

Statement

To: News

Date: 10 December

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Sacro Comment on New Bail Legislation

Sacro, Scotland's leading community safety organisation, expresses concern about the effect of new measures being introduced across Scotland's courts today.

Sacro Chief Executive, Susan Matheson said,

"To make Scotland safer we should increase the use of bail supervision. These new measures will only increase prison numbers whilst our bail supervision services demonstrate that a great number of those on bail do not require a custodial sentence".

"The 23,181 remand receptions in Scotland in 2006/07, and an average of 1,567 people on remand each day, costs £51.2 M. Over half of those remanded will not be given custody, so are not a danger to the public. Bail supervision provides courts with a robust and cost effective alternative to remand, and puts in place measures, such as support with accommodation and addiction, which help to stop re-offending. If bail supervision could be available across Scotland with adequate capacity for say 10,000 clients, then 10,000 prison beds would be freed up. We would urge the Scottish Government to consider these figures."

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For further information please call 0131 624 7270