



## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

by

**Senator the Hon. Kim Wilkerson, JP  
Attorney-General and Minister of Justice**

### **“Tabling of the Treatment of Offenders Board and the Parole Board 2025 Reports”**

*Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026*

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**Madam President**, I rise today to lay before this Honourable Senate the Annual Reports for the year 2025 for both the Parole Board and the Treatment of Offenders Board. These Reports are submitted in compliance with the requirements of the Treatment of Offenders Board Act 1979 and the Parole Board Act 2001 respectively.

**Madam President**, the Treatment of Offenders Board, chaired by Mrs. Komieko Roberts comprises ten members following three appointments and one resignation during the reporting year. The Board has operated under the Ministry of Justice since September 2024,

following the transfer of oversight of the Department of Corrections from the Ministry of National Security.

During 2025, the Board conducted 23 adjudications, all at the Westgate Correctional Facility, with a quorum of five members present for each. A total of 33 inmate interviews were held across the three facilities and 32 rota visits were conducted. The most common infractions recorded involved the possession of contraband, including mobile phones and accessories, as well as the possession and consumption of prohibited substances.

The Board's report is candid about ten systemic concerns, a few of which have been formally documented in previous reporting cycles. Chief among them is the ongoing impact of staffing shortages on the delivery of education programmes, medical services, case management and legal and appeal preparation. The Board also identifies the increasing number of inmates with serious mental health diagnoses as one of the most significant emerging risks facing the system, a concern echoed by the independent review panel.

**Madam President,** I now turn to the Parole Board Annual Report for 2025.

The Parole Board, now chaired by Dr. Emily Ross following a renewal of its membership effective October 1, 2025, is a seven-member independent statutory body empowered to determine the timing, terms and conditions of release for eligible incarcerated persons.

During 2025, the Board reviewed 41 individual parole applications, consistent with the 41 reviewed in 2023 and the 43 reviewed in 2024. Of those, 13 parole licences were granted, a meaningful increase compared to seven granted in each of the two preceding years. A further 62 applications were deferred and ten individuals chose to decline parole, citing in some cases a preference to complete the Right Living House programme, or a preference for release at their Earliest Release Date rather than on licence. This last point is worth noting: it speaks to inmates who are making considered choices about the conditions under which they re-enter society and we should not see it as a failure of the process.

Five parole licences were revoked during 2025, the highest number since 2019. These were linked to non-compliance with recommended programming and the use of controlled substances. The Board has rightly emphasised that these revocations reflect broader systemic challenges around the limited availability of rehabilitative programming, both in custody and in the community, rather than solely individual non-compliance. The Ministry accepts that analysis. We cannot ask people to comply with conditions we have not sufficiently resourced them to meet.

The total custodial population at the end of 2025 stood at 163, unchanged from the end of 2024. The population of incarcerated foreign nationals rose, from 20 at the end of 2024 to 29 at the end of 2025, representing 17.8% of the total prison population. The Board has

initiated work on policy and guidance to ensure fair and consistent parole consideration for this cohort in 2026. Individuals serving life sentences accounted for 20.2% of the custodial population and the sexual offender population rose from 16 to 22. The Board has emphasised the acute need for enhanced access to specialist programming to support rehabilitation and safe release planning for these complex cohorts and this Ministry concurs.

As of 31 December 2025, 46 individuals were on parole licence in the community, all men, with ages ranging from 22 to 85. The Board has noted that effective reintegration in a small island context requires flexible, well-resourced and inter-agency approaches. As such, this Ministry is actively working to ensure that our post-release support is commensurate with that reality.

**Madam President**, both Reports paint a picture of a system under pressure, but one that is moving in the right direction. Parole grants have nearly doubled. Incarcerated persons are making considered choices about their reintegration. The Treatment of Offenders Board continues to provide meaningful oversight, and our corrections staff continue to serve with professionalism and dedication. We acknowledge the challenges that remain and this Ministry is committed to meeting them. The foundation is there and the work continues.

**Thank you, Madam President**