

Justice Committee

Prisoners (Control of Release) (Scotland) Bill

Supplementary written submission from the Parole Board for Scotland

This is a further submission from the Parole Board for Scotland requested by the Justice Committee in response to changes to the Bill proposed by the Scottish Government.

1. The Board's response to the proposed changes to the Bill

These proposals do not have any impact on life sentence or order for lifelong restriction prisoners.

As previously noted, removing the option of automatic release for categories of long-term prisoner will ensure that such offenders are only released before the end of their sentence (subject to the proposed separate arrangements for a minimum period of compulsory supervision) where the Board judges that the risk can be safely managed in the community. In addition to ensuring that these categories of offender are only released where the risk is manageable, it should also encourage greater engagement with the parole process with the potential for offenders to undertake more work regarding their offending behaviour. The proposed changes to the Bill will necessarily increase the work to be undertaken by the Board to a greater extent than first envisaged and while the Board will endeavour to do so within existing budgets, it may need some support from Scottish Government to manage the impact. As previously noted, the impact would not be felt until three years after implementation.

The proposal regarding a minimum period of compulsory supervision in the community is welcomed. It is expected that this will have little or no impact on the work of the Board.

The Chairman is unable to attend the round table discussion with the Committee on 24 February 2015 due to a prior commitment.

We hope this information is helpful to the Committee.

Parole Board for Scotland
9 February 2015