

IRISH PRISONS INSPECTORATE

CASTLEREA PRISON

**CASTLEREA PRISON INSPECTION:
2ND - 9TH JUNE 2004**

Role of the Irish Inspector of

Prisons and Places of Detention

The Office of the Inspector was established by an order signed by the Minister for Justice Equality and Law Reform on the 21st February 2002. There is a statutory provision in the forthcoming Prisons Authority Bill for the establishment of a Prisons Inspectorate. The following are the terms of reference for the Inspector of Prisons and Places of Detention.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

To -

- (a) Inspect and report, as the Inspector considers appropriate, to the Minister on prisons and places of detention under the aegis of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.
- (b) Report in particular on conditions in those institutions and on the regimes in place for prisoners and detainees.
- (c) Investigate and report on any specific issue referred to the Inspectorate by the Minister.
- (d) Submit to the Minister an Annual Report on the activities of the Inspectorate.

GUIDELINES:

In carrying out an inspection of any prison or place of detention the Inspector will, in general terms, have regard to such matters as:

- (a) the quality of the regime;
- (b) the attitude of staff and inmates
- (c) health, safety and well-being of prisoners
- (d) the conditions of the buildings
- (e) questions of humanity and propriety;
- (f) any general pattern which may indicate possible inadequacies in the management of the prison

As the terms of reference provide, the Minister may also request the Inspector to investigate and report on specific issues or incidents connected with the running of any prison or place of detention. Furthermore, the Inspector may raise issues of concern, arising out of an investigation or an inspection, either with local management, the Director General of the Prisons

or the Minister. To facilitate the Inspector in carrying out his functions, he may consider complaints from prisoners but only to the extent that such complaints are relevant to the functions of the Inspector. The Inspector will, not later than four months following the end of each calendar year, submit a written report to the Minister on his activities during the year.

It is intended that the annual report will be published. The Inspector will also furnish the Minister with such information relating to his activities as the Minister may require from time to time.

The functions outlined above will also apply to any child detention centres and remand centres designated by the Minister under Section 150 of the Children Act, 2001.

These terms of reference may be further refined in the forthcoming Prisons Bill in the light of the experience gained in the interim. The Inspector will also be entitled to report and make recommendations, in the light of experience gained, on the contents of the legislation which will eventually make statutory provision for the Prisons Inspectorate.

Any enquires or comments about the inspectorate should be directed in the first instance to:

The Irish Prisons Inspectorate
1 Lower Grand Canal Street
Dublin 2

Phone no. 6610447
Fax: 6610559
E. Mail: info@inspectorofprisons.gov.ie

Index

1. Introduction
2. Background
3. Statistical Information
4. Governor's Briefing
5. Meeting with Various Groups
6. Tour of Inspection
7. Health and Safety
8. Recommendations
9. Conclusions

COMMENCING THE 2nd JUNE 2004 TO 9th JUNE 2004

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On the 2nd to 9th June 2004 an inspection of Castlerea Prison was carried out by the Inspectorate Team which consisted of:

Mr. Justice Dermot Kinlen	Inspector of Prisons and Places of Detention
James Woods	Special Advisor to Inspector
Dr. Jim Ledwith	Consultant
Prof. McCutcheon	Consultant

- 1.2 The purpose of inspection is to identify issues and take note of any areas of concern or good practice which may pertain.

Date: Mr. Justice Dermot Kinlen
Inspector of Prisons and Places of Detention

2. Background

2.1 The complex had functioned as a psychiatric hospital and sanatorium for forty four years. The estate known as Harristown House and its adjoining lands were purchased from the Young family in the mid 1930's by the Mental Health Board for the purpose of establishing a major psychiatric hospital or "asylum" as it was then called.

Work on the site commenced almost immediately and was completed in 1939. The two main blocks were constructed from cut limestone which was quarried locally and cut on site. The site was occupied by the staff from the Mental Health Board at the outbreak of World War II in 1939. Allegedly the board (hearing that the army were about to take over the grand new building for use as an army barracks) moved in twelve patients and attendants during the night!

In the early years of the hospital. It functioned as a self contained 200 acre farm. It offered full employment to those patients who were capable of working. It also employed people from the local community.

The hospital continued to function until May of 1994 when a decision was taken by the Western Health Board to close the hospital and to move most of the patients into the community. When the decision to close St. Patrick's Hospital (as it was known) was announced in 1993 a group was formed to put pressure on the Government to locate a prison on the hospital site. A decision was taken by the Government to locate a prison on the site and work commenced on the building of the prison wall in May 1994.

2.2 In 1995 work halted on the project due to financial constraints imposed by the Government. Political development in Northern Ireland in 1995/1996 caused work to recommence on the “village” project with a view to transferring some of the subversive prisoners from Portlaoise prison. The breakdown of negotiations meant that the project was again brought to a halt.

A year or so later the Government decided to increase the overall prison accommodation and the Castlerea project was reactivated. Work commenced on the building of the main cell block and ancillary buildings in the Spring of 1997 and was completed in early 1998.

A decision was also taken to take low security prisoners in the “village” or Unit A as it became known. This area of the prison is currently referred to as the “Grove” in reference to a Grove of trees which are inside the perimeter fence. It consisted of a number of stand alone 2 storey houses and the first prisoners were transferred to this area on 23rd December 1996.

Castlerea prison currently operates as the courts committal prison for the West of Ireland taking committals from Counties Roscommon, Mayo, Sligo, Donegal, Leitrim, Galway, Cavan and Longford. The current capacity of the prison is 210.

2.3 A new courthouse has recently been opened outside the main gate to cater for court appearances for remand prisoners held within the prison. This is an

excellent forward looking step. It should save considerable costs in providing escorts for prisoners for such a short distance from the prison to the courthouse instead of travelling to the courts all around the other counties. Videolinking could also be considered for here similar as to what is planned for Cloverhill prison.

Prison's Mission Statement

Aim

The aim of Castlerea Prison is to hold in Secure and Humane confinement those people committed to custody by the Courts, and to reduce the risk of re-offending by encouraging prisoners to partake of the rehabilitation opportunities offered to them.

OBJECTIVES

- To keep in safe custody those people committed to prison by the Courts
- To put in place opportunities for Prisoners to develop their physical and mental well-being and prepare them for release.
- To use the allocated financial resources effectively, economically and efficiently.
- To provide training and facilities for staff to enhance their morale, commitment and effectiveness.

3. Statistical Information

3.1 The total cell capacity of Castlereagh Prison is 133 with bed capacity for 165 as result of doubling some of the single cells and using an area with 4 prisoners to a cell.

The Grove section (7 double storey houses) has a capacity to hold 42 prisoners with a bed capacity of 50 as result of doubling some of the single bedrooms.

This gives an overall bed capacity of 215. This does not reflect the overcrowding in the main prison as the overall bed capacity includes the Grove area and there are vacant occupancy in some of the houses as a result of the various categories of prisoners not mixing with each other. Furthermore, one of the houses is unoccupied as it is in the process of being renovated which reduces the bed capacity further.

The total prisoner population on date of completing the questionnaire was 214 of which 17 were on remand to District Courts, 12 were for trial in the Circuit Courts while 185 were serving sentences. There were 3 prisoners on daily temporary release. 14 of the prisoners were foreign nationals from South Africa, China, Jamaica, Lithuania, Latvia, Iraq, Czech Republic, Algeria, Georgia.

3.2 Breakdown of Sentences

Serving sentences up to and including 6 months	28
--	----

Serving sentences of over 6 months and up to 12 months	25
Serving sentences of over 12 months and up to 2 years	33
Serving sentences of over 2 years and up to 4 years	34
Serving sentences of over 4 years and up to 7 years	24
Serving sentences of over 7 years and up to 10 years	16
Number serving sentences of over 10 years	10
Number serving life sentences	<u>15</u>
Total Sentenced	185
Remands 17 for trial 12	<u>29</u>
Total in custody	214

3.3 The age profile of the prisoners

Those aged 16,17 and 18 years old	3
Those aged 19 - 21 years old	15
Those aged 22 - 25 years old	54
Those aged 26 -30 years old	46
Those aged 31 - 35 years old	32
Those aged 36 - 40 years old	25
Those aged 41 - 45 years old	19
Those aged 46 - 50 years old	6
Those aged 51 - 60 years old	8
Those 61 years and older	<u>6</u>
Total =	214

3.4 Staffing

Governor	1
----------	---

Deputy Governor	1
Assistant Governor	1
Chief Office Class I	1
Chief Office Class II	1
Clerk Grade I	3
Chief Trades Officer	1
Industrial Manager	1
Assistant Chief Officers	15
Clerk Grade II	3
Industrial Supervisor	2
Assistant Industrial Supervisor	8
Prison Officers	114
Nursing Officers	8
Trades Officer	4
Chaplain (R.C)	1
Probation and Welfare Officer	<u>1</u>
	166

Other staff [part time]

Doctor (G.P.)	1	Monday to Friday approx 1 hour per day and on call
Psychiatrist	1	3 - 4 hours per week and on call
Dentist	1	3 - 4 hours per week
Optician	1	3 hours approx per month
Teachers	24	9 full time and 15 part time
Counsellors	3	Part time (1 is a volunteer)

Chaplains of other religious other than R.C available if required.

Groups such as Samaritans, St. Vincent De Paul A.A etc also visit the prison and provide a service to prisoners as required or requested.

Castlerea Prison

Daily Routine

8.00am:	Day Staff on Duty
8.15am:	Unlock and collect Breakfast
8.40am:	Staff Break
9.15am:	Unlock for Work/Exercise/Education.
12.15pm:	Return to Landings, Collect Lunch and return to cells
1.00 - 2.00pm	Lunch break. Prisons locked in cells
2.15pm:	Unlock for Work/Exercise/Education
4.15pm:	Return to Landings, Collect tea and return to cells
5.15pm:	Unlock for Recreation
7.30pm:	Return to Landings, and in cells for night
8.00pm:	Day staff off duty

4. Governors Briefing

4.1 The Inspector and his special advisor met the Governor and his senior management team on our first day of the inspection.

The Governor outlined that there were 210 prisoners in custody on that day of whom 16 were sex offenders, 31 were on remand or awaiting trial and 13 were “political”. The breakdown of the “political” prisoners were as follows 2 were I.N.L.A 8 were P.I.R.A and 3 were concerned parents against drugs (allegedly a part of the P.I.R.A). The Grove, which is basically a separate

prison within the grounds, is where the “political” prisoners are held along with 26 “ordinary” prisoners. It has a capacity of 50 but on the day of inspection it held 39.

The prison operates a policy of no segregation where sex offenders and “ordinary” prisoners mix, work, and recreate together. The management state that it is the only prison in the jurisdiction that this policy applies. When questioned as to how it works in Castlereagh and no where else the Governor said that a lot of the prisoners are from the west or north west of the country and they can get visits fairly frequently from their families. There is also a good atmosphere within the prison and therefore they do not want to be transferred to another prison, which may happen, if they become involved in conflict with sex offenders. The Governor outlined that a serious attack took place on a sex offender some years ago and arising from this incident three offenders received severe prison sentences of 10 years, 8 years and 4 years imprisonment for same.

The design capacity of the prison was intended as single cell occupancy except in the remand section. There are 165 spaces but as can be seen from the numbers in custody, there are several cells doubled and 10 extra bunk beds were being introduced the day of our inspection. We were told that the beds were ordered several months previous. The projected need for remand prisoner accommodation was for 20 spaces but now he generally has over 30 daily in custody. A house in the Grove area has only 2 occupants but they will not allow anyone else share it unless they are attached to their organisation.

The Governor said plans have been drawn up to build an additional wing to the prison to accommodate the extra numbers on remand plus a 60 place therapeutic centre which would have all of the medical services in the one area. The centre would also have facilities for prisoner assessment, programme delivery, counselling services, interview rooms, meeting rooms, waiting rooms etc, but due to financial constraints it is not now going ahead. The same applies regarding the plans for the proposed new kitchen which is also on hold.

He gave a breakdown of staff attached to the prison as outlined under statistical information section. He said that 22 members of staff were female out of a total staff of 166. Regarding counselling services for prisoners the Governor outlined that he had a counsellor who gave of her services free of charge and that he had two other counsellors who are attached to the Western Health Board. They provide an adult counselling service to prisoners who had been sexually abused themselves.

- 4.2 The prison doctor is on strike and is not providing a service. If prisoners require medical attention they are seen by the nurses and if their complaint requires a doctor's opinion they are then sent to the accident and emergency department of Roscommon county hospital. The psychiatrist attends the prison each Monday and is available on call to quote the Governor "whatever hours" if required in emergency. The Governor is very pleased with the service provided by the psychiatrist and the doctor. Regarding the facility of the special care unit, the psychiatrist thinks that he can treat prisoners in the

prison's special care unit as well as in a psychiatric hospital but some extreme cases may have to go to the Central Mental Hospital. The Governor then gave a breakdown of the cells contained within the special care unit which are described in the tour of inspection section of this report.

- 4.3 The entire prison is declared as a drug free environment and all committals are advised accordingly that they shall be required to give urine samples from time to time. When questioned as to what happens if they refuse to give a sample the Governor said that such a problem has never really arisen but if they insisted then the possibility of a transfer to another prison would have to be considered. If a prisoner is committed suffering from the effects of illicit drugs or if he is a drug addict, he is placed on a 5 day detoxification programme. There is no methadone treatment programme and if a prisoner arrives into the prison who is on such a programme he is then transferred to another prison where a methadone treatment programme is administered. A substance misuse programme operates in the prison under the guidance of the Probation and welfare officer in contract and liaison with the Marist rehabilitation centre in Athlone. This programme is funded by the Probation and Welfare Service. There were 60 breaches of discipline for use of illicit drugs in the prison during the past year, most of which were for cannabis. They had very few cases of heroin. The making of "hooch" was very rarely found in the prison. The counsellors provide a counselling service for alcohol and drug addiction, gambling, bereavement and the adult counselling as already mentioned. The whole prison ethos is based on being drug free with emphasis on reduced dependency on drugs. The prisoners are tested on a

regular basis for illicit drugs. The management pride themselves on being a drug free prison, however, the Governor agrees that it is quite impossible to guarantee 100% freedom from drugs.

The prisoners' run "listening scheme" is in operation under the guidance of the Samaritans.

There are no sex offenders rehabilitation programmes in the prison and if a sex offender wishes to participate in one and if found suitable for the programme, he then has to be transferred to Arbour Hill Prison, which is the only prison where sex offenders programmes are delivered. There is no psychologist attached to the prison and such an appointment is very badly needed.

There were 135 breaches of discipline by prisoners during 2003, 3 of which were for assault on staff while 21 were for assault on fellow prisoners.

- 4.4 The cells are fitted with in-cell sanitation facilities (except some cells in special care unit) and all have televisions as well as kettles. The Governor outlined that 2 of the work training shops are idle due to the lack of suitably qualified staff. The workshops concerned are the carpentry and the computer shop. He said that he has continually sought Assistant Industrial Supervisors for them but has failed to secure anyone. If these shops were operating all employable prisoners would be employed.

The Grove area consists of 7 houses but one of the houses is empty at present for repairs. The Governor explained about the 3 different groupings

of prisoners held there and how they operate independently of each other and therefore don't share the dining hall, workshops, gym, or educational classes together.

4.6 The Governor stated that he has never had the full complement of clerical staff working in the offices and stores. He has 3 Clerk II's and 3 Clerk I's at present when he should have 6 Clerk II's and 2 Clerk I's.

4.7 The Inspector asked the Governor about industrial relations within the prison and that it is alleged that a senior member of the P.O.A is taking a court action against local management. The Governor said that some considerable time ago, a senior member of the P.O.A attached to this prison made a verbal complaint concerning harassment. He was asked to put the complaint in writing so that it could be investigated. He has declined to put same in writing to date and despite being requested on two different occasions he still has not supplied a written version of the complaint.

That is the only incident the Governor can recall regarding a senior member of the P.O.A and that overall he felt local branch P.O.A and local management co-operate quite well in the running of the prison.

4.8 The inspectorate team then referred to the business plans for the prison for years 2001 -2003 and went through a summary of same with the Governor and senior management. Herewith are the particulars.

Castlereagh Prison Business Plans for

Years 2001 to 2003.

(Summary)

Strategy 2. Ensure safe custody of prisoners.

- 2.1.** Devise standard arrangements for recording assaults in the prisoner population in each prison by end of 2001.

Review national working party's report, appoint person responsible for same.

Result; No, not done as no national report available.

Organise interim manual record keeping system.

Result: Yes

Train the trainers in standard procedures, deliver training to appropriate staff, and implement standard procedures.

Result; Yes A.C.O doing same as far as possible.

Strategy 3. Provide appropriately secure custody for prisoners.

- 3.1.** Annual review of security at all prisons.

Set up security committee, hold interim meetings, hold special security meetings

Result:Done

Conduct annual review of security, present report & findings to Governor.

Result;Done

Implementation of recommendations.(all by end of DEC 2003.)

Result: In a limited way being done.

- 3.4.** Use the prisoner records information system to generate a prisoner profile in respect of each prisoner due to be escorted outside the prison with effect from 1/1/03.

Result; Done

Await development & introduction of new PRIS facility.

Result; Doing it

Train the principal users in use of new PRIS prisoners profile system.

Result;Clerks and C.O doing it

Relevant info transferred from paper files to PRIS system

Result;Done

Strategy 4. Manage the custodial function so that it supports positive prison regime.

- 4.1. Make provision in business plans for maximum take-up of places in prison education, training and employment facilities.

Result: Done

Education. Supervising teacher interview each prisoner in prison to identify their educational needs and inform them of educational resources available by June 03.

Result;Done

Evaluate on an ongoing basis the educational courses on offer.

Result;Matter for teachers, believe being done.

Develop further within the prison, links with other sections--custodial, probation and welfare, chaplains, etc, in order to improve & maintain the take up of places in the prison educational programmes. (By June 02 & ongoing.)

Result; Yes being done

Training & Employment. Establish a training & employment committee and agree terms of reference by Jan 2003.

Result; Done

Establish current take up of training places relevant to places available and make recommendations by March 03.

Result; Not done

Present findings, implement approved recommendations of report and seek financial sanction requested for additional facilities/staff training by July 03.

Result;Not being done

Strategy 5. Plan to meet emergency situations. (fire, hostage-taking, riot.)

- 5.1.** To provide for maintaining an adequate standard of preparedness in relation to emergency planning at each prison.

Result: Done

Conduct review of existing fire / riot / hostage-taking, plans and emergency equipment, present report & recommendations plus implement recommended actions where feasible by June 03.

Result;Done and ongoing as far as possible having regard to staff shortages and overtime restraints.

Review training needs re fire, riot and hostage taking and present report & recommendations by April 03.

Result;On-going - but little training taking place

Implement actions as recommended and hold fire evacuation drills in accordance with requirements by Dec 2003. Result;Done

Provide a designated command room by Dec 03.

Result;Done

All riot equipment to be inspected, cleaned and stock levels recorded quarterly.

Result; On-going

Hold annual meeting between management and local gardai / army re response to a riot or hostage taking situation / plans by June 03.

Result;Regular contact

Ensure all SCBA / Fire fighting equipment & detection systems are checked, maintained and serviced as required statutory and records of same maintained. (done monthly).

Result;Done

5.2 Finalise liaison arrangements with fire authority by end 2003.

Contact local fire brigade / authority and arrange meetings.

Result; Done

Arrange visit to prison by local fire watch commanders to build local contacts for liaison with each watch & to familiarise each watch with layout of prison by Nov.03.

Result; Partly done.

Hold annual reviews by end of each November.

Result:On-going

Strategy 6. Provide for the personal well-being of prisoners.

- 6.1.** Make arrangements for a designated drug-free area in the prison by end 2003.

Result;Yes entire prison drug free

- 6.2.** Multidisciplinary suicide prevention group at prison to meet at least quarterly to review implementation of suicide prevention measures and consider new initiatives (or meet after a suicide incident.)

Result;Yes done.

Representatives of the group to participate in an annual forum to facilitate information sharing.

Result:Forum not held. These are organised by headquarters but not done.

No meetings.

Strategy 7. Help prisoners maintain their relations with family and the community.

- 7.4.** Measures to be put in place in each prison by end 2003 to help prisoners keep in touch with the wider community through improved access to the written & spoken media.

Access to T V in all cells by March 03.

Result;Yes.

Ensure access to daily newspapers by Jan 03.

Result;Yes can purchase same.

Conduct review of prisoner telephone system & provision of T Vs and video in recreation halls every four months.

Result;Each prisoner can receive 2 phone calls per week at state expense.

Present report & recommendations to Governor and implement actions recommended.

Result; Yes ongoing

Strategy 8. Ensure medical & psychiatric care for prisoners to a standard consistent with that which applies in community.

- 8.1.** Implement all accepted recommendations, subject to resource provision, contained in the report of the prisoner Health care Review Group by end of 2003.

Review the Medical Director's identified list of accepted recommendations of the report by the health care team within one month of receipt from M.D.

Result; Yes being done

Identify improvements that can be made with current resources.

Result;Yes

Draw up implementation plan for improvements that can be made, within current resources, in the life span of current business plan (2003). By health care team.

Result;Done

Identify & prioritise additional resources needed to fully implement the accepted recommendations within the review group's report.

Result;Implemented as far as possible

Request resources if required and implement plan by end 2002.

Result;As far as possible

Strategy 11. Elaborate positive sentence management.

- 11.3.** Maintain the prisoner participation rate in education at 50% against the background of increases in the prisoner population.

Produce statistics of numbers in education on a quarterly basis (by head teacher)

Result; Being done

Interview each prisoner in the prison to identify their educational needs and inform them of the educational resources available within the school area.

(Headteacher)

Result: Being done but educational classes optional

Identify facilities & resources needed based on existing data and make reports plus recommendations to (a) co-ordinator of education and (b) the governor by April 2003.

Result;On-going

The governor to implement appropriate recommendations where feasible by end December 2003.

Result;On-going

Supervising teacher to devise strategy for maximising participation through liaison with relevant agencies and to evaluate on an ongoing basis the education courses on offer by Jan 2003.

Result;Being done

11.5. Extend parenting courses to all prisons where they are appropriate.

A multidisciplinary group to review & assess parenting courses in other education units and relevant community practices by March 2003.

Result; Not done

A survey to be carried out by group & head teacher to ascertain interests in parenting group within the prison by April 2003.

Result;Done

The group and head teacher to determine appropriate action following the survey & review and prepare recommendations and report for the governor by June 2003.

Result;Yes received

Implement appropriate approved actions by December 2003.

Result;Mostly done but needs to be checked further with teachers

11.6. Implement the recommendations of the report of the physical education development group “physical education in the Irish prison system”.

The Governor to regularise the gym committee & agree brief by Jan 2003.

Result; Done

The gym committee to review report on physical education in the prison system and prioritise its recommendations by Jan 2003.

Result;Done.

The gym committee to access resources required, assign responsibilities for course delivery by Jan 2003.

Result;Done

The committee to prepare implementation plan for the governor by Feb 2003 and to implement relevant recommendations where approved by December 2003.

Result;Done and on-going

- 11.7.** Introduce the CONNECT project in all prisons by end 2003 with appropriate local and central arrangements

Date identified when the CONNECT project is to be introduced into the prison, meetings with the connect project manager and agree programme for its implementation.

Result; No not done

- 11.8.** Implement accepted recommendations of the prison - based drug treatment review group by the end of 2003.

The local communicable diseases committee review report's recommendations in partnership with local Health Bd. Services by December 2002.

Result;Being done by nurses

The governor attend all relevant seminars & meetings and feedback relevant information to local communicable diseases committee.

Result;No committee

The local diseases committee assess the prisoners drug status & treatment needs in relation to the report by the end of Feb. 2003.

Result;Not done.

Governor & committee agree on a programme for implementation and implement same according to agreed plan.

Result;No Committee

Strategy 12. Develop & maintain activity programmes for prisoners.

- 12.2.** Make provision in the initial business plan for each prison for a programme of interaction with the wider community.

A multidisciplinary group to review existing links with the community and identify any deficiencies and duplications by Jan 2003.

Result;On-going (citizens information service in operation and Fas)

The group, by building on the existing linkages, agree a programme of interaction with the wider community by Feb. 2003.

Result: on-going through linkage

The Probation & Welfare, make, as necessary, contact with agencies in the wider community in order to run the 2003 programme.

Result; Done, on-going as deemed necessary.

The multidisciplinary group design an evaluation mechanism and establish a forum for interfacing between the prison and external agencies by April/May 2003.

Result;On-going

The group and the governor hold briefing for staff by May 2003.

Result;Not Done

The probation and welfare evaluate effectiveness of the programme for staff and prisoners by end of November 2003.

Result;Yes being reviewed - staff involvement limited (limited programmes also)

Strategy 13. Address offending behaviour.

- 13.1.** Each institution to deliver at least one multidisciplinary programme per year addressing offending behaviour relevant to its own prisoner population with effect from 2003.

The prison's multidisciplinary group to review current approach to offending behaviour i.e. anger management, drug addiction, etc. and review current offending profile of prisoners by Feb. 2003.

Result;Alternative to violence programme - yes

The Probation & Welfare to research evidence based practice on what works and identify potential material, plus devise modules relevant to the population's needs by May / June 2003.

Result; Not done

The probation & welfare provide training for pilot programme delivers and runs pilot programme by Sept / Oct. 2003.

Result; Not done

The Probation & Welfare to evaluate effectiveness of programme & identify training and resource requirements for future multidisciplinary programme delivery and submit report to governor by `Nov / Dec 2003.

Result; Yes being reviewed - staff involvement limited as well as a limited amount of programmes due to lack of Probation and Welfare staff.

Strategy 14. Evaluate effectiveness of prisoner programmes.

- 14.2.** Ensure that at least 50% of work training courses are pursued to recognised certification levels by the end of 2003.

The governor to establish a work training committee and agree terms of reference by the end of Jan 2003.

Result; No Committee Industrial Manager does it

The work training committee review work training courses in the prison and identify courses for development to certified level by the end of March 2003.

Result;On going with Industrial Manager and Head Teacher

The committee to draw up implementation plans and present same to Governor by May 2003.

Result;No Committee

The work training committee implement approved plan by end Dec 2003.

Result;No Committee

(Castlerea Prison Business Plans 2001-2003)

Targets identified locally which are specific to Castlerea Prison

CP1 : Ensure the kitchen passes the hygiene and food safety audit by end of June 2003.

Result:Done and achieved

CP2. :That by Dec 2003, 50% of the staff will be provided with training in manual handling.

Result:Manual handling training was given may not have reached the 50% mark

CP3 : Organise donning & doffing training for all discipline staff in SCBA by end of Dec 2003.

Result: All available staff done as far as possible

CP4 : Fire hose, water cannon training to take place on Saturday mornings for all staff.

Result: On going on a Monday instead of Saturday

CP5 : Provide the prisoners within the prison with automated telephone system by end Dec 2003.

Result: Not done

5. Meeting with Various Groups / Individuals

5.1 *Meeting with Chaplain*

The Inspector met with the Catholic Chaplain whom he had met on his previous visit. He told me that mass attendance was quite good (unlike some other prisons). He told me that one mass was said by a visiting priest on a Saturday evening when the chaplain is on leave and that they could have up to 90 people at it. He celebrates two masses on Sundays. He said he would have about 50 or 60 on the Sunday between the two masses. This is a significant number in comparison with Fort Mitchel where the POA stated that only a handful of travellers attend mass there. The Chaplain seems very dedicated and seems to enjoy his work. The Governor also spoke highly of

the chaplain and outlined his dedication to working with prisoners and to the prison in general. I asked him about Kairos and Alpha. He was familiar with both. He does not have either in existence in Castlereas. He told me that there was an English Survey done regarding the Kairos movement and an evaluation of their work. It was known as the Kairos Sic Community evaluation and was conducted by Jonathan Burnside, Joanna Adler, Nancy Looks and Gerry Rose. I asked him for this report if he happens to come across it which he agreed he would do. I believe a copy of this Home Office report has been submitted to the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform. I assume that this is the same organisation as the group I met in my office.

The discussions then focused on counseling services for prisoners in such areas as addiction to alcohol, drugs, gambling, plus other personal issues such as childhood abuse, guilt and shame, bereavement and lack of sex offenders counseling programme at Castlereas Prison. Other special programmes such as thinking skills, anger management, self esteem skills, plus pre-release programmes were raised. The fact that no psychology services are available for the prisoners and no personal counseling for some quite deserving cases was another requirement badly needed for the prisoners. The lack of co-ordination of the professional services and the need to integrate the services of the counsellors who work there at present plus the budgetary constraints placed on overtime working resulting in staff shortage for the supervision of family visits, etc, were among the other matters raised.

5.2 ***Meeting with the Visiting Committee***

The Inspector spent an hour with the visiting committee. They are reduced to seven members and they are anxious for the Minister to make up his mind to decide whether to abolish them or to give them new members. They quite accept that the members will come from near the prison. One lady kept referring to the Inspector as “the invisible man”. She pointed out that I had been in office for two years and that she hadn’t even met me. I told them that I didn’t want special meetings which would incur additional expense but that I hoped to visit all visiting committees on a date that they would normally be having their meeting anyway. I explained that one of the main problems with visiting committees was the fact that in the previous year there was over €600,000 spent on travelling expenses. I also explained how they had been emasculated. None of them had infact copies of the 1925 Rules (or Act!). This seems to be the position with every visiting committee. I told them that they had considerable powers under the 1925 Act and that they were now all gone and that they now had power to over rule the Governor regarding decisions on prisoners’ punishment but subject to non existent rules which meant they were totally ineffective.

Some of the committee had political backgrounds, some had served for many years, some were relatively new. However, there is no doubting their enthusiasm and commitment. They were extremely critical of the shortage of staff in the prison. They stated that they had received promises many times from the Department but that the promises were frequently broken. They certainly don't hold the Department in high regard.

They developed the points raised in their 2003 annual report to the Minister which are herewith.

Visiting Committee Concerns:

Homelessness: In their annual report they reiterate their concerns for the lack of follow up service for offenders on discharge from prison. Some prisoners are homeless on discharge and they urge the Minister to liaise with other Departments and agencies to rectify this situation.

Overcrowding: They are very concerned with the overcrowding situation and the pressure it puts on staff and prisoners.

Castlrea is running at full capacity and beyond it on an ongoing basis especially in the remand area. It is disappointing to note that the Minister has not revisited the issue of refurbishing the vacant section of the prison. This is a fine several storey high empty building.

Prisoners with Psychiatric problems: This is a matter of grave concern to the committee with the number of prisoners with psychiatric problems committed by the courts. The prison is not equipped to deal with these matters. The staff must be recommended for their excellent work they do in this area. The shortage of beds in the Central Mental Hospital should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

However, the Inspector would go further stating that many people who “have a bit of a want” are rejected by psychiatrists because they can’t offer any treatment. The outstanding example is the “personality disorder”. They are not acceptable as mental patients by psychiatrists and are dumped in prison

where they deteriorate and cause havoc for the staff and other prisoners. This is an obscenity which is being eradicated in England where all such persons are put under the Mental Health System. At the moment it is deeply offensive and obscene the way these unfortunate people are sacrificed by feuding departments. The attitude of the Department is clearly unchristian, inhumane and self serving.

Suicides and Attempted Suicides: It is with sadness the committee report that one suicide occurred in 2003 and there were a number of suicides attempted during the year which further highlight the need for a full psychiatric service to be provided to the prison. They welcome the establishment of the new Courthouse. They also welcome the opening of new houses in the Grove area. They regard this as a progressive step and is vital to the rehabilitation of long term prisoners. The Governor has introduced a number of animals such as ducks, hens, geese, peacocks and rabbits.

In the opinion of the Inspector the Grove is to be commended and infact has got international recognition.

I was very impressed with the Castlerea Visiting Committee and their enthusiasm and their anger. I would adopt every one of their comments. I was saddened that I should be described as the "invisible man". It is my practice to visit all the visiting committees hopefully when I am actually doing an inspection of a prison. However, I am very conscious of the cost involved, therefore I have arranged to see visiting committees on their monthly visit if that can be arranged. At least I can not be accused by Castlerea visiting committee of being invisible anymore!

5.3 ***Meeting with the Teachers***

We met several teachers and had the privilege of meeting and presenting certificates on the pre-release course to a number of prisoners. I also engaged in conversation with several prisoners in the school. I asked about the drama. It was very effective and useful in Mountjoy and in Wheatfield. I was informed that most prisoners would be shy about appearing on the public stage. A drama course is held in a small room. It could and should be developed.

The teaching facilities we visited were located in a dedicated area of the main prison building. Some teaching activities also occurred in The Grove which has its own self-educating facilities serving 3 different groups of prisoners. The teaching rooms in the main prison were reasonably well equipped and were in an acceptable state of repair. Nevertheless, an improved budget for the purchase of materials and consumables would be welcome.

I found the teaching staff to be dedicated, enthusiastic and motivated. There was an evident sense of involvement in their work and a concern for the general welfare and development of prisoners.

The range of courses available was impressive and it is noteworthy that a number of prisoners have been working towards educational qualification. Several are pursuing Open University courses while others are undertaking various distance learning programmes, in addition to those taking the regular State examinations. Herewith are a list of subjects and other learning

opportunities available to prisoners:- Physical Education, English, Literacy, Creative Writing, Art, Craft, Career Guidance, Irish, Geography, computers, Yoga, Horticulture, Woodwork, Technical Graphics, Home Economics, Art, Pottery, Stone Carving, Bog Oak Carving, Thai Chi, Stained Glass, I.T., Maths, Accounting, Languages, Pre-release, Psychology, Parenting.

Overall I was left with a favourable impression of the teaching facilities and courses offered. Prisoners' observations bore this out and they reported that there were plenty of opportunities available.

5.4 Meeting with "Heads of Service"

The Inspector and his special adviser Jim Woods met the "heads of service" of the prison who are the assistant governor, the clerks in charge of office and stores, the chief officers, the chief trades officer and the person who was acting for the industrial manager.

The Inspector welcomed them to the meeting and enquired about the unused building within the grounds that was almost as big as the main prison block and appeared suitable from the outside of holding a considerable number of prisoners. He understood that it is a dormitory style accommodation as it was part of the old hospital bed wards which could be used for sleeping facilities for prisoners. He was informed that a survey was carried out on this building to establish the costs of having it restored for prisoner accommodation use and other facilities such as workshop, education, etc. It was estimated at between 3 and 4 million. It was decided

that it would be cheaper to commence from a green field site rather than restore this building. The proposed plan put forward included a new building to hold 165 prisoners which had an indoor soccer pitch, new kitchens, new reception and new visiting facilities. It was also to have a childrens creche and play area. However, it is put on hold until such time as finance becomes available.

The next matter raised by the Inspector was the wages paid to the prisoners for doing the factory work in the rubber shops and the fabric shop and if the wages paid met the statutory minimum rate. He also enquired if they were being recognised and registered with the Department of Social Community and Family Affairs regarding stamps for benefits. The Inspector was informed that they were paid the same amount as those working on the outside doing similar work and the harder they work the more they earn. Regarding the registration with the Department of Social Community and Family Affairs, the prisoners were only engaged part time as the hours in the workshop would not justify a full days work i.e 8 hours and as well they do some prison work and attend education, visits, etc so their work is very much only a few hours per week. They are not being employed as such by the factory but these shops are most useful to occupy their time and the payment is just a bonus.

Discussions took place in relation to the library services for prisoners. It was stated that there was a library in the main prison, one library in the Grove and the education section also had a small library. The main library was open 10-12am and 2pm - 4pm each day except when the officer in charge

had to be taken away for other duties due to staff shortage. They outlined that Roscommon county library is prepared to train 2 officers and to give an librarian part time for a half day per week. They are prepared to fit the library out with new furniture and fittings.

The drama room in the school was raised by the Inspector and enquired if outside people are invited into drama productions in the prison. He was informed that drama is taught as a subject in the education section but no public performances takes place. In some cases not enough prisoners participates in the drama class to provide a full cast for a production.

The number of members on the visiting committee was raised and the Inspector said they were down to 7. He was told that 2 had resigned in January last and had not been replaced.

The Inspector gave an outline of the Butler Awards scheme which was founded by Terry Waite which operates in England for outstanding services by staff within the Prison Service. The nominations for the awards are considered throughout the entire service from the lowest grade officer to the highest rank and includes Prison Headquarters staff. He said that the costs for the awards were sponsored by a bank and he was suggesting something similar should be done here with backing from an outside commercial organisation. He was recommending this to happen. It was pointed out that the Governor operates an award type scheme for staff attached to this prison. It is based on a number of factors such as good time keeping, good sick records, dedication to duty and the prizes vary from a voucher for a meal out to a week end away with family etc.

The Inspector asked if they had any suggestions regarding improvement which could be done in the management of the prison. Quite a number were raised which included

- (a) additional clerical staff for offices and stores.
- (b) shortage of trades staff particularly during holiday periods and the drafting in of qualified tradesmen on temporary basis similar to what is happening in other sections of the civil service for holiday relief work only
- (c) security people to escort outside contractors around the prison and not wasting qualified prison trades officers time at doing same.
- (d) use of incinerator within the prison and not wasting money sending out skips at enormous costs
- (e) need for staff training and the requirement of a separate allocated budget solely for staff training
- (f) appointment of a full time training liaison officer
- (g) granting of parental leave for family purpose, same as applies in other parts of the civil service
- (h) better workshop facilities
- (i) more structured counselling service for prisoners as it is a haphazard at present and the counsellors are part time
- (j) a full time psychologist and full time drug counsellors
- (k) an additional probation and welfare officer
- (l) at least one sex offenders rehabilitation programme per year to be delivered to the sex offenders as they have to go to Arbour Hill Prison if they want to partake at present

So there was a considerable number of issues raised. They outlined that it was a good prison to work in as a good atmosphere existed within it. The regime was good with staff and prisoners getting on very well with each other. A lot of the prisoners are very happy in this prison. They are from the general area and their families don't have to travel too far for visiting purposes. They said that the doctor was on strike at present but when here he provides a very good services as does the psychiatrist. They thought if there were some extra incentive for prisoners to work, it would help the running of the prison.

This concluded the meeting with the inspectorate thanking them for attending and for participating fully in the discussions.

5.5 Meeting with the Medical Staff

The doctor (G.P) was on strike and not available for our meeting

The Inspectorate met with a chief nurse who informed us that there are eight nurses on the staff, six are general trained nurses and two are psychiatric nurses. The minimum number on duty during the day time is two nurses and there is one night nurse. First of all the padded cell is used solely for medical reasons and the prisoners are observed there once every fifteen minutes.

Medicine is given out in "dry" form and to quote the nurse they "endeavour to make sure that the prisoner does swallow it".

The nurse did not think there was a major drug problem in the prison.

“Hooch was made occasionally” especially at Christmas time.

All prison staff are offered Hepatitis B vaccination on recruitment and the follow up booster vaccination can be given to them in the prison but if necessary it can also be given to them by their own GP if they do not wish the prison doctor to administer it to them.

HIV is not a problem but clients can be referred to Roscommon General Hospital if necessary.

Obtaining medication is not a problem if the wholesaler is contacted before 12.00 noon it will arrive on the following day, however, a local chemist will provide medication at weekends if needed on an emergency basis.

A chiropodist attends on a three monthly basis or if necessary.

An optician attends when there are ten people to be seen.

All medical emergencies are sent to Roscommon Accident and Emergency Unit.

The nurse informed me that there is a need for a counselling service as only one nurse has counselling training and prisoners can wait for weeks for counselling. It can happen, that a visit from a relative to a prisoner can go wrong. This can cause considerable distress to a prisoner and there is no

regularised system to allow the prisoner to contact his relative by phone to “straighten things out”. This can cause the prisoner considerable distress.

A computerised medical record system is not in place at this time.

There is not a management nursing structure in place at this time for example the nurse did not know that there would be only one other nurse with him when he came on duty that morning.

Study leave is a problem and there is no recognised structure here for nurses.

Though all the nursing staff have all had CPR training this is not updated on a regular basis as it should be.

There is not a regular triage system in place.

All prisoners mix and for example sex offenders are not segregated.

There is random drug screening in place.

There are tv sets in all cells as well as radios.

5.6 Meeting with the Dentist

There is one dentist and one dental nurse.

They attend the prison from 11.30a.m to 2.30p.m every Friday.

Acute cases are a major problem as many are not always as real as prisoners tend to want to “jump the queue”.

The dental equipment is by and large excellent but three slow and three fast “sterile hand pieces” are urgently required. These are part of a normal dental surgery and are not presently available. They would cost approximately €500.00 each.

There is a problem in getting some relatively minor equipment supplied and put in place so that some basic dental equipment is not available.

The meeting with the dentist may appear to be a “gripe list” which is not the case and in fact our meeting was most cordial and helpful. The dentist has wide experience and has worked in the dental service in the United Kingdom’s prison service. He states the Castlerea Prison dental facilities compares very favourably with the institutions in the United Kingdom. He also states that he gets great support and assistance from both staff and management at Castlerea.

They believe they are providing “fire brigade service” at present so that one visit is not sufficient in their opinion.

They gave an example that the extraction of wisdom teeth has to be done in Dublin while a special x-ray machine if available in this prison would

eliminate this necessity. This machine, I was informed, could be made available for about €6,000.

They would like a flexible arrangement so that they could clear the waiting list if necessary.

They would also like a formal medical history in writing before seeing prisoners. This does not happen at present.

5.7 Meeting with the Psychiatrist.

The doctor informed me that he attends once a week or once every ten days or as necessary. He is on call on a 24 hour basis and will come into see prisoners at any time on request.

He will see about three to five prisoners per visit and these visits last about two to three hours.

He has been in post since August 1998.

He usually sees those with gross anxiety states, addicts or prisoners with alcohol problems. He also sees prisoners who find it difficult to cope or those who are on polypharmacy on admission.

Those who are acutely ill are seen as soon as possible or within a day of admission.

He does feel that the welfare officer is of great help generally.

However, he feels that there is a need for more counsellors, again he informed me that only one nurse has counselling skills and he also felt that there was a need for a psychologist.

He informed me that there was no collateral that is an outside history readily available to him when he saw prisoners but that on occasions he would take the initiative to contact either the family doctor or the family itself. He has been told by relatives of some prisoners that they were “never better mentally” while under treatment in prison and while under his care.

He says he does feel the padded cell is necessary as a place of safety in an emergency and he informed me that on occasions prisoners will ask to go into the padded cell.

Frequently he sees prisoners looking for benzodiazepines (valium) and as there is a drug free policy in the prison, so prisoners are taken off these drugs if possible.

It would take one to four weeks to see him for consultation and he does not regard this as a problem as he would see those who would have severe psychiatric problems right away.

There is a detoxification programme managed by the Prison’s General Practitioner and methadone is not used. He is not involved with this area.

He was of the opinion that it was difficult to keep illicit drugs out of the prison but it was not in his opinion a major problem.

He sees it to be a major problem that there is no recognised discharge programme to discharge letters on prisoners treatment and their medication. They are written by the G.P and not by him. The doctor told me that on occasions he would contact the relevant psychiatrist himself if possible. He is of the opinion that the times he spends with the prisoners is sufficient and he can see prisoners outside office hours if he thinks fit.

He has a good relationship with the Central Mental Hospital and prisoners can be taken there within one or two days if necessary.

Other prisoners with a past history of mental illness can be taken in when a place is available.

The Central Mental Hospital will send a staff member to assess the second group.

Prisoners who self mutilate are also sent to the Central Mental Hospital if necessary.

Prisoners are referred to him by the G.P, the nursing staff, prison officers and the Governor.

It should be noted that the doctor did not know why this interview was taking place.

5.8 Meeting with the Probation and Welfare Service

The Inspector met the Probation and Welfare Officer who is assigned to this prison. His appointment is full time to the prison and his reporting structure is to his superiors in Castlebar. He is the only probation and welfare officer to the prison but should have assistance as it is an impossible task for one officer to deal with such numbers. He told me there had been one suicide on a previous year and several attempted suicides. He admitted that there was no programme whatsoever for sex offenders and that they badly needed a proper sentence management structure.

While the Inspector was very impressed by the Probation and Welfare Service there were complaints from a number of prisoners about his availability and his effectiveness. [such high number of persons to deal with and only one officer to do the work may be the reason for this complaint]

Some prisoners informed us of their worries about the confidentiality of the Probation and Welfare Service within the prison. It was not possible to determine whether this was the case or not but inasmuch as that impression exists it must be a matter of concern.

5.9 ***Meeting with the two female officers***

I met two female officers who were complaining about the arrangement for parental leave. They stated that the only offer available was for 14 weeks in block without pay which was not of value to them. They wanted to take it for the evening section of their tour of duty i.e 5.00pm - 8.00pm or for one day per week. They were asked as to what the P.O.A's views were on same. They outlined that the Governor stated that if the P.O.A were willing to agree to operate the prison a post down then he would be in a better position to consider their applications more favourably. Apparently the P.O.A have refused to operate with a post down and both officers did not deem it appropriate for them to have to negotiate between local management and the P.O.A on this matter. The Governor said that they would have to be replaced on overtime basis at present if released on leave and he had difficulties with this in view of the budgetary restraints placed upon him. The officers also spoke of term time leave not available to them but such facility was available to other general civil servants. This leave was for time off during the summer when the children were at home on school holidays and it allowed a parent to take time off to care for them during the long summer break.

5.10 ***Meeting with a Prison Officer***

One prison officer whom I interviewed complained bitterly about the lack of training. He stated that the records may show that someone was down for training on a particular day but in fact it never happened. The officers have had no information on such issues as anti bullying policy or race relations guidelines. While he praises the Governor in Castlereagh he gets the feeling

that there is an unhealthy competition between Prison Governors as to which can manage on the lowest budget with inevitable consequences such as the dropping of the CONNECT project in Castlerea. The Governor states that he is not in competition with any Governor and in fact all prisons operate independently of each other as far as budgetary matters are concerned.

5.11 ***Meeting with Local Branch of the P.O.A***

I met three officers of the local branch of the Prison Officers Association. They had a written submission. I asked for a copy. They undertook to give me a copy before I left the prison during the following week. However, they also gave an oral presentation. On my last day in Castlerea I received their briefing document which included copies of letters and a report. I have summarised their submissions herewith.

They stated that the majority of staff here were transferred from various prisons in May 1998. Most of the staff have more than 15 years service. They state the majority live in the West and would be non militant. They state that they have concerns about the treatment of different POA officials for some time and about the ability of management representatives to separate trade union roles as against employee roles. Indeed a senior official of the National Committee of the Prison Officers Association is a member of staff in this prison. He has had a blemish free career in the Prison Service prior to his transfer to Castlerea but has since faced four separate investigations. The officer is dealing with this matter himself. There was industrial action on the 11th March 2003 and on 29th April 2003. This was the first industrial action in the Irish Prison Service since the strike of 1988. Two crisis meetings with

Directors of Irish Prison Service, Headquarters in 2002 and 1 x 4 way meeting with Headquarters, local management, National P.O.A and branch P.O.A. They alleged that undertakings given at meetings in the aftermath of this industrial action (by a senior official of Headquarters) were effectively renegaded upon.

Their submission outlines:-

“Inability to deal with local management on any issue is at the root of Industrial Relations problems since opening of Castlerea Prison in 1998 and indeed no recognition of the Trade Union”.

“It would appear that the Governor of Castlerea and the senior official in Headquarters enjoy a close working relationship and indeed similar modus operandi”.

“Indeed when we sought to establish a point by lodging a report carried out by a Department of Justice Clinical Psychologist (on Loughan House in 1992 the present Governor was the Governor of Loughan House at the time). A senior Headquarters official accused us in writing of “scraping the bottom of the barrel”. We were attempting to use research and precedents to establish a point”.

“In July 2002 this branch received complaints about bullying from management. The situation is still effectively unresolved and will be focus of a court application. Flawed code of discipline ruling by Governor in June 2003” They state that a Judicial Review is currently before the High Court (and should be heard this month)

“Parental leave application (applications for parental leave turned down but then opinions expressed by management to the applicants that if they got the

POA to agree to work posts down that their applications would be looked upon favourably)”

“Use of rumour and innuendo by management team. Indeed for this very meeting we were warned through the “bush telegraph” to be careful what we spoke to you about”.

“Overcrowding: Only this week cells have been doubled up on A1 without any notice or consultation with the association. A1 - 35 cells now holds up to 55 prisoners. What our fear is that these cells were doubled up to relieve the overcrowding in the seg unit for Justice Kinlen’s visit. Prisoners sleeping on floors in cells as against over spill area across from the surgery so as to avoid extra night guards. In the aftermath of your visit we will again use over spill areas. Bed capacity up by approximately 35 i.e. 18% with no increase in facilities for offenders and a reduction in staffing even though our staffing were always considered very low”.

“Segregation Unit renamed as “Special Care Unit” being used as over spill area for prison. Prisoners (up to 5 or 6 housed in Rec hall) with no means of getting night guards attention and no delegated night guard for this sensitive area”.

“Introduction of initiatives such as “listener” scheme without any consultation or negotiation. No guidelines provided for staff (especially on nights)”.

“Concerns about lack of activities (work, recreation) for all these extra prisoners e.g lack of library facilities (detailed on paper only) express instructions to have the area open this week only.”

“The published ethos of Castlerea Prison - full integration. Policy of full integration in Castlerea main block - not working. Elderly prisoners serving sentences for sex offences effectively locked up on recreation times (evenings, weekends) use example of this weekend the long weekend (no access to fresh air or recreation halls).

“They are afraid of using these facilities and are afraid of other offenders”.

“Policy of integration in unit A not working with P.I.R.A prisoners effectively using the power of veto over the duties assigned to working prisoners in the Grove (i.e objecting to prisoners serving sentences for sex offences or drugs to work in kitchen or on grounds near to the houses that they occupy)”.

“Concern over Health and Safety matters e.g staff locker rooms. We sought and got a favourable risk assessment carried out by the Health and Safety Officer over 12 months ago. To date nothing has been done”.

“*Staff shortages*” especially on night guards. Use example of fire in seg unit in 1998. Increase in prisoner population.

“Discipline of unruly prisoners. Treatment of staff in aftermath of serious assaults on our members”.

“*Staff training* Virtually non existent. Five staff detailed every Monday and Tuesday but used for training rarely. Ongoing training needed for B.A.,

C & R, Hostage negotiation, suicide awareness, etc”.

Staff facilities Non existent.

I have already stated that I only received the submission and copies of letters and report from the POA branch officer the final half hour of our inspection. I did not read them until I returned to my Dublin office. Normally, I would have discussed this information with the Governor and his management team.

However, that was not physically possible. Accordingly, I dispatched all the information to the Governor for him and his management team to comment.

The Governor very promptly replied. He also provided me with copy of letters and correspondence in support of his case. I have opened a file where I have put all the information provided by the P.O.A and by the Governor. I herewith insert the Governors reply (but excluding the supporting documentation).

Governor's Response

Dear Inspector

I acknowledge receipt of your correspondence of 5th July 2004 regarding the observations submitted to you by the Castlerea Branch of the Prison Officers' Association. I thank you for the opportunity given to me to respond to some of the allegations and complaints contained in these documents.

Let me deal with the issues pertaining to Castlerea from two historical viewpoints. Firstly, when the main cellular block of Castlerea Prison opened in May 1998 there were some new initiatives and practices introduced.

These practices along with staffing levels, which were part of the PCW Agreement were discussed and agreed with the then National Officers of the POA. The most contentious of these initiatives were the use of technology and new staff rosters which were re-designed to accommodate the introduction of a thirty-nine hour week. All staff who transferred here initially were made aware of the new arrangements but some staff, along with others who subsequently transferred here, sought to have these arrangements changed. Indeed when the “old order” of the national officers of the POA were replaced it was the stated intention of the newly elected national officers to have these arrangements varied.

I have sought to have regular and minuted monthly meetings with the elected branch officers. This has not happened, primarily due I think, to staffing arrangements. When meetings do take place I am constantly dealing with different branch officials which makes the chance of agreement very remote. Indeed, in many instances agreements and discussions that may have taken place at previous meetings tend to be varied at subsequent meetings which gives rise to all sorts of difficulties and makes it difficult to agree any issue.

I also think the word “consultation” gives rise to difficulties. It seems to me that the POA look on consultation as agreement which it clearly is not. I can categorically state that no changes were effected in Castlereagh Prison without consultation with the branch officers. There have been instances for example in relation to the “Listeners Scheme” and the extended use of bunk

beds where clearly discussions have taken place but for some reason they do not seem to be either discussed or passed down to officers generally.

I am very concerned about the allegations made about the treatment of branch officers. At no time have I or anyone acting on my behalf singled out anyone for unfair treatment. Two officers, Officer "A" and "B" have made such allegations. In the case of the former, it was referred to me that he had complained on June 10th about being treated unfairly. I asked him on two occasions, in writing, to substantiate his claims but he failed to respond. He then wrote to the Minister with a similar complaint. This was passed on to the Human Resource Directorate for investigation. They, in turn, sought further detail from Officer "A", which has not been forthcoming to date. In the case of the latter he is citing two such instances. The first refers to an incident where a prisoner who was deprived evening recreation for a transgression was in fact allowed out to recreate. The POA branch remonstrated and on investigation it was found that the Chief Officer allowed the prisoner to be so out on request from, oddly enough, Officer "B". It appears that Officer "B" is annoyed by the revelation of this fact. The second incident was some what similar in that the branch officers complained to the Assistant Governor about the additional use of bunk beds without consultation. It transpired that on May 22nd the Chief Officer alerted Officer "B" to this development. Again, when this was pointed out, Officer "B" became annoyed. I think on both occasions, you will agree, that there is no evidence of any unfair treatment but a mere statement of fact.

They have raised a number of specific issues with you that I will now address. To suggest that there was no consultation about the extended use of bunk beds is misleading and inaccurate. It is furthermore a contortion of the facts to suggest that the development was purely for your Inspectorate's visit. These matters were discussed at a management meeting on 2nd February 2004 and with the staff association on 10th March 2004.

Again, I refute the allegation that the Listeners Scheme was introduced without any discussion or negotiation. It is clear that the introduction of this scheme was well announced and discussed. Indeed there was an information session for all staff given by volunteers from the local branch of the Samaritans and attended by 35 officers.

They attack the full integration policy of all prisoners in this prison. As can be gauged it works well and only one incident has occurred where a prisoner was attacked because of the nature of his crime since the prison first opened in 1996.

Regarding staff facilities in general and the locker room in particular, plans are at an advanced stage to upgrade this facility. The staff have a canteen, two rest rooms, and the use of the gymnasium. In addition, I have made available an outdoor recreational area which has never been used. Further, I have sponsored many sporting and social occasions and introduced a good attendance recognition scheme and a staff suggestion scheme.

The POA has centrally opposed initiatives I have introduced for staff training. There is an expectation that staff training should generate overtime and it appears that it is only in this context that such training be undertaken.

The use of trustee prisoners in prisons is a long-standing tradition and prisoners who have been so deployed following careful selection contribute positively to the overall operation of the prison. Castlerea is no different in this regard.

The statement that a waste management system has to be replaced is incorrect. We have only in the last few weeks introduced a waste segregation policy which is now fully operational. We have recycling programme and a cooked and uncooked waste composting system in place.

Regarding the issue of parental leave I received four applications for such leave on a staggered basis. Eligible officers can get 14 weeks of unpaid such leave. There is no obligation to grant this leave on a piecemeal basis. As most of the applications were for the summer period and for particular days and particular times, I could see some problems and so I sought assistance from the branch officers. Basically what I was saying is that if we could agree a minimum staffing level that I would be in a better position to deal with the applications. As can be seen no such agreement was forthcoming. Applications were dealt with on their merits and one was granted.

Regarding the document produced in relation to Loughan House, It is important to note that it was I who sought the assistance of the psychologist in an attempt to re-invigorate and motivate staff there. The psychologist report is merely a collection of issues as raised by staff and is not, nor was it intended to be, a fact-finding report.

In relation to reference to the “bush telegraph” and the implied attempt to influence the branch officers’ discussions with you, I want to clearly state that neither I or anyone acting on my behalf made any approach to the branch officers in this regard. Indeed my only contact with them was by letter of 26th May informing them of your visit.

The second historical fact that should be borne in mind is my role in industrial disputes of 1983 and 1998. There is obviously some residue of antipathy still in existence.

From all the documents I have supplied to you and these are only samples, I feel sure you will agree that the picture painted by the POA is grossly exaggerated. You will also note that when input is requested from the branch it is not forthcoming. There is a Luddite mentality prevailing among some members of both local and national officers of the POA and any initiative that involves change is opposed for opposing sake.

Finally, I want to state that the vast majority of staff in Castlerea Prison perform their duties with diligence and commitment and in general find

Castlerea Prison a good place to work. The professional attitude of the majority of staff has attracted much favourable comment from the many visitors of different professions to this prison.

Yours sincerely

Daniel J. Scannell

Governor

I have indicated two view points. It is hoped that with goodwill the matter will be resolved to the satisfaction of both sides. The matter will be kept under review.

5.12 ***Meeting with Groups of Prisoners***

The Inspectorate met a number of prisoners, both in a group session and individually. Several points were raised that lie outside the Inspector's terms of reference and in those cases the prisoners were informed accordingly.

Some prisoners complained about inconsistencies in general regime while others observed that the regime was gradually becoming stricter.

Contrarwise, those with experience of other prisons, in particular Portlaoise, reported that the regime was relatively relaxed. They stated that there was no after care programmes. Prisons in England had much better treatment programmes than here. They said the anger management programmes here was "mickey mouse" compared to England. The prisoners did state that Castlerea was one of the better Irish prisons with good relationships with staff plus quite good freedom of movement.

Some prisoners complained about what they considered to be the intrusive nature of drug searches. However, when further questioned they were in general agreement with desirability of ensuring that the prison is as drug free as possible.

Telephones: Prisoners reported their dissatisfaction with telephones. It was stated that the telephones were located in a noisy area and that it was difficult to speak. It also appear that one of the telephones has been out of service for a prolonged period. This merits further investigation

Visits: the view was expressed that a play area and/or crèche should be available for children during visits. It was observed that such a facility is available in The Grove.

Food: Meals were said to be monotonous and lacking in variety. They said that what the Inspectorate team sampled and what they got was entirely different. [There is a 28 day menu cycle in operation]

Tuck Shop: A number of complaints were levelled against the tuck shop. In particular, the prisoners complained about high prices and the non-display of a price list. This was a complaint I received in other prisons. Tuck shop prices should at least be the same as supermarket prices and prices should be displayed.

Recreation facilities: the major complaint about the recreation rooms was the lack of furniture in them. In particular, the television rooms had no chairs. Prisoners also complained about the state of the urinals in the recreation yard. On inspection I found the urinals to be in an unacceptable state.

5.13 ***Meeting with Individual Prisoners***

One prisoner who hasn't spoken for over six years is now beginning to interact. In fact he met the Inspector and psychiatrist for a long interview. He feels that under the Good Friday Agreement he should be released and that there has been discrimination against him. He said other people involved with him had been released.

Some of the other prisoners whom I met individually had concerns about matters which were outside my remit and I informed them accordingly.

6. ***Tour of Inspection***

6.1 The cell accommodation in the main prison consists of one block which is three storey high over a basement area. The block is provided with the necessary ancillary services such as workshops, kitchen, educational, recreational, some administration facilities as well as open air exercise yards . The cell accommodation and the other service buildings are designed in the shape of a letter "T" with the cell block being the leg of the "T" while at the top of the "T" are the ancillary facilities feeding into same. On the entrance to the cell block via the staff corridor, is located the duties detail office, staff parade room, staff tea room, probation and welfare office,

chaplains office, chief officers offices, A.C.O's office, industrial supervisor office and further on the corridor leads into one of the entrances to the kitchen area.

6.1(a) *"Listeners Rooms"*

The link area from the staff corridor to level two of the cell accommodation is located the "listeners" rooms which consists of 2 small rooms with two soft chairs in each and a coffee table in the centre of the floor. I believe Castlereagh Prison is the first prison or institution to introduce a listener scheme in this jurisdiction. The scheme is supervised and managed by the Samaritans with the support and confidence of local prison management. Prisoners are selected and trained by the Samaritan team to perform the work of the Samaritans and hopefully reduce the incidence of suicide or self harm. If it comes to the notice of prison staff or other staff that a particular prisoner is feeling low then he is referred to the trained "listener" prisoner and they conduct their discussions in these specially fitted out "listeners" rooms. These discussions are not in the hearing of prison staff and the rules relating to Samaritan workers apply in relation to confidentiality, etc. This service has been used on a few occasions since its establishment and appears to be working well. It has not been used during the night time lock up period as they stated that the need did not arise.

Located in the link area also is the medical facilities, such as the doctor's consultation room and medical drug store. There is also a prisoners' waiting area which serves as the waiting area for both the medical services and the tuck shop which is located on the same corridor.

6.1(b) *Tuck Shop*

The tuck shop staff were in the process of restocking the shelves with the normal supplies of minerals, tobacco, biscuits, crisps, sweets, chocolates, etc, when I visited. They informed me that the tuck shop is open each Monday and Thursday and for a half day on Tuesdays and Fridays. The other half of the half days are spent in the houses at the Grove to supply the prisoners held there with their orders. It is a reasonably well stocked tuck shop and appears to be operating efficiently.

The connecting corridor also accommodates the lifts for the kitchen's use where they wheel the hot trollies with the food for the prisoners onto the lift and then to the various cell floor levels. The food is served from the hot trollies and the meals are pre-prepared in the kitchen.

6.2 **Basement Area [committals/remands]**

There are six cells in this area consisting of four with four beds within them and two with two beds thereby holding a total of 20 prisoners. In the 4 person cells there are 2 bunk beds while in the 2 person cell there is one bunk bed. The floor covering in some of the cells is well worn and could do with being replaced. There is in-cell sanitation in all of the cells as well as a 4 channel radio and a television. There is a large screen television on the landing outside of the cell doors as well as a pool table and other small tables for card games. There are two passageways off the landing, one of which is used as the corridor for the delivery of goods for the kitchen and

tuck shop while the other one leads to the prisoners open air exercise yard. The exercise yard is lined for ball games. There were 14 prisoners in the yard on the day of our inspection and they were just lying out sun bathing and not partaking in any form of games. The end of the landing opposite the exercise yard end, contains a class officers office, which has a console within it that displays the call light of each cell. If a prisoner in his cell activates the call bell a light will display over the cell door as well as in the console in the class officer's office. In order for the light to be put off, the officer must go to the outside of the prisoner's cell door and cancel it from there. There is also a computer and record books contained in the class officer's office. There is a passageway at both sides of the class officer's office. On one side there are 3 showers and a slush/sink mop washing facility. The area is tiled and was clean and tidy. There is a storage and locker facility adjacent to the shower area in which is stored prisoners' razors, delph, cutlery, etc, the necessary needs when operating a class. The second passageway leads to the area where the distribution of meals for prisoners takes place. The hot trollies are wheeled in from the lifts and the meals are pre-plated and handed out as the prisoners queue up for same. The area has stainless steel shelves and tables as well as a large fridge and some storage facility for "dry" foods. It is not the most suitable of areas for this purpose as the prisoners queuing for their meals are in the way of those returning with their meals and the passageway is quite narrow. If there was sufficient room for those queuing for their meals to go in one door and having collected their meals return by another door would be much better. However, the design of the building does not allow for such luxury.

Immediately outside the entrance to the basement is located a telephone for the sole use of prisoners held in the basement area.

6.3 A1 Landing

There is a lobby area immediately outside the entrance gates to the landing in which the Governor's office is located for the purpose of interviewing prisoners or seeing those prisoners who request to see the Governor.

There are 35 cells on A1 landing, 20 of which are doubled with a bunk bed in those that are doubled. The cells were reasonably clean and tidy with some better than others but overall had satisfactory levels of hygiene. The design is the same as those described in the basement, in that the class officer's office is situated at one end in the centre of the landing with 3 shower cubicles a bath, mop/cleaning slush draining sink/facility in passageway at one side of the office and the prisoners' meal servery area at other side of the class office. The class office has glass or perspex fitted in it so that the officer operating within the office can observe and view the movements on the landing. It was obvious that the bath was seldom used and was informed that it is generally only used for those prisoners with medical problems under the supervision of a nurse. The small room where the bath was located was in need of tidying. The shower area would benefit from a repainting. The cells have in-cell sanitation with wash hand basin. They are also fitted with a 4 channel built-in radio and a television kettles are also supplied to the cells. The servery area has the same facilities as the

basement with a large fridge, stainless steel shelving and the hot trolleys wheeled in from the lifts from the kitchen.

There is an exercise yard off the main landing which accommodates the prisoners held on the 3 floors of the wing. It is quite a large enclosed yard the surface of which appears to be of tarmac material. There were 30 prisoners in the yard at the time of inspection and there is a shelter, shed type, at one end of it. Most of the prisoners were sitting around enjoying the sun while a few were walking around. None of the prisoners were engaged in games or sports.

6.4 Special care unit/Special segregated section.

The entrance to this unit is off the A1 landing and it is located separately from the other cell accommodation. There is a class officer's office located in the centre of the landing at one end. Each of the 5 cells are similar in size to the other cells. All of the cells have piped 4 channel radio installed. The accommodation consists of

- (a) (1) unfurnished cell with mattress and no toilet facility within it
- (b) Two cells which have a concrete base with mattress and in-cell sanitation
- (c) A soft furnished cell (with walls clad) and no in-cell sanitation but there is a toilet w.h.b and shower in a lobby just outside the cell door.
- (d) The opposite corridor has one special padded cell (walls and floor) with toilet, shower and w.h.b outside the door. The sanitary fittings are of stainless steel material as the sanitary fittings in the main cell block are

of porcelain material. There is a small exercise (open air) yard just off the unit and there was one prisoner in the yard at the time of inspection who did not engage in conversation. The yard is quite small and not suitable for any ball games. The Inspectorate team were informed that no more than one or two are held there at any time. The records of those held in this unit for the past six months were examined and found to be kept up to date. The record sheets do not have a facility for the Governor's initials or signature, the chief officer being the highest rank recording their inspection of the unit.

6.5 A2 Landing

The entrance to A2 landing consists of a lobby type area and the dentist's surgery is located there. Passing into the landing by electrically controlled hand palm reading gates, the landing is of similar lay out as A1 with the class officer's office at one end and passageway both sides of the office for entrance to prisoners' shower area and the other side for the serving of the prisoners' meals. There are 46 cells on this landing with 4 of the cells doubled thereby accommodating 50 prisoners. The cells and general area was reasonably clean and tidy.

6.6 A3 Area Top Floor

There is a lobby area at the entrance to A3 landing in which the Chaplain's office is located. There is also a linkage corridor opposite the entrance which leads into the education area, the library and the indoor recreation rooms for the entire wing.

6.7 **Recreation Rooms**

The recreation rooms consists of one large narrow room with table in centre for the purpose of card games. The second room which is quite small has a large screen television within it while the 3rd room is reasonably large and has 2 pool tables in it. The covering on one of the pool table is damaged and in need of repair.

The 3 rooms are very sparsely furnished and when questioned as to why there are no chairs provided the inspectorate was informed that the prisoners bring their own chairs from their cells if they wish to sit. They also said that with the installation of televisions in their cells the use of the large screen television room is greatly reduced. The overall impression of the 3 recreation rooms is that they are not very inviting as a recreational relaxing area and are indeed extremely sparsely furnished and drab.

6.8 **A3 Landing**

The entrance from the lobby area to A3 landing is again via hand palm operated electronic gates. The design of the landing is similar to A1 and A2 as already described. It is a bright landing as the windows in the roof added to the light on the landing. The cells and landing were clean and tidy. This landing was the most hygienic of all the landings. The accompanying staff said that the prisoners there were generally serving longer sentences than those on the other landings thereby the change over in cell use was greatly reduced. There was a stairs at the opposite end of the landing to the class officer's office which allowed the prisoners down to the exercise yard. The shower area and the meals servery area were clean and hygienic.

The lobby area immediately outside the landing has 4 telephones installed for prisoners' use. These phones are for the prisoners within the entire wing except the prisoners in the special care unit and the remands. Each landing has a designated phone day. Each prisoner can make 2 telephone calls per week and they are not charged for them. There are no hoods over the phones and the area is quite small where they are installed. Therefore, the other persons within the area can hear one another's conversation. If hoods or kiosks were installed at each phone, it may help to add to the privacy of the call.

6.9 **Library**

The Inspectorate visited the library on two occasions and on both times it was closed. However, on the 3rd attempt it was open for business. It is a reasonably large room and the walls had been painted by a prisoner who allowed his imagination run free but are quite nice. The officer in charge told us he got books from other prison libraries as well as from Roscommon county library. He outlined that personnel from Roscommon county library had been into the library and had taken measurements for the purpose of installing library furniture. They are also going to give training to prison staff regarding operating a library. The library does not hold any CDs or daily newspapers but does have the odd magazine and the occasional video. Whilst I am aware that many prisoners are totally illiterate there are a few who would like to read newspapers and could convey details from sports pages and indeed news items to their illiterate colleagues. This deficit should be remedied immediately. They do not stock any law books but if a

prisoner requests a particular law book they order it in for him. The prison rule book (1947) was not available. They have a computer but it is not connected to the prison system. The transactions are recorded in book records rather than by computer. There are 2 free standing book shelves in the centre of the floor with 3 of its walls covered with book shelves. There is an officer's desk and an area for prisoners to sit and browse through books. One prisoner was there during our duration. The officer stated that he had approx 400 books in stock but it appeared to have much more than that amount. He stated the library was open Monday to Friday in both the a.m's and p.m's but not on Saturdays or Sundays. It was not open in the evening time during recreation from 5.15pm to 7.15pm. When questioned further he stated that it was closed for a considerable time due to staff shortage as it was one of the first posts to be stripped if staff failed to report for duty. However, this assertion was rejected by the Governor. It seems that an auxiliary service is provided by the school which has a small collection of books which prisoners may borrow. This latter arrangement may have come about as a means to overcome problems associated with the main library service.

6.10 Kitchen

The kitchen had 13 prisoners working in it at the time of inspection and they were supervised by 2 assistant industrial supervisor and 1 industrial supervisor. The industrial supervisor accompanied us on the inspection. It is quite a large kitchen and designed in an "L" shape. The main cooking area has free standing cookers in the centre of the floor operated by both

gas and electricity. The electric ovens and boilers are also in the centre of the floor with stainless steel shelving all around the walls. There is a canopy over all the cookers and ovens with steam extraction exits from same. Just off the kitchen area is a dry food store which is fitted out with stainless steel shelving. The prisoners are instructed in the use of a computer and they operate the computer in the keeping of records of goods and supplies received in and the level of stock on the shelves. This is a stand alone computer and is not attached to the prison administration computer network. There is a goods chilled room just off the kitchen and off the chilled room is the deep freeze room, both of which are fitted with stainless steel shelving. A corridor at the end of the kitchen leads to the chemical or cleaning equipment store in which powder, wash up liquid, soap, etc. is stored. This corridor also contains a tea room for the prisoners, which has a few tables and chairs in it. The prisoners working in the kitchen generally arrive at 7.30am and remain there until approx 6.00pm each day. The other section of the kitchen contains the storage area for the hot trollies, storage of bread and buns on free standing shelves as well as the wash up area plus the food preparation area with sinks, etc.

Prisoners whom we were told were experienced in tiling prior to committal, were tiling the walls of the kitchen and had completed a considerable amount of work on same. It is a very good job and the staff were saying that the costs savings was enormous compared to a contractor's estimate who had tendered for same. There were prisoners painting on another section of the wall and ceiling and all of this work was going on while the kitchen staff

were busy preparing the mid day meal. However, each section of workers were well away from each other and their work in no way hindered the quality of the meals being produced. The industrial supervisor outlined that plans had been drawn up for a new kitchen but due to financial constraints it was deferred until the money for same becomes available.

They purchase both prepared and fresh vegetables and in that way prisoners can learn and train how to wash and prepare the fresh vegetables. They provide approximately 200 meals at each sitting. The meals are portioned and plated in the kitchen then placed in hot trollies where they are then dispatched to the various landings. They serve the prisoners' meals directly from the hot trollies. They operate a 28 day cycle menu and a new menu is coming into operation nationwide in all the prisons on 24/6/04. The fact that each cell has an electric kettle, the traditional 7.30pm supper is no longer being served from the kitchen and prisoners collect their supper food allocation at the tea time serving at 4.30pm and can then have their supper in the cell at whatever time they wish themselves.

There is a small office located in the centre section of the kitchen for the use of the industrial supervisor. It is fitted with glass or perspex so that the officer can see the workings in the main cooking area as well as observing the wash-up and preparation area from same. It is fitted with a computer/printer and filing cabinets in which all the records relating to the operation of the kitchen as well as the training received by the prisoners is recorded there.

The prisoners are all passed as medically fit by the prison doctor to work there. They are given a training course prior to commencing work in the following areas:- (1) hygiene and all aspects of same regarding themselves, food preparation and areas of work (2) induction into all aspects of kitchen work (3) how the work is assigned and the various moves one gets as they become efficient in their particular area (4) wash area such as pots, pans, delph cutlery (5) food preparation - vegetables, potatoes, etc (6) meat preparation for various dishes (7) cooking skills and (8) presentation and serving of the food.

The kitchen received a “C+” on the recent audit carried out by “Failte Ireland”. This is the first time to achieve such an award.

It is a well run kitchen with good rapport between staff and prisoners. The fact that they are able to carry out the maintenance work themselves and save considerably on the costs of same is a credit to all concerned. It was very hygienically operated, all in their whites including the inspectors who were given whites to wear on entry. The inspectorate team sampled the mid-day meal which was well cooked and tasty.

6.11 Workshops (Main Prison)

There are 4 work/training workshops attached to the main prison one of which is a carpentry shop which is closed due to the fact that management are unable to get trained staff to operate it. They have advertised both locally and nationally for industrial supervisors for this carpentry shop and have failed to secure the staff necessary for its operation. It is a pity that

such a fine facility with well equipped benches, saws, etc, is just lying idle when such a need is required for the training of prisoners in carpentry skills. The sooner this staffing problem is sorted out the better.

6.12 **Workshop Rubber shop**

On the day of inspection there were 14 prisoners employed there but the officer in charge said he can take a max of 17 prisoners. Those working there can also attend educational classes so the number of prisoners working there vary from day to day depending on the classes they attend. They were working on rubber components for the motor industry. They have entered into a contract with a company based in Carrick-on-Shannon who supply the workshop with boxes of rubber pads for foot pedals of cars, joint seals and bungs for the motor trade. The prisoners remove any particles of spare rubber from the seals, bungs, etc trim each of them off with a scissors and then place them in a box. They also fit the rubber pads to the pedal holders and place them in another box. The work must meet a quality control standard. If such standard is not met then the entire box of finished articles is returned by the company to the person responsible for filling it. The more boxes the prisoners produce, the more money they earn. Records are kept of the prisoners' boxes and also of the material received in and sent out. When the company receives the boxes and have same checked for quality control, they then forward a cheque to the prison and the Industrial Manager distributes the cash (cheque) allocation to the various prisoners according to the amount they have done.

6.13 **Leather Shop/Rubber Shop**

There were 10 prisoners working in this shop, one of whom was a cleaner.

The main work carried out was similar to the other rubber shop but they work on the rubber pads for the motor car pedals only and not the seals or bungs.

They place rubber pads on to steel plates and again the quality control aspect was very important. If the factory found a single pad improperly attached or if the indentation in the rubber was damaged, the entire box would be returned to the prison. The work on the rubber pads was for the same firm as described in the other rubber shop based in Carrick-on-Shannon. All of the waste rubber is returned to the factory for reuse.

They also do some leather work within this shop making belts, wallets, holders, key straps, etc, but nobody was working at leather when the inspectorate team visited. The officer in charge outlined that a person who lives locally who is a saddler came into the prison and trained one of the officers in the skills of leather work. This person was a saddler and leatherman to the Queen of England's horsemen. He has long left that position and returned to Ireland to set up a saddlers business locally. There was no leather work on display and the officer stated that they only fill orders as they come in. It was outlined that there was no order for any leather work at the time of our visit. The prisoners get paid for their rubber work at €2.50 per box, the same as in the other shop. The same format applies regarding distribution of the money for work performed when the factory forwards the cheque.

6.14 **Fabric Shop**

The fabric shop provides the prison with the necessary clothing for those working in the kitchens in the manufacture of white coats, trousers, aprons, caps, etc. It is also involved with an outside contractor or factory based in Donegal in the making of patch-work for the manufacture of hats, waistcoats, caps, etc. This shop sows up various lengths of different colour materials to the factory's order and then the various bundles or lengths are duly forwarded to the factory. Quality control applies strictly here too in that each piece is sown the correct distance from the edge so that the joinings/edges can be ironed out flat. The stitching is also checked for correct strength. If this is not done properly, then the entire bundle is returned by the factory.

There were 10 prisoners working in this area at the time of inspection and the officer in charge stated that he can take up to 12 prisoners. Again they can attend education or can be off on visits, so it would be seldom that he would have the full compliment of 12 prisoners. The prisoners working in this shop are all convicted of sex offences and while the sex offenders and others mix on the landing at recreation, etc, they keep very much to themselves in this workshop.

The officer was asked as to how he manages both prison work and contract work as they get extra bonus for the contract work. He explained that he allocates the time spent on both work evenly. When questioned about maximum bonuses a prisoner could earn he estimated that about €12.00 per

week would be the average that he could earn above the normal prison rate after the various deductions were made.

The workshops were quite busy overall but I suppose if prisoners are receiving a bonus in cash for work done it is an incentive to work hard. It is a shame that the carpentry shop is not functional and over 30 prisoners out in exercise yards not engaged in any activity. The work for the outside factories and the bonus payment for the prisoners' work is managed by the Industrial Manager. The other prison work such as the manufacture of the whites for the kitchen and the leather work is also managed by the Industrial Manager. The whole operation appears to be working very well and everyone involved doing a good job. It is a bit unusual for the Prison Service to operate in this way as the prison stores department are normally the people responsible for such activities. The recording of items in and out of the prison plus whatever manufacturing costs, bonus payments, etc that are involved in such operation are generally accounted for in the stores manufacturing account. However, the old saying "if it is not broke don't mend it" may very well apply here as it appears to be working well.

6.15 **Gym**

The gym instruction cater for 15 to 20 prisoners per session. There is one part time P.E teacher and 2 gym instructors operating the gym. There are 2 instructors present at every session. It is a large airy room with good high ceiling and very bright with large windows in same. They outline an individual programme for a prisoner if he so wishes, otherwise they operate

a system whereby the prisoners are encouraged to rotate the various machines and exercises. In this way they are engaging the entire body in exercises as sometimes the prisoners would build muscle only with weights being the main form of exercise. The prisoners have to be cleared medically by the doctor prior to commencing classes in the gym and they also sign a “disclaimer form” outlining that they have had no injuries or medical problems before joining the classes.

The equipment is quite modern and they have 3 stepper machines, 3 bicycle machines, 2 rowing machines, 2 tread mills, 10 resistant weight building machines and a punch bag. Just off the main gym area there is a changing room which has a seat fitted along the wall as well as two showers, 1 toilet, w.h.b and urinals. It was reasonably clean and tidy. There is also a storeroom and an office in which the files and records are maintained.

The gym operates 7 days per week with morning, afternoon and evening sessions being the norm. There are no problems regarding shower availability after each class for the prisoners and they appear to enjoy the sessions very much. They were performing their exercises to the beat of loud music when the inspectorate visited the area and there appeared to be good rapport between the prisoners and the instructors.

6.16 Reception Area

The prisoner reception area has 3 “holding” cells with seating fixed to the floor around the walls of them. There is a toilet, 2 showers and a bath in an

area just outside of the holding cells. The reception is the area that all prisoners on entering the prison and leaving the prison must pass through. The record of their personal details such as height, weight, marks, scars, plus their personal belongings such as clothes, shoes, property, etc, is maintained there. Valuable property such as watch, ring, money, etc, is held and recorded in the general office. The reception operates similar to the reception in most of the other prisons in that there is a counter where all the particulars are recorded, the prisoner is then changed from his clothing, bathed/showered, and placed in prison clothing. He is then photographed (mug shot as far as shoulders) by reception officers with digital camera for the purpose of identification by prison staff only. The photograph is developed on the computer. He is given a "kit" which is a pillow case with sheets, toothpaste, soap, information booklet, etc within it and he is then placed in a cell in the main prison wing. The same procedure follows in reverse if a prisoner is being discharged.

There is another room just off the main area in which the prisoner's photograph and fingerprints are taken by the fingerprint officer and these prints are for the National Criminal Record. There are sufficient lockers for the prisoners personal clothing and all the clothing is marked with a number which is applied by means of heat pressure. So the numbering of the clothing guarantees that each prisoner gets back his own laundry each week and also it is a means of identification of each ones clothing belongings. The prisoners are allowed to wear their own clothing provided they have 3 full sets of clothing for exchange purposes when they are being laundered.

Overall, the reception was neat and tidy but it was obvious a working area with the various bundles of clothing in the process of being stored or rearranged by the prisoner working there.

6.17 Visiting Area

The visiting areas consist of a large visiting area that can accommodate 13 visits at the same time, a professional visiting room with a small table in the centre of the floor and fitted out with soft arm chairs, plus two screen visiting rooms with a barrier floor to ceiling between prisoner and visitor.

The main visiting room has a counter with a small barrier in the centre of it between the prisoner and the visitor. The prisoners sit in the centre of the counter while the visitors sit on the outside of the counter. There are 2 fixed C.C.T.V. cameras in use throughout the visits and there are two raised chairs at each end for the officer to see and observe the entire room. The C.C.T.V. is taped and if an illegal article or substance is passed between prisoner and visitor the tape evidence can be shown to the prisoner if he is placed on disciplinary report and disputing the facts.

The professional visiting room is used to accommodate Solicitors, Gardai, Probation and Welfare and other such professional visits. It is used at times for family visits on special occasions such as a child's first Holy Communion or Confirmation, etc or at times for family/marriage counselling purposes.

The screen visiting rooms are used for those who have been found to have passed illegal items on ordinary visits and are placed there arising from a disciplinary hearing before the Governor. There is no contact between either parties and a glass or perspex sheet divides each other off. Communication with each other is via a grid in the counter.

There is a corridor outside the main visiting area where a search room and toilets are located. Prisoners are searched at random when leaving the visiting area except in cases where there is a suspicion that something had been passed during the course of the visit. There is also a metal detector screen which all prisoners must walk through after visits and naturally if the alarm on the screen is activated then that particular prisoner is also searched.

There were a number of visits taking place at the time of our inspection and there was a good buzz about the place. The area was clean and well maintained.

6.18 Laundry

There were 4 prisoners working in this area with an officer in charge on the morning of our inspection. They cater for the laundry need of all the prisoners within the main prison but not those in the Grove. They also launder for those prisoners who are wearing their own clothes so no clothing is going outside of the prison for laundering like some of the other prisons. Prisoners shirts, socks, underwear, track suits, sheets and pillow cases are laundered once per week while towels or tea towels are laundered twice per week. The officer outlined that they launder the clothing of the prisoners'

two landings on Mondays and Wednesdays while they do the other landings on the other days. Each item of clothing is numbered and they have a record of the laundry received in so that the same laundry is returned to the prisoner by the numbering method.

The laundry has three industrial washers, three industrial dryers, one pressing machine and an ironing service. The area is reasonably large with sink along one of the walls, the washing/drying machines along another wall while the presses and ironing facilities is situated at another wall. There is a small office for the officer's use where he keeps the records of the transactions . There are large laundry baskets located at various points with either laundry to be washed or laundry awaiting pressing.

The area was very busy with everyone engaged in their individual tasks and it appears to be a well run operation with good rapport between the prisoners themselves and the prisoners and officer in charge.

6.19 Control Room

The control room is a secure area with two locked doors to gain entry and an identification process before the doors are unlocked. The area was being operated by an A.C.O and an officer on the morning of our inspection with a 2nd A.C.O coming on duty while we were there.

The staff here monitor the C.C.T.V on all of the external walls as well as the 3 visiting areas plus the public visiting area in the Grove section. They also monitor the cameras situated in the holding cells area of the courthouse outside the main gate as well as the holding cells at the main gate. It is the control centre for the walkie- talkie radios and the back to back radio

communication centre. They also observe the 20 electronically controlled gates throughout the prison which have camera assisted monitoring security devices. These gates also have the hand palm reading system installed within them. It also operates the public telephone answering centre for the prison as well as the prison computer system for prisoner information arising from telephone queries. There are several display computer screens which outline fire alarms plus the break glass alarms. Separate to these are the fire alarm, the security alarm and the general alarm which all can be operated manually from this centre in an emergency.

The following display panels or other communication systems operate from here

- (1) Radio system separate to general radio system
- (2) Cell call lights
- (3) Commercial radio which has 4 channels for prisoners' cells which also works as an intercom
- 4) Camera control screens and monitors from both sides of gates
- (5) Electronic gate locks and all electronic doors with cameras
- (6) Operator mechanism for opening gates electronically
- (7) Night duty recording clocks/machine/computer
- (8) Palm readers recording computer
- (9) Ventilation controls in prison roof
- (10) Fire pumps recording systems
- (11) Prisoners phone card computer system (not operational yet)
- (12) Fire (walls) alarm display unit which is computer linked

There is another room at the rear of the main control room which store the servers for the prison plus all the staff's clocking in recording system. It also contains the control points for the television in the prisoners' cells. There are radio cabinets for the walkie talkies radios plus all of the phone wiring and computer wiring as well as the E.S. B power boards.

There is a small tea room facility with toilet w.h.b off it for the staff's use. It is the control area for the prison and a high security operation point. It was neat and tidy at the time of our inspection and the staff, while busy, were pleasant and helpful.

6.20 Visitors Waiting Room

This is a new building situated outside of the main gate and it is very bright and cheerfully painted. It consists of a large room with seating and tea/coffee making facility machine in one corner of it. There are two rooms just off the main waiting area, one in which the officer in charge operates from by taking the names of the visitors and passing them on by phone to the ACO in charge of visits within the prison. The officer also takes in money on behalf of the prisoners and issues receipts for same as well as taking in clothing for them. The 2nd room off the main area is fitted out with lockers and any visitors who have parcels, handbags, mobile phones, etc are issued with a special coin which fits into the slot in the door of the locker which releases the key. They place their belongings in the locker, lock same and takes the key of the locker with them into the prison for the duration of the visit. When they return from the visit they unlock the locker with the key and

take back their belongings. The key then cannot be removed from the lock without the use of the special coin.

There is a corridor off the two rooms in which the toilets are located. There is another small room just off the main waiting room area which was provided for staff dealing with incoming post. [The prison had an anthrax scare some time ago which proved negative and this room was fitted out for receiving and sorting out parcels arising from that scare]. It appears that this room has not being used for quite some time.

A prisoner looks after the hygiene and tidiness of the area and is obviously doing a good job. It is a pleasant waiting area and the large windows within it gives great brightness to the entire building. The green grass surrounding the outside of the building is kept cut neatly and the entire building is very tidy and well kept.

6.21 The Courthouse

There is a new courthouse built outside the main gate which is under the jurisdiction of the Courts Service but the maintenance of it is carried out by the trades staff attached to the prison. There are holding cells within it as well as professional consultation rooms. There is a fine courtroom with a Judge's chamber and other offices for court and probation staffs' use. It is a modern building set apart from the boundary wall and the visitors waiting room area. It is protected by railings around it with parking facilities for court officials. It is very well maintained.

6.22 **The Grove**

The area known as The Grove consists of 7 separate 2 storey houses which accommodate the prisoners held there. There are other buildings such as workshops, education unit, visiting facilities, etc adjacent to the houses. The Grove is surrounded by the main boundary concrete wall on two sides while the other side is separated from the rest of the prison and grounds by a high steel grid fence so it is entirely separate from the main prison buildings. It is like a village setting within the prison grounds. The prisoners held there are trustees similar to prisoners in an open prison, the only difference being the large boundary wall surrounding their area. The entire Grove area has a considerable amount of grassed lawns around the buildings as well as vegetable and horticulture gardens within it. There are various fowl and animals contained there such as domestic hens, chickens, ducks, peahens and peacock, pheasants/pheasant hatchery, geese, rabbits plus goats. There are a number of plastic tunnels for the growing of vegetables and flowers. There are various groups of prisoners held there such as P.I.R.A, Ordinary and I.N.L.A and they all operate and live separately from each others group. Some of the houses have been there from the time the site was a psychiatric hospital while others have been built since the Prison Department took it over. One of the houses is empty at present for a complete maintenance overhaul.

The first stand alone building nearest to the main gate is a visiting room for the ordinary prisoners which also accommodates the doctor's surgery, interview room and professional visiting rooms for solicitors, outside

probation and welfare people, spiritual visitors, parole board personnel, etc. The visiting area consists of communal open visits where there are 9 small round tables and chairs with an open air area immediately outside for children to play. The open air area is fenced with timber and has a tarmacadam type surface. There are picnic tables and chairs placed around the enclosure which were made by the prisoners in the workshop in the Grove.

The whole building including the toilets were well maintained, clean and tidy. The visits are not strictly supervised as visitors and prisoners are given their privacy but there is an officer in the vicinity who walks through the visiting area every so often and there is also a C.C.T.V. camera in operation.

6.23 Kitchen

The next stand alone building we inspected was the kitchen where the main meal of the day was being served. The area is made up of the kitchen/preparation/cooking section with servery area just off it which leads on to the dining area with tables and chairs that can seat 40 at each sitting. The three different groups of prisoners within the Grove area eat at different times. There is a set time for each group and for each of the meals. The kitchen is fitted out with stainless steel equipment and the entire walls are tiled. It is designed in such a way that there is a vegetable preparation area with sinks, there is the cooking area with all modern cookers, ovens, etc and then the serving area where all the food is stored in hot plates and the prisoners operate a self service system where they pass along with a tray and take whatever choice and amount they want.

The dining room is quite large and bright and both the kitchen and dining area were hygienically clean.

6.24 Workshops and Gym

There is a stand alone building containing a gym and workshops. The gym was quite small which had free weights, 4 pressure machines, an exercise bicycle, a tread mill, a stepper and a punch bag. The items of equipment and its time of use is again divided among the 3 different groups, with no group sharing with each other at the same time. There are two carpentry shops which are laid out with the normal carpentry equipment such as benches, saws, chisels, etc. One of the shops is used by the I.N.L.A group while the other shop is used by the P.I.R.A who were in the process of restoring a boat within it at the time of inspection.

6.25 Workshop and Education Area

There are other workshops for the ordinary group of prisoners which entails woodwork with a teacher instructing, a rubber shop similar to the rubber shop in the main prison, a stonework shop where they cut out designs, nameplates, crosses, etc from stone material and a carpentry shop where they make garden furniture, picnic benches, swings etc.

6.26 Visiting Areas (2)

There is another building which contains the visiting facilities for the P.I.R.A prisoners. The room has 6 round tables and chairs and a pool table in the centre of the floor.

The I.N.L.A prisoners have another reception/visiting area which has a pool table, television, soft chairs, tables, plus toys for the children to play with and occupy them during the visit. These visits are not supervised closely by the staff but there is an officer in the vicinity who may walk through the rooms when the visits are in progress. They are also on C.C.T.V camera.

There is a building which contains the staffs' tea room and the A.C.O's office. There are class rooms which all of the groups use at their scheduled times. There is a small tarmacadam type surfaced area on which the prisoners can play football, tennis or volleyball. There are a few steel containers in which timber, stones, slates, rubber material, etc is stored for the workshops or education classes as well as gardening equipment.

6.27 Seven separate double storey houses

Six of the seven houses are in use while the 7th is empty for refurbishment purposes. Each of the houses have a kitchen cum dining room, a sitting room plus bedrooms and bathrooms. The largest number of prisoners in one house is 12 where all of the bedrooms have 2 single beds while in another of the houses there are only 2 prisoners [which is the number of prisoners of that particular group]. One of the houses also contains the staffs class officer's office where there is a computer, desk and filing cabinet for their records. The bedrooms in the houses are fitted with televisions. Each house is independent of each other and those occupying them operate like any household in the community where they have free access throughout the house as well as to the kitchen where they can make

tea/coffee, etc, as they wish. There is a communal television in each of the sitting rooms. Some of the houses are kept very clean and tidy while other are not as tidy but are reasonably acceptable.

6.28 Office and Stores

The offices are located in the main administration building on the ground floor level. They consist of two offices one of which deals with staff matters such as files, records, overtime payment records, pay, applications, sick records, etc plus the prison's cash accounts. The other office deals with prisoners' matters such as files, warrants, cash, gratuity, applications, appointments, court and hospital appointments, transfers, etc. Both of the offices are quite small and in fact the filing cabinets for the offices' use are stored in a hallway outside the doors of the office. This is unsatisfactory as every time the staff need a file they have to get up from their desk and go outside to the cabinet in the hallway to collect same. The staff state that the computer system has only come on stream fairly recently and is not fully utilised yet. They claim the main problem with the office is the shortage of clerks, as officers are operating on a stand in basis and with roster duties in operation for officers they are not available on a permanent basis. The office space is another of their problems and plans for the expansion of the office and stores section were at an advanced stage, but due to budgetary constraints, this work is not now progressing until such time as money becomes available again.

The stores staff are located in two offices, one of which two staff work while the Clerk I works in the other one. Both offices are quite small and like the

other offices already described, the staff would benefit from larger office facilities. The stores and stores offices are located away from the main administration building. The overall stores comprise of a number of small stores within the area such as the protective clothing store, overalls uniforms and general clothing requirements store. There is a larger store with free standing shelving in the centre of the floor where a considerable number of articles and items are stored, some of which are stacked in boxes. There appears to be a great need for more free standing shelving and greater storage space required. It must be very difficult to establish the exact contents of these boxes and the amount in each in order to keep accurate records, as presently, these boxes are stacked or piled up on each other. The staff state that plans were advanced for further office/store facilities but like the other offices, were cancelled due to budgetary cutbacks. The stores operate like the other prison stores in the provision of the needs of the prison such as clothing, delph, cutlery, footwear, recreational needs such as footballs, etc. They also operated the tendering for articles required especially the food needs of the prison. They organise for the delivery of uniforms and staff footwear as well as the issue of same to staff. They do not operate a manufacturing account for the operation of the prison workshops and apparently this work comes under the heading of work/training and is managed by the Industrial Manager.

Both the offices and stores appear like any working office with files, papers, computers, filing cabinets, phones, etc being operated but the lack of space was very evident. It was clean and tidy as far as a working office can be.

7. Health and Safety (particularly fire aspects)

7.1 The Inspectorate team had meetings with the two senior staff members responsible for Health and Safety matters within the prison but the staff's Health and Safety representative was not available for a meeting.

They produced books which contained records of the various inspections, examinations and evacuations which were carried out as well as records regarding outside contractors coming into the prison and checking the various fire prevention equipment. The outside contractors have been contracted to carry out the services of the various safety equipment particulars of which are as follows:-

*Chubb Irish Superior who service the smoke detectors, the water sprinklers, the break glass units and the staff alarm break glass units four times per year.

*Irish Industry pumps carry out one service per year to the fire pumps and the jockey pumps.

*Apex fire services have the contract to service and replace used cartridges in the fire extinguishers of which there are 199 in total.

7.2 There is a water mains ring surrounding the prison and a branch off this main supplies the necessary domestic water requirements for the prison. There is also a very large water storage facility which holds a million gallons which is plumbed and fitted with the necessary fire pumps and jockey pumps for emergency use. These pumps operate electrically but in the event of a

power failure there is a stand by diesel engine installed which operates off batteries.

7.3 There are fire hydrants attached to the mains and they are located at various locations around the prison and all of their steel covers are clearly marked with yellow paint. There are fully charged water hose reels located in steel cabinets on each of the landing's stairwells which can reach to the furthest points within the wings. Further hose reels are located at strategic locations such as the various houses around the Grove as well as in the stores, office, administration, education, chief's corridor etc. These are mains pressure supplied. The hydrants operate on a seven bar water pressure which is compatible with the fire brigade's requirements. The equipment and attachments required for the use of the hydrants are stored adjacent to the hydrants.

7.4 The fire brigade personnel from two different stations Castlerea and Roscommon have been on familiarisation tours of the prison. The last recorded visit appears to have been in 2002 although the staff think that they have visited since then. There were no records to confirm same. There is an outline (map) of the prison held at the main gate and in the event of the fire brigade being required they are given the plan outlining the wings, yards, etc with all of the hydrant points clearly marked. They are to return the map on leaving the prison. They have also brought the brigade into the prison on occasions to ensure access to the various areas are not impeded. The fire

brigade personnel in both Castlerea and Roscommon are part-time while the Roscommon fire officer is full time.

199 Fire extinguishers are located at strategic locations throughout the prison as well as in offices, stores etc. The trades staff carry out regular checks on extinguishers and replace those requiring replacement as well as checking the break glass unit, etc. They also check the water sprinklers in the special care unit as well as the electronic system to ensure it is working properly. These checks are recorded and are in addition to the outside contractors' contract for servicing same.

The control room, which is staffed 24 hours per day, contains the fire control panel and if an alarm is activated, it is displayed there. All of the systems throughout the prison are connected into this display panel. This panel displays the exact location of the activated alarm and not just the wing or building in which it is situated. The cells' smoke and heat detectors are also wired to the class officer's office control panel which displays a light if activated.

The cells are fitted with a service duct and air vents. There is a smoke and heat detector placed at the back of each vent and in the event of an significant increase in cell temperature or of smoke (beyond that from a cigarette) then the detector activates the alarm in the panels and the smoke is drawn out the duct which leads out to the roof into the atmosphere. The cells are also fitted with call buttons and when pressed it also activates the

display panel in the class officer's office as well as in the control room display panel. The special care unit's padded and strip cells are fitted with water sprinklers. These are the only cells fitted with such a facility. There is also a very powerful fan fitted in the gable wall of the special care unit to extract the smoke and it is most effective but rather noisy when turned on. The main prison building roof is fitted with the colt ventilation extraction systems which have smoke detectors within them that automatically open when smoke is detected within the area. These openings can also be operated manually or from the control room if so required in warm weather. They automatically close if it rains or if there are showers.

There are emergency cut off points installed in the kitchen, workshops and trades officers workshop areas. There is also a wet chemical suppression system in the kitchen and if activated, it sprays white chemical foam over the cookers/deep fryers area of the kitchen.

- 7.5 The records show that fire drill evacuation exercises took place on the 6th May 2003, 7th May 2003 and the 9th May 2003. There were 50 prisoners and 8 staff, 45 prisoners and 8 staff and 50 prisoners and 8 staff respectively involved in each of these exercises. It was based on a night time scenario, therefore 8 staff were the numbers on each occasion. There was a fire drill carried out in the education unit on 3rd November 2003 and 100 prisoners were involved in this evacuation. In May 2000 operation "bumblebee" took place in the prison as part of the county emergency plan. This was a simulated emergency exercise situation with multi-agency

response involving prison staff, gardai, fire brigade and ambulance personnel taking part. The inspectorate were not given any further information on this exercise such as numbers involved, time, its location, or final result or summary of the operation as to its success or otherwise.

The records did not show the exact location of the exercise (except the education unit) and did not show the time it took in each exercise to have the area evacuated or the names of the staff or prisoners involved.

There are signages within the buildings of emergency exits and the prison is fitted with emergency lighting. There are two exits from each of the landings as well as emergency exits from the offices, stores and houses in the Grove area. There are no assembly points displayed in designated assembly areas. There are no fire precautions/evacuation instructions given to prisoners other than a reference in their committal information booklet that they must obey the safety and health rules and instructions as given by prison officers which is the Department of Justice's safety policy.

- 7.6 There has been no C & R refresher training carried out and approx one third of staff received refresher training in donning and doffing of equipment for use in the removal of people in a fire/smoke filled area but no full refresher training in the use of breathing apparatus in such circumstances have taken place in the past twelve months. There are four trained instructors in the use of B.A equipment and procedures but three of the four are out of their term of time regarding recertification which means that there is only one

qualified instructor. The Inspectorate were informed that arrangements are being made to have the other 3 recertified as soon as possible. Some familiarisation refresher training in the use of fire hoses, and stan pipe connections have taken place in the last twelve months. The last record of same being 6th May 2004. There are two days per week designated to staff training but generally don't happen. The Inspectorate were informed that shortage of staff and curtailment of overtime prevented these exercises and training from taking place. This is a serious situation which should be rectified as soon as possible.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 The damaged worn floor covering in cells in basement/committal remand section should be replaced [6.2 Page 64]

- 8.2 Shower area and bathroom on A1 landing should be made more tidy and the area repainted [6.3 Page 66]

- 8.3 To provide seating in the recreation rooms. To have cover on pool table repaired and the rooms painted brighter colours. [6.7 Page 69]

- 8.4 That "hoods" be provided over the telephones on A3 lobby area for prisoners use. [6.8 Page 70]

- 8.5 That the library be opened for prisoners' use more regularly and that all possible assistance be provided by Roscommon County library for help in

upgrading same. That the library provide daily newspapers for prisoners' use without charge. [6.9 Page 70]

8.6 That the staffing requirements for both the carpentry shop and the computer shop be expedited by local management and headquarters as soon as possible to enable both of these units become operational for prisoners' use. If such is unsuccessful, then consideration should be given to employing "outside" personnel for same.
[4.4 Page 12, 6.11 Page 75]

8.7 The proper staffing levels of Clerk II's for the prison should be implemented and bigger office and stores spaces be provided for the staff working there.
[4.6 Page 13, 6.28 Page 91, 92]

8.8 There should be a better structured counselling service provided for prisoners. [5.1 page 32 5.4 Page 40, 5.5 Page 42, 5.7 Page 46]

8.9 The Prison Service Headquarters should provide for a proper nursing management structure for the service and support nursing staff refresher training/updating. [5.5 Page 43]

8.10 That the dentist's surgery be provided with "sterile hand pieces" of equipment which is urgently required as well as other essential basic equipment such as x-ray machine. [5.6 Page 44 and 45]

- 8.11 That discussions take place with local management concerning flexible working hours for the dentist to eliminate the waiting list and also discussions with local prison doctor/dentist regarding prisoners' medical history. [5.6 Page 45]
- 8.12 The Prison Service Headquarters should appoint a psychologist to the prison. [4.3 Page 12, 5.4 Page 40, 5.7 Page 46]
- 8.13 That discussions take place between the psychiatrist and doctor (G.P) regarding letters of discharge to outside psychiatrist when prisoners who are on a treatment and medication programme are being released. [5.7 Page 47]
- 8.14 That another Probation and Welfare Officer be appointed to the prison. [5.8 Page 48]
- 8.15 The prices charged for goods in the tuck shop should be at least the same as supermarket prices and a price list should be displayed for prisoners' information. [5.12 Page 61]
- 8.16 The toilets and urinals in the exercise yards should be brought up to an acceptable level of hygiene. [5.12 Page 62]
- 8.17 There should be assembly points displayed in the event of an evacuation or fire drill exercises. [7.5 Page 97]

- 8.18 That staff training instructors in B.A should be recertified. [7.6 Page 98]
- 8.19 That staff refresher training should take place in C & R, B.A, hostage negotiation, and suicide awareness plus staff training in general. [7.6 Page 98]

9. Conclusions

- 9.1 The entrance to the prison is very well laid out with a long driveway off the main Dublin Castlerea Road just at the entrance to the town of Castlerea. The railway station is situated across the road from the entrance driveway to the prison which is most convenient for visitors travelling by train to visit the prison.

The prison is unusual in that there is really two prisons within the one boundary wall, the main prison building cell block, and the ancillary building services and then a separated section known as the “Grove” which operates like an open prison and all the prisoners detained there have the freedom of “trustee” prisoners. The buildings and grounds are quite well maintained with plenty of open space and flower beds along the driveways. There is a fine building within the grounds which is not in use and it is beginning to look a bit dilapidated. It was formerly a hospital bed wing. The goats, rabbits, fowl, etc wandering around the grounds adds to a relaxed atmosphere about the place.

The prison is operating above its cell capacity and this leads to overcrowding especially in the remand section. Prisoners are sleeping on floors at times when such overcrowding occurs. More single cells were being doubled up, with bunk beds being fitted into them on the days of our inspection. It is a pity that such overcrowding is taking place in view of the fact that some other prisons are closed and cell accommodation lying idle.

The doctor was on strike when we visited and this dispute appears to be dragging on a long time as it is now ten weeks since it began. The prisoners who are in need of G.P medical attention are transferred into the accident and emergency section of the local hospital in Roscommon. This entails extra costs in providing escorting staff. The hospital is dealing with emergency and accident situations but naturally are not providing a general medical service to the prisoners and therefore the prison doctor's dispute is effecting the service being provided to prisoners. The sooner this dispute with the Prison Service Headquarters is solved the better.

The psychiatrist, dentist, optician and nursing staff are providing a service to the prisoners.

The nurses are doing great work in keeping the medical needs of the prisoners looked after. The psychiatrist when meeting a member of the Inspectorate team stated "that he had a good relationship with the C.M.H and that prisoners can be taken there within one or two days if necessary". However, following our inspection we were informed that a prisoner had spent 26 days in the padded cell prior to his transfer to the C.M.H. While he

received visits, had radio and outdoor exercise while placed there, it is far too long to be detained in the padded cell before being admitted. The question of bed availability in the C.M.H is again highlighted with this case and indeed many others. Surely the Prison Service Headquarters and the Department of Health and Children can reach an agreement regarding beds for prisoners in need of psychiatric hospitalisation for any local psychiatric hospital if C.M.H cannot facilitate. This bed availability saga is going on now for years and it is time that it was solved once and for all.

There was one prisoner's death in custody in the previous year as result of suicide and there were three attempted suicides in the previous six months. The Samaritans visit the prison and they have selected and trained prisoners in their "listening scheme" programme. We believe this is the first prisoners listening scheme introduced into the Prison Service in this jurisdiction and I wish to congratulate all concerned in its introduction. Hopefully it will help towards saving lives and self harm to prisoners. It would be interesting to carry out a survey in about three years time to establish if its introduction decreased the number of incidents of self harm.

There is not sufficient work to occupy all of the prisoners time out of cell which results in some of them spending their day in an exercise yard or indoor recreation rooms. There are two areas of work, the computer shop and carpentry shop, idle as result of insufficient qualified staff to operate them. This matter should be rectified. The Connect project is not operative in this prison as indeed sentence management programmes are limited.

There are no sex offenders programmes and those offenders willing to take part in the programme must transfer to Arbour Hill Prison to participate. A lot of the sex offender prisoners are from the West or North West region and therefore do not want to transfer away from their locality where their families can visit them more easily.

The welfare and rehabilitation prospects of prisoners require the provisions of suitable numbers of professionals. There is no psychologist assigned to Castlerea Prison and that there is only one probation and welfare officer.

There is also a need for more counsellors. This is inadequate given the size of the prison population.

The new budgetary constraints placed on all prison managers by the Minister this year is having its effect on this prison also with posts being stripped when staff fail to report for duty. The most obvious one here is the library which appears to be closed more often than open and prisoners are complaining regarding its facility. There were no escapes from the prison during the year, however, there was one escape while under escort outside the prison.

The Governor conducted two staff oral disciplinary hearings during the year. There is an average of 5 staff per day on sick leave and there is an average of 1-2 staff per day who fail to report for duty on overtime basis. Staff of all grades work an average of 1390 hours overtime per week and approx 5% don't work any overtime. Seven staff are seeking a transfer out of the prison at present.

Two days per week Mondays and Tuesdays are designated as staff training days and prisoners' visits are cancelled on these days to facilitate the staff training. However, we were informed that on a lot of these days the training does not take place due to staff shortages and those detailed for training have to be diverted to operational posts. It was also suggested that there is a reluctance by staff to participate in training and when shown in advance on the detail for training some fail to report. There was also a hint to the effect that a lot of staff feel that training should be done on overtime basis only and not as part of their normal working day. So there is absolutely no C & R refresher training and limited B.A training taking place. The overall lack of staff training is a serious situation which should be rectified.

The prison's educational requirements appear to be very well catered for with a total of 24 teachers involved, some are full time while others are part time. There is an average of 35 prisoners per day attending classes with a further 8-10 attending P.E. Six prisoners sat their leaving certificate, five sat their junior certificate while five sat the open university exams in 2003. A further 54 prisoners took exams in city and guilds, fetac/fas, etc, in 2003.

This is very good output of a prison population of approx 210. The majority of those who sat the leaving and junior certs did not take the full amount of subjects, nonetheless, it was a good achievement. It is estimated that approx 10 prisoners attending the education area cannot read or write. Three teachers are involved in remedial teaching with approx 3 hours per day involvement in literacy work. The education area is also involved in

other aspects of education and run various courses or programmes outside of the “normal” classroom teaching. These involve such things as career information, civil and political education, writers and artists schemes, drug awareness, sexual health, basket weaving, flower arrangements, psychology, personal/interpersonal skills, pre-release, etc. So there are a broad range of educational needs catered for and the teachers appear enthusiastic about their work and are interested in their pupils.

The prison is well run and there appears to be good rapport between the staff and the prisoners. The hygiene within the prison block and some of the houses in the Grove could be improved but the overall level of hygiene is acceptable. The grounds are very well maintained with the grass neatly cut and the flowerbeds well looked after. There is an undercurrent of industrial relations problems within the prison. These different industrial relations problems are not healthy in such a confined area. They do not appear to be effecting the smooth running of the prison or impinging on the prisoners regime or atmosphere within the prison at present. However it is a worrying aspect of our inspection.

As I have already indicated Castlereia is in fact a reasonably successful prison. Experienced prisoners said it was the best. Certainly my team and I were very impressed by the Governor and his staff including the P.O.A. However, it is obvious that there are tensions and problems but with a little good will on both sides these could and should be resolved. It is to be hoped that personality problems would disappear for the sake of the individuals and

indeed the prison. All of these could be resolved. It should secure an excellent result in what is presently a successful but not entirely tension free prison.

I wish to thank the Governor and his staff for the co-operation, help and hospitality extended to my inspectorate team throughout our time in the prison. The provision of a room and facilities helped our inspection to run smoothly. I also wish to thank the other agencies, professions and individuals attached to the prison in making themselves available for discussions and meeting us as part of our inspection. So thanks again to one and all in the prison and also to former Governor Woods my Special Advisor, Dr. Jim Ledwith, Psychiatrist and Professor Paul McCutcheon, Head of Law School, University of Limerick.