Preventing the access of contraband (including illegal drugs) into prisons will always remain a high priority for the Irish Prison Service. The suspension of visits for significant periods since March 2020, as a result of COVID 19, has forced a shift in the methods used for trafficking contraband into prisons. We have seen an increase in the number of "throw overs" i.e. contacts on the outside attempting to throw mobile phones and drugs into exercise yards. Due to the regimes currently in operation in our prisons, prison staff have been able to identify and intercept many of these "throw-overs" ensuring they do not reach the prison population.

In addition, staff have increased the use of random and intelligence led cell searches on a daily basis. Our Canine Unit carry out searches around the prisons, including a greater focus on searching deliveries. Recent examples of this was in Mountjoy Prison where two of the biggest seizures of contraband to date was recorded. An increase in drugs found in post, parcels, and prisoner clothing has also increased as a result of visits being suspended. Advancements in our drug detection technology has proved particularly effective in identifying drugs that are sprayed onto letters, newspapers, and other prisoner property.

2020 table

Prison	Number of Mobile Phones seized	Number of Drug seizures	Number of Weapons Seized	Total arrests by Gardaí
Arbour Hill	0	0	0	0
Castlerea	33	36	19	0
Cloverhill	198	207	41	1
Cork	15	46	14	0
Limerick	1	3	0	1
Loughan House	65	116	51	1
Midlands	0	0	0	0
Mountjoy (Female)	47	33	43	9
Mountjoy (Male)	212	319	48	13
Portlaoise	8	11	1	2
Shelton Abbey	1	1	0	0
Wheatfield	568	479	77	4
TOTAL	1,148	1,251	294	31

2019 table

Prison	Number of Mobile Phones seized	Number of Drug seizures	Number of Weapons Seized	Total arrests by Gardaí
Arbour Hill	0	0	0	0
Castlerea	98	59	80	4
Cloverhill	127	186	33	0
Cork	27	65	19	3
Limerick	50	81	79	1
Loughan House	4	1	0	0
Midlands	96	97	132	40
Mountjoy (Female)	3	15	6	1
Mountjoy (Male)	228	237	62	47
Portlaoise	22	19	2	3
Shelton Abbey	0	1	0	17
Wheatfield	309	490	127	6
TOTAL	964	1,251	540	122

2018 table

Prison	Number of Mobile Phones seized	Number of Drug seizures	Number of Weapons Seized	Total arrests by Gardaí
Arbour Hill	0	0	0	0
Castlerea	52	70	69	9
Cloverhill	148	155	57	1
Cork	29	55	37	0
Limerick	56	94	91	5
Loughan House	2	4	0	0
Midlands	127	97	92	50
Mountjoy (Female)	3	9	0	1
Mountjoy (Male)	296	221	172	19
Portlaoise	22	30	8	8
Shelton Abbey	3	0	3	0
Wheatfield	224	403	135	6
TOTAL	**962**	**1,138**	**664**	**99**

2017 table

Prison	Number of Mobile Phones seized	Number of Drug seizures	Number of Weapons Seized	Total arrests by Gardaí
Arbour Hill	0	0	0	0
Castlerea	85	85	80	13
Cloverhill	45	93	23	1
Cork	22	21	31	2
Limerick	66	84	73	16
Loughan House	3	5	0	0
Midlands	123	124	105	66
Mountjoy (Female)	7	13	1	0
Mountjoy (Male)	334	373	56	41
Portlaoise	19	35	14	7
Shelton Abbey	4	2	0	0
Training Unit	3	0	0	0
Wheatfield	161	183	174	10
TOTAL	**872**	**1,018**	**557**	**156**

2016 table

Prison	Number of Mobile Phones seized	Number of Drug seizures	Number of Weapons Seized	Total arrests by Gardaí
Arbour Hill	0	0	0	0
Castlerea	45	48	89	4
Cloverhill	40	88	24	1
Cork	25	38	33	4
Limerick	119	88	69	10
Loughan House	4	7	2	0
Midlands	89	99	44	44
Mountjoy (Female)	0	10	0	0
Mountjoy (Male)	183	139	56	25
Portlaoise	24	33	7	2
Shelton Abbey	9	3	4	0
St Patricks	3	0	2	0

Training Unit	23	6	1	0
Wheatfield	84	156	104	17
TOTAL	**648**	**715**	**435**	**107**

2015 table

Prison	Number of Mobile Phones seized	Number of Drug seizures	Number of Weapons Seized	Total arrests by Gardaí
Arbour Hill	0	0	0	0
Castlerea	31	78	120	10
Cloverhill	31	104	32	0
Cork	16	39	36	0
Limerick	30	63	65	22
Loughan House	32	26	1	0
Midlands	70	86	100	40
Mountjoy (Female)	3	19	3	1
Mountjoy (Male)	265	136	43	36
Portlaoise	19	34	5	2
Shelton Abbey	14	10	1	0
St Patricks	65	52	30	0
Training Unit	15	13	3	1
Wheatfield	35	148	125	16
TOTAL	**626**	**808**	**564**	**128**