



Ministry
of Justice

Prison Security Investment Programme: X-ray Body Scanners Ad Hoc Management Information

Published 14th October 2021

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1. Background and Coverage

This publication sets out management information on the number of scans and indications from X-ray body scanners used in the adult male closed prison estate invested in as part of the Security Investment Programme (SIP)¹. It does not include information on scans from existing X-ray body scanners installed in prisons before SIP.

2. Main Body

The introduction of X-ray body scanners (XRBS) as part of the Security Investment Programme will include the installation of 75 scanners across 74 establishments by the end of March 2022. This covers the entire adult male closed prison estate. XRBS were installed in staggered waves over the past 15 months, with the first wave beginning in July 2020. 51 sites were completed by March 2021 and a further 23 sites were completed by October 2021. Before SIP there were 18 XRBS in the prison estate.

XRBS are used in adult male prisons to detect if prisoners are attempting to conceal contraband internally. XRBS can only be used on prisoners where there is intelligence or reasonable suspicion that they are internally concealing contraband and there is no other means of detecting the suspected contraband (i.e. full or rub down search). All scans must follow the use of the X-ray body scan policy framework².

This publication refers to indications of suspected contraband from the XRBS only. This is different to the finds data published in the HMPPS Annual Digest³ which refers to the number of physical finds of illicit items in prison.

Since the first installation under SIP, prisons have been asked to report the total number of positive scans, negative scans and inconclusive scans. From July 2020 – April 2021 this information was collected via a weekly paper-based exercise by those who received an XRBS under SIP. Since May 2021 this data collection has been automated with prisons uploading their data on a monthly basis to a performance hub.

Overall, since July 2020 there have been 10,611 positive scans from XRBS installed as part of SIP. These are scans where there was an indication of suspected contraband. A breakdown of the scan data is presented in Table 1.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/100-million-crackdown-on-crime-in-prison>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-x-ray-body-scanners-adult-male-prisons-policy-framework>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hmpps-annual-digest-april-2020-to-march-2021>

Table 1: XRBS Scan Results for SIP Prisons

	July 2020 - March 2021	April 2021 - Current	Total
Positive Scans Reported	5,347	5,264	10,611
Negative Scans Reported	33,878	44,180	78,058
Inconclusive Scans Reported	950	2,485	3,435
Total Scans Reported	40,175	51,929	92,104

Data collection and data quality notes:

- Prior to May 2021, reporting was through a paper-based exercise. The recording of the number of inconclusive and the total number of scans may have been inconsistent as some prisons treated the counts of inconclusive scans and rescans differently. Some prisons recorded multiple scans for an individual whereas other prisons only counted the final result of an individual's scans. The figures presented here are as recorded by prisons with no adjustments made.
- There is limited scope to quality assure the data submitted by prisons, however, the data collection has now been automated and a consistent methodology for recording scans data is being defined through the Performance Hub.

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