

Restricted



SINGAPORE PRISON SERVICE

Community Engagement for Rehabilitation & Reintegration: The Singapore Experience

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About Singapore Prison Service (SPS)

About SPS

- Instituted in 1946
- One of the 11 agencies under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)

Vision

- As **Captains of Lives**, we inspire everyone, at every chance, towards a society without re-offending.

Mission

- As a correctional agency, we **enforce secure custody** of offenders and **rehabilitate** them, **for a safe Singapore**.

SPS's Throughcare Approach

Singapore has established its rehabilitation system based on the concept of **throughcare**.



Incare

- Psychology-based Correctional Programmes
- Work programmes
- Education
- Religious services
- Family programmes
- Arts & personal development



Pre-Release

- Employment Preparation Programmes
- Re-integration Programmes



Aftercare & Reintegration

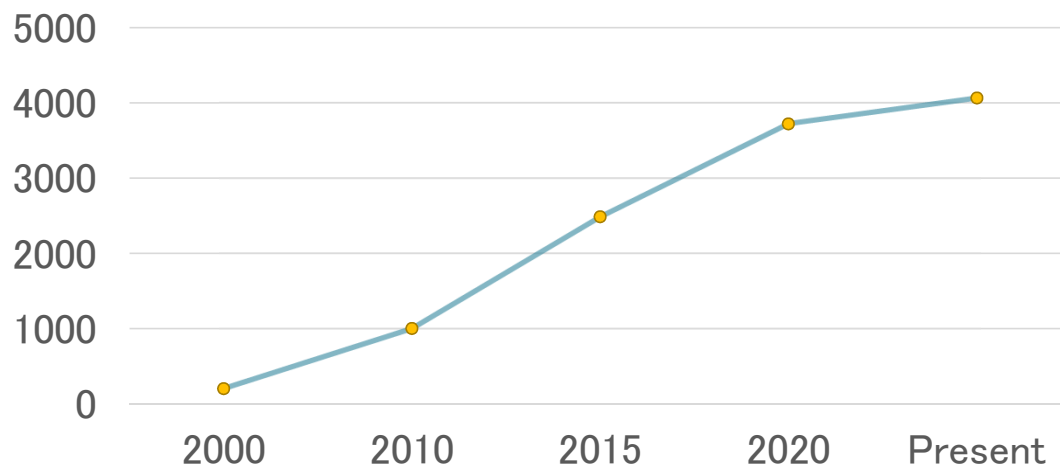
- Community-Based Programmes (CBP)
- Mandatory Aftercare Scheme (MAS)

Continuous and coordinated efforts from incare to aftercare, addressing offenders' needs and building their human, social and community capital

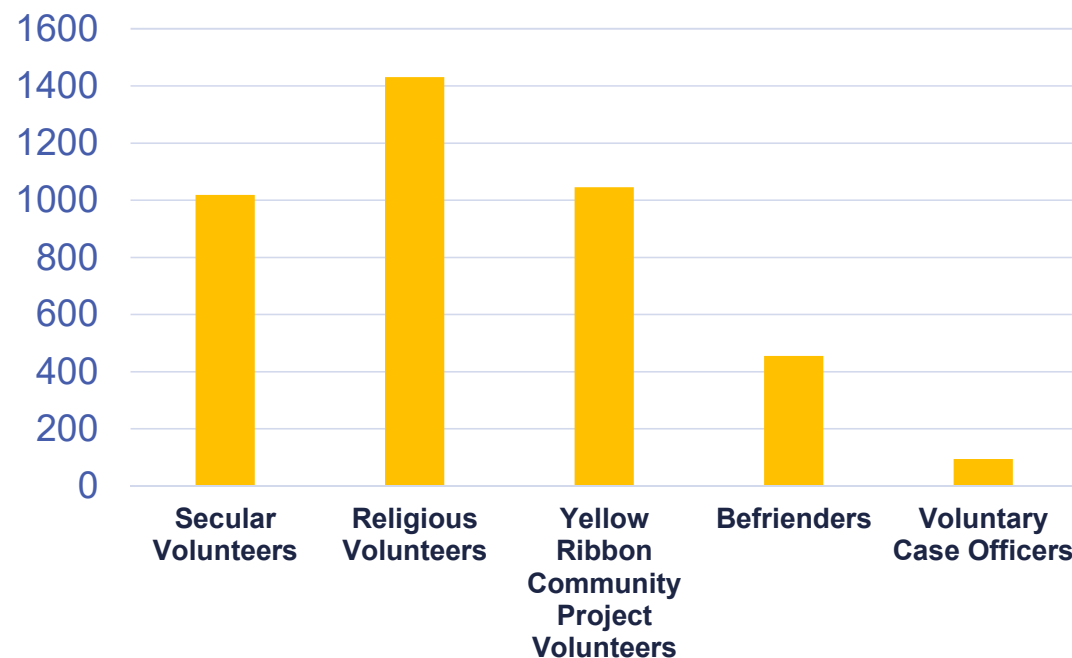
SPS Volunteers

SPS partners closely with community volunteers to support inmates and their families

More than 4,000 volunteers from over 50 organisations



Volunteers Breakdown by Categories



■ As of Jan 2024

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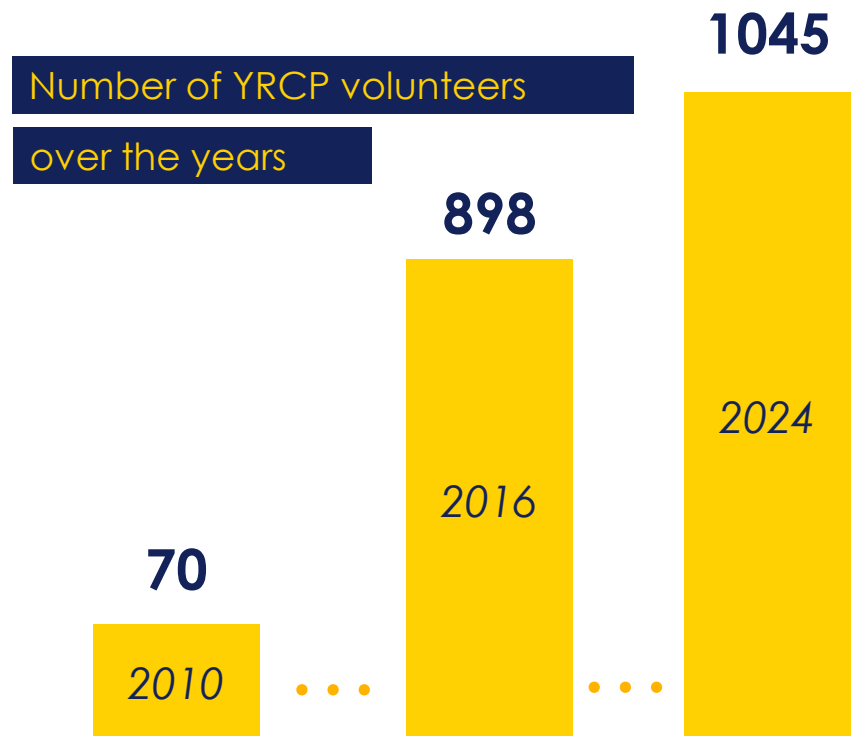
Religious Volunteers

- SPS partners 1,430 volunteers from 12 religious organisations and 5 major faiths to meet spiritual needs of offenders
- **Provides a strong religious foundation and incorporate moral development** to help steer away from a life of crime
- Religious volunteers also **continue to provide pro-social support** to offenders after they are released



Yellow Ribbon Community Project (YRCP)

- Upstream **grassroots-led initiative**
- Trained YRCP grassroots volunteers visit families of offenders, with their consent, to **offer social support and assistance**



Befrienders

- Befriending services are available to inmates and drug abusers **who may not have strong familial support or positive peers**
- Befrienders **foster meaningful mentoring relationships** with befriendees that begin in-care, and **continue to guide them in their reintegration journey after release**



Volunteer Case Officer (VCO) Scheme

Who are the VCOs?

- **Experienced volunteers who support Community Corrections work through case-management and counselling**
 - Experienced in working with inmates (e.g., retired SPS officers)
 - Post-graduate students in Social Work/Psychology/Counselling
- This initiative was developed to appeal to volunteers who desired to make a greater impact

Learning from Japan's Volunteer Probation Officers (VPOs) system

- SPS went on a study trip to Tokyo, Japan in Feb 2020 to learn about VPOs.

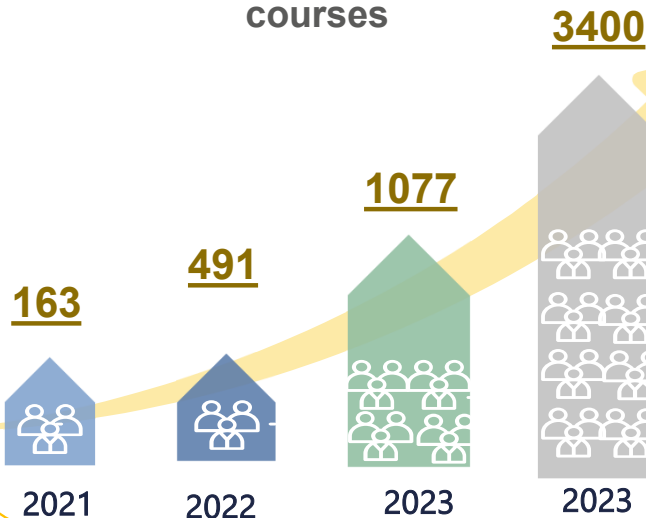
What is the VCO Scheme?

- VCOs refer supervisees and families to community agencies to address reintegration needs
- VCOs provide basic interventions to supervision through counselling and do house/site visits when necessary
- Through the VCO scheme, **SPS targets to expand the supervisees' network of support** in the community during and beyond their community-based programme
 - Thereby **reduce supervisee's risk of re-offending**



Strengthening Volunteers' Capabilities

No. of participants attended developmental trainings and courses



Supporting volunteers and encouraging volunteer retention

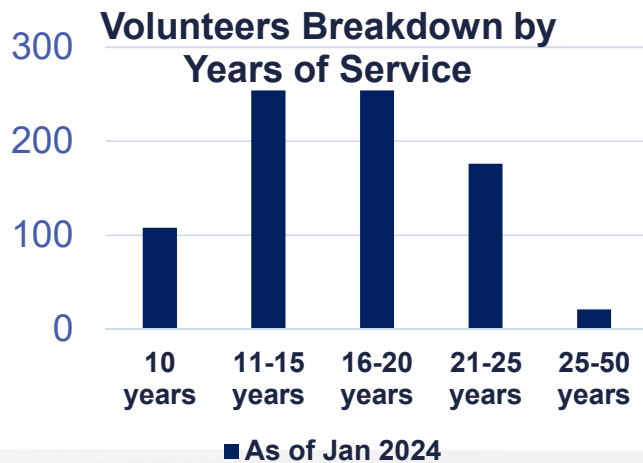
- SPS provides basic training and relevant developmental courses for partners
- **Equips volunteers with capabilities required to work with inmates/ex-offenders and their families**
 - Enhances their ability to cope with challenges
- **Volunteers will also have access to self-care courses**
 - Enhances their well-being and resilience while serving in challenging roles
- Between 2021 to 2024, **SPS increased the number of training spaces from 163 to 3400**
 - Includes webinars, e-learning and classroom sessions

Volunteer Appreciation Events

SPS organizes various initiatives to connect with volunteers and express appreciation

Years of Service

- 813 SPS volunteers have been in service for 10 years and longer



Throughcare Hero Award

- Acknowledges partners and volunteers who journey with inmates and their families throughout incarceration
- 13 recipients from 13 organisations were awarded in 2023
 - Youngest recipient: 37
 - Oldest recipient: 73



Promoting Volunteer Works

Volunteer works are also promoted through social media



Singapore Prison
Service Instagram
Page



Sharing volunteer
Human Interest
stories via
Whatsapp
broadcasts

Ongoing Community Engagement Efforts

Increasing Awareness of Volunteer Opportunities

- Leverage on social media platforms to feature SPS and YRSG volunteers to **raise awareness of volunteering opportunities**
- Collaborate with Institutes of Higher Learning to recruit VCOs

Increasing Engagement of Existing Volunteers

- **Organize dialogues and engagements** for new and existing volunteers
- **Review training framework for volunteers and community partners**
 - Equip volunteers with skillsets relevant to their roles (e.g., befriending skills)
- Encourage volunteer-led initiatives and corporate volunteering
- Explore inter-agency volunteering opportunities for existing volunteers



Ongoing Community Engagement Efforts

Engaging interested younger volunteers for the future

- **Direct interested young volunteers to community partners supporting families impacted by incarceration** so that some will join SPS as volunteers/staff when they reach the minimum age
- **Enhancement of the YRP committee's school engagement efforts to introduce and encourage educational institutions to adopt the YRP to support inmates, ex-offenders and their families**

Engaging desistors as contributing members of the society

- **Recruit desistors to consider volunteering opportunities in SPS and in the community**
 - Through volunteering, desistors are more connected to the community and build a positive self-identity
- Co-create opportunities in the community for inmates and ex-offenders to contribute back to community
- Support ground-up initiatives led by ex-offenders

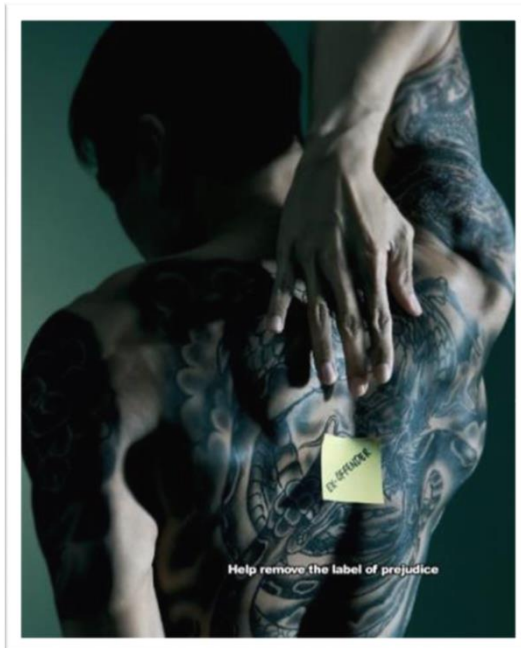


Yellow Ribbon Project (YRP)



Launch of the YRP by late President of Singapore, Mr. S.R. Nathan, in 2004

Yellow Ribbon Project (YRP)



- To create community **AWARENESS** of importance of giving second chances to ex-offenders
- To generate **ACCEPTANCE** of ex-offenders and their families in the community
- To inspire community **ACTION** to support the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-offenders

YRP: Media and Mass Outreach

Spreading Human Interest Angles on Reintegration Issues and Importance of Strong Community Support



Capturing Minds of the Nation through Creative Advertising, Featuring Volunteers and Inmates' Talents



Who: Artist Barry Yeow, 54, an ex-offender who has made a life and career out of art since his release from prison in



Ms Kasmawati Kali Ubi, a Bronze Certificate of Achievement recipient at the Yellow Ribbon Celebrating Second Chances Award Ceremony on Oct 12 – for her commitment to staying crime- and drug-free for six years – poses for a portrait on Oct 15.

Effectiveness of YRP



142 community partners



91% surveyed* are **aware of YRP** and its **objectives**. Majority **acknowledge that ex-offenders need help to restart** their lives (90%) and that it **benefits the community** to give them a second chance (89%)

**Based on a survey of members of public conducted in 2022*





YRP Beyond Local Shores

Over the years, the YRP campaign has garnered much support from many well-meaning individuals and corporate partners, as well as traction beyond the shores of Singapore.

2008: Launch of YRP in **Fiji**



2012: BuCor LOVE Foundation, **Philippines** launched their first Prison Run



2019: **Ireland** and **Northern Ireland** jointly held their pilot Yellow Ribbon Run



2011: Second Chance Day in **Australia**

2016: **Czech Republic** held their first Yellow Ribbon Run



YRP 20th Anniversary Film (2 min)

Video link: https://youtu.be/_fTCOtIv0Sk?si=W-IeyPHie9Losoig



Don't Just Wear a Yellow Ribbon. Be One.

To reduce long-term re-offending rates, a strong support system within the community is essential



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