

The Rt Hon Stuart Andrew MP
Minister of State for Justice
Ministry of Justice
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ

8 August 2022

Dear Minister,

Re: Monitoring prison regime recovery as we exit the National Framework

Your predecessor wrote to me on this subject on 20 June, and I am sorry to have to revive the correspondence. But I noticed in today's Daily Express an unequivocal statement from the Ministry of Justice spokesperson that "categorically denied" that prisoners were being kept in their cell for 23 hours a day ([23-hour lockdown 'still in place' at British jails | UK | News | Express.co.uk](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1284444/23-hour-lockdown-still-in-place-at-British-jails)).

The burden of our previous correspondence, which began in December of last year, was that it was impossible for the ministry to give assurances of this nature because there is no mechanism for measuring whether a prisoner is held in these conditions. We cannot see how the assurance given by the ministry's spokesperson can be evidenced, and there is plenty of anecdotal evidence to suggest that it remains an inaccurate assessment of what is really happening to many individuals.

Your predecessor's letter of 20 June said this about future plans to address the problem of measurement:

As part of the Future Regime Design project, we are collecting data to record the number of prisoners attending Purposeful Activity each week and this data now feeds a new National Regime Dashboard to enable close monitoring of those accessing activities in each prison. This new data will allow Governors to monitor those engaging in activities exposing where an individual is not doing so. This regime data will be available centrally as well as locally, to allow oversight and scrutiny.

That data would appear to hold out the potential for establishing whether or not the assurances still being made by the ministry's press office are true. So my request is that you now make it available for public scrutiny. Without it, the impression will remain that the

department is misleading the public and, it would appear, the courts about the true extent of its knowledge on this critically important issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Dawson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Peter Dawson
Director
Prison Reform Trust