside Avenue, Edinburgh, EH12 9DJ

 [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

 [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 21 October 2025 15:19

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)>; Minister for Victims and Community Safety 2024 <[MinisterforVCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforVCS@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell <[Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot)> [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] HQ CE Executive Secretariat <[HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot)>; Prison Policy Unit <[PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot](mailto:PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy  
Director Community Justice <DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: Record Population press release [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] , just checking and will  
come back as soon as possible.

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Head of Communications

Office of the Chief Executive

📍: Scottish Prison Service, One Lochside, 1 Lochside Avenue, Edinburgh, EH12 9DJ

☎: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

📧: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

OFFICIAL

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **On Behalf Of**

[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

**Sent:** 21 October 2025 14:31

**To:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot);

[MinisterforVCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforVCS@gov.scot)

**Cc:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot);

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b)  
Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted:  
Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal  
Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section  
38(1)(b) Personal Information] HQ CE Executive Secretariat

<[HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot)>; [PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot](mailto:PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot); [Redacted:

Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal  
Information] [DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b)  
Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** RE: Record Population press release [SEC=OFFICIAL]

[Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of  
deliberation]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs : Angela Constance MSP

M: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | E: [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

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**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 21 October 2025 13:30

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <[cabsecforjha@gov.scot](mailto:cabsecforjha@gov.scot)>; Minister for Victims and Community Safety 2024 <[ministerforvcs@gov.scot](mailto:ministerforvcs@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell <[Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] HQ CE Executive Secretariat <[HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:HQCEExecutiveSecretariat@prisons.gov.scot)>; Prison Policy Unit <[PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot](mailto:PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy Director Community Justice <[DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** Record Population press release [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Good afternoon,

This is to make you aware [Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation] We have kept policy and comms colleagues informed on this.

I have included the release below for your awareness, [Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation].

Kind regards

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

The number of people in prison in Scotland has reached a new record high of 8430.

The population in custody has continued to rise for many months.

This morning, it surpassed the previous record of 8420 set in 2012.

A further 124 people handed custodial sentences are being managed in the community through Home Detention Curfews.

Scotland's prisons were designed to hold 7805, meaning they are now accommodating more than 600 additional people.

That is enough to fill another prison the size of HMP & YOI Grampian or HMP Shotts.

One of the key reasons for the surge has been the rise in people serving long-term sentences of four years or more.

The number of individuals held on remand has also remained stubbornly high at 2187 – 26 per cent of all those in custody – and has not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

The long-term population has risen to 4012, which is more than 600 higher than two years ago.

By comparison, the short-term population is roughly 130 lower than two years ago.

This has followed a period of Emergency Early Release last summer, and the Prisoners (Early Release) Scotland Act 2025 coming into law earlier this year.

The Act changed the point of release for all eligible short-term prisoners from 50 per cent to 40 per cent of their sentence.

That provided welcome relief for prisons in the face of overcrowding, but populations have continued to rise sharply since then.

The Scottish Government has set out plans for a new period of Emergency Early Release of some eligible short-term prisoners, which will be considered and voted on by MSPs.

Teresa Medhurst, Chief Executive of the Scottish Prison Service, said: “Our staff have been managing an extremely complex and far too high population for almost two years. Their skill, dedication, and professionalism in the face of this challenge has been outstanding.

“However, we have now reached a new record high – an unfortunate landmark which none of us wanted to see.

“The level of overcrowding in our establishments was already restricting our staff’s ability to build relationships, support rehabilitation, reduce reoffending, and help to build safer communities across Scotland.


“Now it is reaching a level that raises very serious concerns around our ability to keep people safe and secure.


“I am grateful for the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs’ leadership in this area and it is clear that further action is needed to support all those living and working in Scotland’s prisons at this time.”

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Head of Communications  
Office of the Chief Executive

: Scottish Prison Service, One Lochside, 1 Lochside Avenue, Edinburgh, EH12 9DJ

: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

3)

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 21 October 2025 15:02

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <CabSecforJHA@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Prison Policy Unit <PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy Director Community Justice

<DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell

<Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; Minister for Victims and Community Safety 2024

<MinisterforVCS@gov.scot>

**Subject:** FOR JUSTICE SECRETARY CLEARANCE - immediate - SG reactive media lines - SPS population press release

### **PS/Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs**

I have drafted reactive media lines ahead of SPS issuing a prison population news release this afternoon. Policy colleagues and FM spads have reviewed.

Is Ms Constance content to sign off the lines?

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

News | Senior Media Manager | Communications Justice and Home Affairs Team

The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh

Mobile: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | Portfolio Media inquiries: 0300 244 9023

[www.gov.scot/news](http://www.gov.scot/news)

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

[Redacted: Section 29(1)(a) – formulation or development of government policy]

ENDS

**Attachment:** [Redacted: Section 29(1)(a) – formulation or development of government policy]

4)

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024

**Sent:** 24 October 2025 13:42

**To:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)>; Minister for Victims and Community Safety 2024 <[MinisterforVCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforVCS@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell <[Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Prison Policy Unit <[PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot](mailto:PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy Director Community Justice <[DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)> [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Director of Safer Communities <[DirectorofSaferCommunities@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorofSaferCommunities@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** RE: FOR INFORMATION - media query - SPS record population press release - PA  
**Importance:** High

Hi folks

[Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation]and the likelihood of bids over the weekend I would be grateful if we could receive some condensed prion population material to be prepared for close today should that be required over the weekend.

I do recognise that Ms Constance has a copy of her briefing for Committee which will provide a lot of factual material in there but think it would be helpful if the Cab Sec could have:

- Main [Redacted: Not in Scope] briefing on prison population

[Not in Scope]

Many thanks, happy to discuss.

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]  
Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs : Angela Constance MSP  
M: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | E: [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)  
The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG



**Subject:** FOR INFORMATION - media query - SPS record population press release - PA

PO,

For info. I have attached an email from Press Association seeking response to the SPS news release on 'record prison population' that has now issued (under 0001 Sunday embargo).

The Cabinet Secretary cleared lines on Wednesday at 17.40 that I will issue to PA and any other media that contact comms.

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

News | Senior Media Manager | Communications Justice and Home Affairs Team

The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh

Mobile: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Portfolio Media inquiries:  
0300 244 9023

[www.gov.scot/news](http://www.gov.scot/news)



- **VIDEO** [Scotland's prison population has reached a record high. The number of people in custody has been rising for many months and this week hit 8,430.](#)

6)

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024

**Sent:** 27 October 2025 21:15

**To:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <CabSecforJHA@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy Director Community Justice

<DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Director of Justice <DirectorofJustice@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; HQ CE Executive Secretariat <hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot>;

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell

<Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Communications Justice and Home Affairs <CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot>; Teresa Medhurst [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Catriona Dalrymple <Catriona.Dalrymple@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation

Many thanks [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Ms Constance has noted and commented that [Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation].

She will discuss further with officials this week.

Thanks

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs – Angela Constance MSP

Scottish Government | 1W.11, St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG |

Tel: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | Mob: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

| Email: [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

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[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** Re: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation

**Importance:** High

Hi [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation

[Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views]

Thanks!

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Deputy Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

---

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** Monday, October 27, 2025 1:58:06 PM

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)>; Deputy Director Community Justice <[DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Director of Justice <[DirectorofJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorofJustice@gov.scot)>; DG Education & Justice <[dgej@gov.scot](mailto:dgej@gov.scot)>; HQ CE Executive Secretariat <[hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot)> [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell <[Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Communications Justice and Home Affairs

<[CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot](mailto:CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot)>; Teresa Medhurst [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

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[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

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[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

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[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Attachment:** [Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views]

7)

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 22 October 2025 10:23

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <CabSecforJHA@gov.scot>; First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; SPS Executive Management Group [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Director of Justice <DirectorofJustice@gov.scot>; Deputy Director Community Justice <DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Head of Justice Analytical Services [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>;

Communications Justice and Home Affairs [CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot](mailto:CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot)

; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

HQ CE Executive Secretariat [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** Weekly population update (SPS) and weekly Capacity Assessment Indicator Data  
[SEC=OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE:PERSONAL]

**OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE**

**OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE: PERSONAL**

**PS/Cabinet Secretary for Justice & Home Affairs**

**Copy to: First Minister as requested**

On behalf of Teresa Medhurst, SPS Chief Executive, please find attached a 4-page submission providing SPS weekly update on current population pressures, [Redacted: Not in Scope] and breach of highest prison population recorded.

Also attached is [Redacted: Not in Scope]

Kind regards

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]  
Business Support Manager - Office of the Chief Executive  
[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]  
[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]



Helping to build a safer Scotland - Unlocking Potential - Transforming Lives

**OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE**

**Attachment: Briefing SPS Operational Update:** [Redacted: Section 30: Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs]

**Attachment: Briefing Scottish Prison Service Data:** [Redacted: Not in Scope]



							Sat/Sun if they were able to pop by the studio - or if in Edinburgh Saturday might work best.'
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 24 October 2025 17:23

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell <[Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Prison Policy Unit <[PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot](mailto:PrisonPolicyUnit@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy Director Community Justice <[DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)> [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]; Minister for Victims and Community Safety 2024 <[MinisterforVCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforVCS@gov.scot)>  
**Subject:** FOR CONSIDERATION: media interview request for Monday am - immediate - SPS prison population news release - BBC Radio Scotland(GMS)

**PS/Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs**

BBC Radio Scotland’s Good Morning Scotland programme have bid for the Cabinet Secretary to come on their programme on **Monday morning (27 October)** to talk about the Scottish Prison Service news release – embargoed till Sunday am – on record prison population(copy emailed by SPS comms to PO today at 15.05)

Is Ms Contance content to undertake the bid? [Redacted: Not in Scope]

BBC have been sent cleared lines below:

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

"We recognise the serious challenges facing the prison system, which is why the Justice Secretary announced in Parliament emergency proposals to tackle prison overcrowding, with stringent safeguards to protect public safety. Our paramount concern is to ensure that those who work and live in prisons are kept safe, so immediate action is now necessary."

Sunday duty comms colleagues –[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]– and weekend duty spad [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] copied. Duty comms will provide Cab Sec’s PO with running issues note early Monday am.

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

News|Senior Media Manager|Communications Justice and Home Affairs Team

The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh

Mobile: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]| Portfolio Media inquiries:

0300 244 9023

[www.gov.scot/news](http://www.gov.scot/news)

WHO	OUTLET	TIME	LIVE/PR E-REC	INTERVIEWER	TOPICS	Recommendation	Other details (if required)
Justice Secretary	BBC Radio Scotland	0805 on Monday morning or at 0830am	Live via Zoom(audio only). Will send link if bid is accepted.	TBC	SPS news release – ‘Scotland’s prison population reaches a record high.’	Accept – for 0805 am.	Teresa Medhurst, Chief Executive of the Scottish Prison Service, will be speaking to BBC Radio Scotland’s Good Morning Scotland programme shortly after 7.30am.

9)

**From:** Jeanette Campbell <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 28 October 2025 11:37

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <CabSecforJHA@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy Director Community Justice <DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Cc:** HQ CE Executive Secretariat <hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot>; Teresa Medhurst; Communications Justice and Home Affairs <CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** RE: URGENT: TOPICAL QUESTION - PRISON POPULATION

[Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation]

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024

**Sent:** 28 October 2025 11:24

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <CabSecforJHA@gov.scot>; Jeanette Campbell <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot> [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]; Deputy Director Community Justice <DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Cc:** HQ CE Executive Secretariat <hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot>; Teresa Medhurst ; Communications Justice and Home Affairs <CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** RE: URGENT: TOPICAL QUESTION - PRISON POPULATION

With attachment now

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs : Angela Constance MSP

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | E: [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)  
The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

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## **Attachment: Topical PQ Supplementary Question & Answer**

### **Prison population – Topical PQ 28 October**

#### **Supplementary**

It is surely incumbent on all parties and Parliament as a whole to give proper consideration to the report of the Independent Sentencing Commission. In that vein, does the Cabinet Secretary agree that this issue should be one where we have a grown up, measured discussion on any recommendations they produce so we properly consider how we have a safe prison environment that focuses on rehabilitation and reducing reoffending whilst ensuring justice is served.

#### **Draft answer:**

[Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation]

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024

**Sent:** 28 October 2025 11:24

**To:** Jeanette Campbell <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <CabSecforJHA@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]; Deputy Director Community Justice <DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Cc:** HQ CE Executive Secretariat <hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot>; Teresa Medhurst; Communications Justice and Home Affairs <CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** RE: URGENT: TOPICAL QUESTION - PRISON POPULATION

[Jeanette](#)

[This is the draft supp](#)

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]  
[Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs : Angela Constance MSP](#)  
**M:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **E:** [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

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**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 28 October 2025 10:54

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <CabSecforJHA@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Deputy Director Community Justice <DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Cc:** Jeanette Campbell <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; HQ CE Executive Secretariat <hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot>; Teresa Medhurst; Communications Justice and Home Affairs <CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** RE: URGENT: TOPICAL QUESTION - PRISON POPULATION

Hi [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Thanks so much. I have attached the PQ and answer as a word doc and will upload the cleared answer to the PQ system.

I have also attached a draft response to the supp for clearance.

Thanks

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]|Priority Projects Unit| Scottish Government

### **Attachment – Topical PQ Supplementary Question & Draft Answer**

## **Prison population – Topical PQ 28 October**

### **Supplementary**

It is surely incumbent on all parties and Parliament as a whole to give proper consideration to the report of the Independent Sentencing Commission. In that vein, does the Cabinet Secretary agree that this issue should be one where we have a grown up, measured discussion on any recommendations they produce so we properly consider how we have a safe prison environment that focuses on rehabilitation and reducing reoffending whilst ensuring justice is served.

**Draft answer:** [Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation]

### **Attachment – Topical PQ Question & Answer**

**Liam Kerr: To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the prison population reaching a record high of 8,430 prisoners. (S6T – 02716)**

Recognising there is no single or quick solution, this Government has taken decisive action to address the rising prison population.

We have expanded Home Detention Curfew and invested an additional £25 million over two years to strengthen alternatives to custody. We have also optimised prison capacity by 400 additional spaces compared to 2024 and will further increase capacity with new facilities in Inverness and Glasgow. And as the member knows, I have laid regulations for emergency early release.

However, I am clear we need to look at further sustainable solutions while continuing our track record of reducing crime and prioritising victims. This is why I established Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission to guide further action and it will be for all parties to consider their recommendations.

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 28 October 2025 10:36

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <CabSecforJHA@gov.scot> [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]; Deputy Director Community Justice <DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Cc:** Jeanette Campbell <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; HQ CE Executive Secretariat <hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot>; Teresa Medhurst; Communications Justice and Home Affairs <CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** RE: URGENT: TOPICAL QUESTION - PRISON POPULATION

Hi [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Many thanks. We've tweaked the answer slightly to reduce the word count in line with the guidance and to include the prison capacity figure. Grateful if you could

confirm if the Cabinet Secretary is content with the slightly updated answer before we update the tracker.

Thanks

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | [Priority Projects Unit](#) | [Scottish Government](#)

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024

**Sent:** 27 October 2025 21:09

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024

<CabSecforJHA@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]; Deputy Director Community Justice <DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Cc:** Jeanette Campbell <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; HQ CE Executive Secretariat <hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot>; Teresa Medhurst; Communications Justice and Home Affairs <CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** RE: URGENT: TOPICAL QUESTION - PRISON POPULATION

Hi [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

Please see below slightly revised answer. Grateful if you can add this version to tracker please.

[Redacted: Section 30(b)(ii) Free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation]

Many thanks

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]- Deputy Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs – Angela Constance MSP

Scottish Government | 1W.11, St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG |

Tel: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | Mob: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | Email: [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

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See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024

**Sent:** 27 October 2025 18:44

**To:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]; Deputy Director Community Justice ; Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 ; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Cc:** Jeanette Campbell ; HQ CE Executive Secretariat ; Teresa Medhurst ; Communications Justice and Home Affairs ; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** RE: URGENT: TOPICAL QUESTION - PRISON POPULATION

Many thanks [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information], Ms Constance is content.

Thanks

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]  
[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]- Deputy Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs – Angela Constance MSP  
Scottish Government | 1W.11, St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG |  
Tel: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | Mob: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] | Email: [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

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**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 27 October 2025 18:29

**To:** Deputy Director Community Justice <[DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Cc:** Jeanette Campbell <[Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot)>; HQ CE Executive Secretariat <[hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot)>; Teresa Medhurst; Communications Justice and Home Affairs <[CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot](mailto:CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot)> [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** RE: URGENT: TOPICAL QUESTION - PRISON POPULATION

Dear PO

Please see below approved draft answer. Briefing requirements also noted and we will send no later than 11am tomorrow.

Kind regards

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024

**Sent:** 27 October 2025 17:24

**To:** Deputy Director Community Justice <[DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)>; Jeanette Campbell <[Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot)>; HQ CE Executive Secretariat <[hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:hqceexecutivesecretariat@prisons.gov.scot)>; Teresa Medhurst; Communications Justice and Home Affairs <[CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot](mailto:CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** URGENT: TOPICAL QUESTION - PRISON POPULATION

**Importance:** High

Good evening,

Please see the below Topical Question which Ms Constance will answer in Chamber tomorrow at 2.00pm.

[Redacted: Not in Scope]

- 1. Liam Kerr: To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the prison population reaching a record high of 8,430 prisoners. (S6T-02716)**

Many thanks,

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]- Deputy Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs – Angela Constance MSP

Scottish Government | 1W.11, St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG |

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38(1)(b) Personal Information] Email: [CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)

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See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

10)

**From:** [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Sent:** 27 October 2025 12:48

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs 2024 <[CabSecforJHA@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforJHA@gov.scot)>; Minister for Victims and Community Safety 2024 <[MinisterforVCS@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforVCS@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Deputy Director Community Justice <[DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DeputyDirectorCommunityJustice@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Prison Policy Unit [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Director of Justice <[DirectorofJustice@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorofJustice@gov.scot)>; Communications Justice and Home Affairs <[CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot](mailto:CommunicationsJusticeAndHomeAffairs@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] Jeanette Campbell <[Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot](mailto:Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot)>; [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information] [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

**Subject:** BIDS - Cab Sec Prison population - BBC, STV

### PO/Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs

We have received bids from the BBC and STV for CabSec to discuss the prison population following the SPS's news release about the record numbers.

Although Ms Constance was on GMS earlier, the BBC are keen to capture an on-camera interview to broadcast later.

STV, who interviewed CabSec on Sunday, would also like CabSec to appear on Scotland Tonight which will be broadcast at 10:40 this evening.

Details of the bids are below. Grateful if CabSec could consider.

Many thanks

[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]

WHO	OUTLET	TIME	LIVE/PRE-REC	INTERVIEWER	TOPICS	Recommendation	Other details (if required)
Ms Constance	BBC	After 3pm	Pre-rec	[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]	Prison population	Accept subject to availability	Can be done in-person or virtually. The BBC has also

Ms Constance	STV Scotland Tonight	Pre rec 16:00-16:45 <i>or</i> 18:30 onwards; <i>or</i> live at 10:40	Either	[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]	Prison population	Accept subject to availability	arranged interviews with Teresa Medhurst and Sara Snell.  Can be done virtually or in their Glasgow studio. STV do not yet have anyone else lined up to take part in the discussion
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[Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]  
Senior Media Manager  
Justice and Home Affairs  
Desk: [Redacted: Section 38(1)(b) Personal Information]  
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