

The Crane Report



CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY RECRUITMENT –

THE PRISON ESTATE

Section-5-SUMMARY

ABSTRACT

This section examines the construction industry's recruitment from the prison population amid a skills shortage. Evidence highlights risks including tool theft, exposure to violence, and heightened post-release mental health vulnerability, particularly among individuals convicted of theft. Drug poisoning exceeds suicide as a cause of death in this group. Comparisons between public and private prison systems reveal variations in discipline and post-release outcomes. The section also considers potential risks to female leaders when integrating individuals with histories of sexual or maternal violence, underscoring the need for careful risk assessment.

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Section 5 – Construction Industry Recruitment – The Prison Estate

Content links of Full Section-5 Report

- Balancing Rehabilitation with Risk: The Impact of Hiring Ex-Offenders into Construction
 - Is there a heightened risk of tools theft?
 - Are ex-prisoners more vulnerable to suicide?
 - Do ex-prisoners suffer PTSD, like ex-combat soldiers?
- U.S. Military “Surge” Era Recruitment and Criminal Backgrounds
 - Negative Effects of Surge-Era Recruitment Policy
 - Post-Service Criminal Behavior
- Can we draw any parallels with the construction industry?
- Recidivism – What are the Risks?
- Profiling the Offenders
- Insider Threats – Tools Thefts
 - Data Collection Flaws Hindering Threat Assessment
- Sincerity to Reform
- Mental Health – What are the Risks?
- Mortality risks faced by recently released prisoners
- Combining Theft, Mental Illness, & Suicide
- The UK Prison System
 - Prison Analysis
- Sexual Violence
- Childhood Trauma & Gender-Directed Violence
 - Suicide Risk
 - The Hire (Ex-Offender)
 - The Female Victim
- Section Conclusion





Section 5 – Construction Industry Recruitment: The Prison Estate (Summary)

This section explores the opportunities and risks of recruiting ex-offenders into the construction industry. It recognises the dual benefits of rehabilitation and addressing labour shortages, but highlights critical concerns:

- **Lessons from U.S. Military Recruitment** – Lowering standards during the Iraq War surge led to higher misconduct, theft, and post-service crime, showing parallels with construction recruitment risks.
- **Recidivism & Risk Profiling** – Theft offenders reoffend at high rates, often within months of release. Young men with short custodial sentences are the most likely to relapse. Regional overlaps with drug misuse and suicide hotspots intensify risks.
- **Tool Theft & Insider Threats** – Theft is the most common reoffence, carrying major financial and mental health consequences for workers. FOI requests reveal weak police data collection, obscuring insider crime levels. Early evidence suggests insider involvement in tool thefts may be significant.
- **Suicide & Mental Health Risks** – Recently released prisoners face suicide rates 3–4 times higher than construction workers, and ~10x higher than the general population. Substance abuse and post-prison trauma (violence, sexual abuse, hypervigilance) compound vulnerability.
- **Prison Environment Impact** – Differences between public and private prisons influence safety, rehabilitation, and post-release behaviour. Private prisons appear more frequently in misconduct and violence reports, raising concerns about inmate trauma.
- **Sexual Violence & Gender Risks** – Employers must set clear policies on sexual offence histories. Early-life trauma, particularly maternal abuse, may underpin misogyny and aggression, posing risks in industries advancing female leadership.
- **Compounded Vulnerabilities** – Theft conviction + drug misuse + construction employment = a compounded high-risk zone requiring monitoring, safeguarding, and suicide prevention.

Conclusion: Prison recruitment can support rehabilitation but introduces serious risks tied to theft, recidivism, trauma, and suicide. Employers must look beyond the criminal record to early-life factors, mental health, and attitudes toward authority. Without rigorous assessment and safeguarding, such hires may increase both material losses and mental health crises in the workforce.





Investigation Stage 2 / Stage 3 - We Request Your Support

Roadmap of the Investigation

Stage 1 – Desk-Based Investigation

Analysis of existing literature, statistics, international models, cultural influences, and industry narratives. (*This document.*)

Stage 2 – Survey of Experiences

In an online [survey](https://www.dsrmrisk.com/survey) we are asking you to promote across the sector, designed to capture personal testimonies: what contributed to lives lost, and what brought others back from the brink. <https://www.dsrmrisk.com/survey>

Stage 3 – Industry Collaboration

Structured dialogues with construction firms, unions, and industry bodies to explore their views on root causes and the adequacy of current responses. We invite your input, thoughts, ideas, and what you see as solutions...***just a few lines*** - ***“What do you think is the problem?”*** (This phase is currently running in parallel with Stage 2)

Please send your thoughts to: contact@dsrmrisk.com (Anonymous is Okay)

Stage 4 – Expanded Data

Incorporation of data from Scotland and Northern Ireland (*not currently included in official ONS reporting*), alongside further refinement of UK-wide analysis.

Together, these stages aim to provide both evidence and lived experience, enabling a clearer understanding of risk and more effective prevention strategies.

Stage 4 will be the Final Crane Report.