

IRISH PRISONS INSPECTORATE

LIMERICK PRISON

**LIMERICK PRISON INSPECTION:
19TH - 23RD JUNE 2006**

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) the health, safety and well-being of prisoners
- (d) the condition 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 enquiries 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. 01 6610447
Fax: 01 6610559
E. Mail: info@inspectorofprisons.gov.ie

INDEX

Contents	Pages
1. Introduction	5
2. Background	6 - 7
3. Governor's Briefing	8 - 12
4. Business Plans	12 - 28
5. Statistical Information	29 - 32
6. Tour of Inspection	32 - 62
7. Health & Safety (especially fire aspect)	62 - 68
8. Meeting with Various Groups and Individuals	68 - 98
9. Recommendations	99 - 100
10. Conclusions	101 - 111

REPORT ON VISIT TO LIMERICK PRISON
COMMENCING THE 19th JUNE TO 23RD JUNE 2006

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 From the 19th June 2006 to the 23rd June 2006 an inspection of Limerick 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 Adviser to the Inspector
Dr. Jim Ledwith	Consultant
Paul 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
-------	--

Background

Limerick Prison is located at Mulgrave Street in Limerick City. The original prison was built between 1815 and 1821 but of recent years extensive renovation has been carried out by knocking down wings and replacing them with modern buildings and in-cell sanitary facilities. Two of the wings "A" and "B" have not been replaced but they have had some renovation carried out to them over the years. Slopping out still occurs in them. Both these wings are supposed to be knocked and replaced in the near future. The old female prisoner section of the prison has been closed (except when extreme overcrowding occurs) and the female prisoners are now held in a newly renovated unit with in-cell sanitary requirement. All the cells are fitted with electric power points thus facilitating the prisoners with T.V., C.D players, electric kettle, etc within their cells.

The prison holds sentenced, trial and remand male and female prisoners from age 17 years and upwards. It also at times holds prisoners for deportation or extradition. It is a committal prison in that they take prisoners directly from the courts. They also take prisoners transferred from other prisons.

A new wing is in the process of being built at present which will accommodate the educational classes , sports/assembly hall, and consultation rooms for the medical and other services, which will be of great benefit to the prison. This wing is due to be opened in January/February 2007.

The total bed capacity for the male prisoners is 275 comprising 87 single cells and 94 double cells (single cell with bunk bed placed in it). The total bed capacity for female prisoners is 20, again all single cells with a double bed (10 single cells). The total number of prisoners in custody on the date of completing the pre-inspection questionnaire form was 281 males and 18 females.

Subversive prisoners were held in part of the prison prior to the Good Friday Agreement and during that time the prison staff were supported by the Gardai and the army, who no longer perform duties there.

This is the 2nd full inspection of Limerick Prison, the first one was conducted in 2002. A considerable amount of building work has been carried out since the last inspection and great improvements, especially around the main gate entrance and inside the front of the prison, have taken place. This is apart from the new wing replacement already mentioned. Gone are the terrible Portakbins which were situated between the railings at the front of the prison and the main gate plus all of the extra security barriers at the front gate. This area has been cleared, freshly resurfaced and new entrance and lights installed shining up on the boundary wall. Inside the front gate, there are new walkways with flower beds between them and a new large piece of sculpture with water flowing from the top of it, which was constructed in the educational areas. All of these improvements have really enhanced the front entrance to the prison.

Governor's Briefing

The Governor welcomed the Inspectorate team and guaranteed full co-operation in the carrying out of the inspection. He said that there were 266 male and 20 female prisoners in custody on that morning.

Regarding the new annualised working hours for staff which were introduced on 21/1/06 he has 214 staff of which 209 are insitu, he has some supernumerary non-operational staff such as trades officers, but the prison is operating 5-6 staff down each day plus whatever number goes sick "on the day". He outlined that he is down 10 assistant industrial supervisors and one industrial supervisor. He also has 6 officers on long term sick leave, 2 of whom are on transfer from Fort Mitchel when that institution closed. The sick leave has gone up by 2000 hours but when the annualised hours were first introduced the level of sick leave dropped. The drop was not sustained. He is seeking an additional 6 female and 4 male officers to operate the annualised hours efficiently.

The Connect Project is not working and the Governor is hoping to have it operational in the next 3 - 5 months.

He has 5 nurses and 5 medical orderlies on the staff. The Governor believes that the medical services to prisoners have improved since our last inspection. The psychiatrist gives 2 sessions per week while the doctor gives a daily service, and the dentist attends once per week. The ALJEFF counsellors attend 5 days per week and the two psychologists attend a half

day per week. He said that he has problems at times in getting prisoners transferred to the central mental hospital in Dundrum in Dublin. The possibility of getting prisoners transferred to the local next-door psychiatric hospital was also discussed but it appears to no avail.

The Governor outlined that he had a very strict policy in relation to illegal substances getting into the prison or being found in prisoners' possession. Any prisoner found to have or attempting to obtain such substances was punished on disciplinary reports by the loss of all privileges for 2 months and placed on screen visits for 6 months. This was the standard punishment for such misconduct and he did not depart from it. He said that they have a lot of problems with illegal drugs getting into the prison. They have netting over the exercise yards and close circuit T.V's in the visiting rooms. They have purchased a detector recently and a drug dog is being introduced into the service. The dog is in one of the prisons in the Portlaoise District at present and will be rotated with the other prisons on a 6 months' trial basis.

Regarding new workshops within the prison, the Governor hopes to have industrial staff appointed shortly to operate same. He intends to upgrade the laundry, establish a computer training shop, a building skills training workshop, a health and safety instruction shop, a carpentry shop, an industrial cleaning shop which will also facilitate the training of female prisoners as well as a new craft shop for the female prisoners. It is intended that these work-training workshops will be operated to certification standards

and if prisoners reach the required levels they will receive a recognised certificate.

A new wing is in the process of being built at present which will accommodate the medical, education and library staff, as well as a large multi-purpose sports hall, consultation rooms, classrooms and administration offices. It is an impressive-looking building and due to open in January 2007. The Governor also showed the Inspectorate team a drawing and long-term plans for Limerick Prison for the next 7 years. Discussions between the Governor and Headquarters on these plans are ongoing and are only at a very preliminary stage.

The Probation and Welfare staff have been reduced since our last inspection with 1 senior and 1^{1/2} probation officers now attached to the prison. The Governor stated that a considerable amount of their time is taken up with providing reports for the Parole Board, especially if the prisoner is on his first review of sentences which entails a lot of background work to be done by the probation officers.

The Governor said that the national 28-day-cycle menu is in operation and that a no smoking policy is also being applied within the prison. He felt that the no smoking policy is working well, prisoners being allowed to smoke in their cells and exercise yards only.

The Governor regretted to report that a prisoner died in custody in May 2006. The cause of death is unknown as yet as he is awaiting the results of the coroner's inquest.

Staff training is limited due to the staffing level problems already outlined but all staff up to and including the grade of chief officer are receiving P.M.D.S training. Some other training is taking place but a lot more needs to be done in C & R, B.A plus other areas.

A contract has been agreed with Dublin City University to carry out research into illegal substance abuse and the extent of such abuse. The team are to produce a "best model of practice of treatment" based on the experience of other drug treatment programmes/projects in Ireland and other countries.

The research is being conducted under the Bedford Row Family Project and is due to be completed in March 2007.

The Governor stated that the padded cells have been replaced since the last inspection with 3 new isolation cells, 2 in the male prison and one in the female prisoner section. The new cells have been fitted with new cell windows which allow in more light, in-cell sanitary facilities, call button and a T.V. The walls are covered but not with padding material.

He said that there is a dedicated group of teachers attached to the prison and that the prisoners' educational needs were well catered for, although they are all looking forward to moving into the new facility where the classrooms will all be together, not as at present scattered everywhere. The Governor also

praised the services of the chaplains who perform duties away beyond their terms in order to facilitate the needs and requirements of the prisoners.

This concluded the Governor's briefing and the Inspectorate team then began going through the prison's business plans for 2006 with the Deputy Governor.

Business Plans

1. Implement the agreed Proposal for Organisational Change

Target 1.1 Operate all prisons on the basis of new staff attendance arrangements with effect from mid-February 2006 and achieve authorised staffing numbers by grade at each prison.

1.1.1 Establish Implementation Team.

Result: Done.

1.1.2 Roll out of new working arrangements on 21st January 06.

Result: Carried out.

1.1.3 Fill all agreed posts as per SORT numbers.

Result: Not done - still awaiting new appointments (4 A.C.O's + 9 A.I.S. 1 Industrial Supervisor, 1 Training Liaison Officer).

1.1.4 Monitor & Review.

Result: Ongoing.

Target 1.3 Introduce new planned preventive maintenance arrangements of all plant and equipment by end 2006 (Cork and Limerick)

1.3.1 Audit of plant by consultant

Result: Done

1.3.2 Review consultant's report.

Result: Yes. Done.

1.3.3 Implementation of system.

Result: Yes, by outside contractors (contracts)

1.3.4 Monitor & Review.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

Target 1.6 Enhance Regimes Services available to prisoners in all institutions.

1.6.1 Review the present position.

Result: Done.

1.6.2 Establish Workshop Review Group.

Result: Yes, established.

1.6.3 Establish evaluation criteria.

Result: Yes, done.

1.6.4 Conduct needs analysis.

Result: Yes, done.

1.6.5 Review the current work and training programmes and make appropriate recommendations.

Result: Yes - work training not done due to the non-appointment of staff.

1.6.6 Seek approval for Governor to implement recommendations.

Result: Approved but awaiting staff.

1.6.7 Implement approved recommendations.

Result: Yes, when staff in position.

1.6.8 Review changes.

Result: Yes, if necessary.

2. Replace approximately 40% of the current estate

Target 2.1 Open new education, medical and other accommodation at Limerick Prison in 2007.

2.1.1 Maintain established implementation team

Result: Yes, maintained.

2.1.2 Agree final outfitting, locking, IT etc.

Result: In the process (fittings + I.T. done).

2.1.3 Prepare plan for commissioning of facility.

Result: Not yet. (Building not completed yet).

2.1.4 Manage “snagging” of delivered facility.

Result: Yes, towards final stages of building.

2.1.5 Commission and open new facility.

Result: Yes, when ready.

3. Implement of the Prisons Drugs Policy

Target 3.2 Strengthen physical barriers countering the trafficking of drugs to prisoners.

3.2.1 Maintain to its present standard the netting over the main recreation yard.

Result: Yes, done.

3.2.2 Ensure C.C.T.V cameras in the visiting area provide high quality recordings.

Result: Yes, digital recording very good.

3.2.3 Reduce the trafficking of drugs into the Prison.

Result: Yes, as far as possible.

3.2.4 Continue to launder all prisoners' personal clothing within the prison.

Result: Yes, ongoing - no clothing going outside for laundering purposes.

3.2.5 Ensure that staff are particularly vigilant on all visits, courts, escorts and reception.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

3.2.6 Report all prisoners endeavouring to procure for use prohibited substances.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

3.2.7 Deal with all reported incidents in accordance with the 1947 Prison Rules and Regulations for the Government of Prisons (Statutory Rules and Orders 1947 No. 320).

Result: Yes, ongoing.

3.2.8 Extend C.C.T.V to A,B & D Wings.

Result: Going out for tender within the next month (July 2006).

3.3 Extend the “Mountjoy” Visitor Identification System to all closed prisons in 2006.

3.3.1 Conduct research of Mountjoy System.

Result: Yes, done.

3.3.2 Review and adapt for Limerick.

Result: Yes, done. Up and running.

3.3.3 Consult and communicate system to visitors and prisoners

Result: Yes, done.

3.3.4 Implement appropriate system.

Result: Up and running - implemented.

3.3.5 Monitor & review

Result: Ongoing.

Target 3.6 Enhance drug treatment provision for prisoners.

3.6.1 Review present position with Health Care Team & addiction counsellors.

Result: Yes, done.

3.6.2 Develop improvement plan for Governor’s approval.

Result: In process of doing same at present (ALJEFF project).

3.6.3 Conduct research into current usage of illegal drugs in the prison population.

Result: Yes, being done by researchers from D.C.U.

3.6.4 Implement agreed changes.

Result: Depending on the research.

3.6.5 Monitor & review.

Result: Yes, when applicable.

Target 3.7 Target drug treatment/interventions for prisoners testing positive in mandatory drug testing.

3.7.1 Review present practices and procedures.

Result: Yes, constantly under review.

3.7.2 Identify areas for improvement.

Result: Yes, ongoing. Urine tests carried out.

3.7.3 Submit changes for approval.

Result: Yes, where applicable.

3.7.4 Monitor & Review any changes.

Result: Yes, where applicable.

Target 3.8. Record quantities of all drugs seized.

3.8.1 Put protocol put in place for recording seizures of drugs.

Result: Yes, being done (records, weights, etc of substance found).

3.8.2 Procedures implemented.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

3.8.3 Monitor & Review.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

Strategy 6. Secure custody of prisoners.

Target 6.1 Meet set targets in preventing escapes from custody.

6.1.1 Security Committee to meet regularly.

Result: Yes. Quarterly or sooner if needs arise.

6.1.2 Review present practices

Result: Yes, ongoing.

6.1.3 Implement approved new working practices if necessary.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

6.1.4 Monitor & Review.

Result: Yes, being done

Target 6.2 Implement a rolling programme of security reviews and audits of security procedures at closed prisons commencing in 2006.

6.2.1 Security Committee to meet regularly.

Result: Yes, done.

6.2.2 Provide for security reviews & audits.

Result: Yes, done.

6.2.3 Implement any changes agreed.

Result: Yes, being done.

6.2.4 Monitor & review.
Result: Yes, ongoing.

7. Safe Custody of Prisoners

Target 7.1 Fully implement the computerised accident, and assault and incidents of self-harm information system in 2006 to establish the benchmark for performance in future years.

7.1.1 Conduct user acceptance test.
Result: Implemented.

7.1.2 Receive Guidelines from Operations based on new classification system.
Result: Yes, done.

7.1.3 Train end users in the system.
Result: Yes, done.

7.1.4 Implement the new system.
Result: Done.

7.1.5 Review.
Result: Yes, ongoing.

7.1.6 Conduct initial audit of assaults in 2005.
Result: Yes, carried out.

8. Humane custody of Prisoners

8.1.1 Receive new prison rules for I.P.S.
Result: Not received yet.

8.1.2 Training provided for prison personnel.

Result: Not available as yet.

8.1.3 Implement new Prison Rules.

Result: When issued.

8.1.4 Monitor & review.

Result: Whenever they are issued by Headquarters.

Target 8.3 Co-operate with prison inspections by the Inspector of Prisons and Places of Detention and the CPT.

8.3.1 Review recommendations of the Inspector of Prisons.

Result: Yes, done.

8.3.2 Set up Working Group (Heads of Function areas referred to in the report).

Result: Yes, done.

8.3.3 Prioritise and agree areas requiring attention.

Result: Yes, done.

8.3.4 Implement change.

Result: Done wherever deemed necessary

8.3.5 Evaluate and review.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

Target 8.4 Maintain a formal Prisoner Complaints Register at each prison and make available to inspection bodies.

8.4.1 Establish Complaints Register.

Result: Yes, records maintained of same.

8.4.2 Maintain accurate record of all complaints.

Result: Yes, done and ongoing.

8.4.3 Monitor & review.

Result: Yes, being done.

9. Contingency Planning

Target 9.1 Review all fire, riot and hostage-taking plans annually to take account of changing needs and circumstances, including operational changes consequent on implementation of the agreed *Proposal for Organisational Change*.

9.1.1 All emergency plans to be reviewed with specific reference to the Proposal for Organisational Change.

Result: Yes, done (fire plans etc).

9.1.2 Identify any deficiencies within the plans.

Result: Yes, done.

9.1.3 Implement approved emergency plans.

Result: Yes, implemented.

9.1.4 Monitor & review.

Result: Ongoing.

Target 9.2 Carry out simulated exercises to maintain preparedness to deal with emergency situations.

9.2.1 Conduct fire evacuations at least twice annually.

Result: Yes, done.

9.2.2 Produce report on examination of drills and prepare recommendations for Governor's approval.

Result: Yes, done.

9.2.3 Implement recommendations as approved by the Governor

Result: Yes, done.

9.2.4 Review training needs for staff in relation to Fire, Riot and Hostage Taking.

Result: Reviewed.

9.2.5 Produce report on training and recommendations to Governor for approval.

Result: Done.

9.2.6 Implement approved training programme for staff.

Result: Yes, ongoing as far as possible. (No training liaison officer as yet.)

10. Introduce defined care standards.

Target 10.4 Improve information of prison regimes, rules, entitlements and services using written and electronic media in 2007.

10.4.1 Review all methods already being used to give information to prisoners.

Result: Yes, noticeboards and new electronic noticeboards installed.

10.4.2 Continue with methods already in use.

Result: Yes, doing same.

10.4.3 Implement any new way of communication when it becomes available.

Result: Yes electronic noticeboards installed including one in visitors waiting room.

10.4.4 Monitor & review

Result: Ongoing.

Target 10.5 All institutions shall endeavour to achieve a minimum score of 80% in annual external catering audit and grade C in the annual external hygiene audit by 2007.

10.5.1 Establish a Catering Team to comply with H.A.C.C.P standards

Result: Yes. Team in place.

10.5.2 Continue to maintain the high standards set down by E.I.Q.A.

Result: Yes, done.

10.5.3 Continue to implement any new changes that will improve the standard in the catering area.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

10.5.4 Conduct internal audits as required.

Result: Yes, two done this year.

10.5.5 Monitor & review.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

11. Ensure the provision of health care to prisoners of a standard comparable with that which applies in the general community.

Target 11.3 Progress the implementation of the Pharmacy Service Plan with the intention of securing new control of medications and cost-efficiencies in all prisons by end of 2006 through the provision of professional pharmacy oversight.

11.3.1 Review Pharmacy Service Plan Report.

Result: Report not available.

11.3.2 Establish internal team to review document and procedures.

Result: Yes, whenever available.

11.3.3 Implement new Guidelines & Policy.

Result: After receiving report.

11.3.4 Monitor & review.

Result: Not implemented as yet - no report.

Target 11.5 Smoking Policy implemented in all institutions by end of 2006.

11.5.1 Agree unified Smoking Policy with headquarters and Governors.

Result: Yes, agreed.

11.5.2 Set up team to evaluate and implement.

Result: Yes, implemented.

11.5.3 Inform both staff & prisoners of the new smoking policy regulations

Result: Yes, done.

11.5.4 Implement new Smoking Policy.

Result: Yes, done - working well.

11.5.5 Review operation of new policy.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

15. Enhance prisoner employability prospects on release through continuing development and delivery of skill based training courses and activities.

Target 15.1 Complete the roll-out of the information system to track prisoner participation in work and vocational training by end 2006

15.1.1 Establish Work & Training Team.

Result: Yes, team established.

15.1.2 Review present arrangements.

Result: Yes, done.

15.1.3 Implement any new arrangements that improve the tracking of prisoners' participation in work & vocational training.

Result: Yes, but not fully operational due to staff shortage in work/training area.

15.1.4 Monitor & review.

Result: Yes, when fully implemented

Target 15.2 Increase the number of available work training courses with recognised certification levels by end of 2007.

15.2.1 Establish Work & Training Team.

Result: Team established.

15.2.2 Review industrial shops and the possibility of opening Health and Safety shop

Result: Yes, when staff available.

15.2.3 Review the opening of Computer shop & Industrial cleaning Shop

Result: Yes, when staff become available.

15.2.4 Set target to have workshop training.

Result: Yes, when operational.

15.2.5 Monitor & review.

Result: Yes, when up and running.

16. Recognising the important role that families can play in the rehabilitative process, pursue a service-wide approach aimed at sustaining and maintaining relationships with the families, in as normal a manner as possible.

Target 16.1 Provide continuing support for appropriate services provided by the prison visitors' centre.

16.1.1 Bedford Row servicing the Visitors' Centre

Result: Yes giving a good service.

16.1.2 Provide information to visitors of services available and hospitality when they arrive.

Result: Yes, leaflets available on arrival at prison also office in city giving out such information

16.1.3 Provide a family-friendly environment for children.

Result: Special facility being prepared at present (due to open in September 2006)

16.1.4 Monitor & review.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

Target 19.2 Put in place practices and procedures on harassment, bullying and threats to staff and review periodically.

19.2.1 Receive report from Human Resources
Result: No report received from Headquarters.

19.2.2 Appoint internal team for implementation.
Result: Whenever required.

19.2.3 Implement new Guidelines & Launch Policy.
Result: Not applicable - no report available.

19.2.4 Review Policy.
Result: Ongoing review of bullying and harassment.

22. Organisational Support

Target 22.2 Continue to develop management and staff partnership structures at central and local levels.

22.2.1 Maintain local arrangements with respect to additional hours agreement.
Result: Yes. Implemented and ongoing.

22.2.2 Put in place agreed partnership programme as national programme develops.
Result: Yes, done.

22.2.3 Monitor & Review.
Result: Yes, being done (weekly basis).

25. Review current Health & Safety management system and bring into line with appropriate external standards by end of 2008.

Target 25.2 Ensure full roll-out of agreed plan of Health & Safety Management system by first quarter 2007.

25.2.1 Review Safety Statement.

Result: Not due until 2007 - no work done on same as yet - operating the old Health and Safety requirements.

25.2.2 Identify areas requiring change.

Result: As above.

25.2.3 Redraft where necessary.

Result: As above

25.2.4 Construct updated edition.

Result: As above.

25.2.5 Familiarise staff.

Result: As above

25.2.6 Monitor & Review.

Result: As above.

Statistical Information

Prisoner Sentences	Male	Female
Serving under 3 months	13	2
Serving 3 - 6 months	29	1
Serving 6 - 12 months	28	-
Serving 1 - 2 years	31	5
Serving 2 - 4 years	40	6
Serving 4 -7 years	54	-
Serving 7 - 10 years	18	-
Serving over 10 years	21	1
Serving life sentence	<u>19</u>	-
Total sentenced	253	15
Prisoners on remand/trial or deportation orders	Male	Female
	<u>28</u>	<u>3</u>
Overall Totals	281	18

Age Profile

Age profile of the prisoner population

Under 18 years old	4	1
Aged 18 - 21 years old	37	2
Aged 21 - 25 years old	72	5
Aged 25 - 30 years old	49	3
Aged 30 - 35 years old	46	3
Aged 35 - 40 years old	31	-

Aged 40 - 45 years old	21	-
Aged 45 - 50 years old	11	3
Aged 50 - 60 years old	9	1
Aged 60 plus	<u>1</u>	=
	281	18

Number in custody solely for
fines or debts

Fines	7	1
Debts	<u>3</u>	=
	10	1

Number of Foreign Nationals in Custody	Male	Female
American	1	-
British	3	-
German	1	-
Kenyan	1	-
Latvian	4	-
Moroccan	1	-

Polish	2	1
Romanian	-	1
Russian	1	-
Scots	1	-
Nigerian	<u>1</u>	-
Total	<u>16</u>	<u>2</u>

Staffing as of 21/6/06

Governor	1
Deputy Governor	1
Assistant Governor	1
Chief Officer Grade I	1
Chief Trades Officer Grade I	1
Clerk Grade I	2
Clerk Grade II	2
Industrial Manager	1
Chief Trades Officer Grade II	1
Clerk Grade II	7
Assistant Chief Officer	12 (one on temp transfer to Cork and 1 on temp transfer from Cloverhill)
Industrial Supervisor	1
Trades Officers	8
Chief Officer (i/c details duties)	1
Assistant Industrial Supervisors	4

Nurse Officers	5
Prison Officers	<u>165</u>
Total	214
Others	
Doctor (3 hours per day)	1
Chaplain (1 full-time 1 p/time)	2
Psychologists (part-time)	2
Teachers (8 full-time 12 p/time)	20
Probation and welfare officers 1 sen + 1.5 p.o.)	2.5
Psychiatrists (visiting)	1
Optician (visiting)	1
Dietician (when required)	1
Counsellors (part-time)	4
Psychotherapist (part time)	<u>1</u>
	<u>35.5</u>
Overall total	249.5

Tour of Inspection

The Inspectorate inspected the cellular accommodation on the 4 wings (A,B,C,D), walked each of the landings and inspected a number of cells on each landing at random. All the shower/toilet areas of each landing were inspected as were each of the exercise yards attached to the various wings. The other facilities such as workshops, laundry, kitchens, etc, were all inspected.

DI class (Isolation Unit)

This landing is used to separate prisoners from other prisoners within the prison and the landing is divided by a steel barrier with gate about $\frac{3}{4}$ way down the corridor. The first section (separated area) contains 4 cells and there were 6 prisoners in the 4 cells at time of inspection. The Inspectorate team spoke with the prisoners separately and they said that they were held there at their own request because they were in conflict with other prisoners either in the prison or while they were at large. When questioned about the conflict within the prison, they appeared reluctant to discuss the details but some gave the impression that they were very much under pressure/threats from the other prisoners. They get outdoor exercise from 12.45 p.m - 2.00 p.m. (the only time an exercise yard is available and free from other prisoners). They may also get some time in the gym but this is very much dependent on staff availability. If, for whatever reason, they are unable to get their exercise at lunchtime they may get it at staff tea-break period (4.45 - 5.30 p.m) for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour. Again, this is very much dependent on staff availability. The landing is also used as a recreation area and there is a communal T.V there but the Inspectorate were informed that the area is seldom used for recreation since the T.V's were placed in their cells. Basically those in the separation area are unlocked for their meals, make phone calls, see the Governor, doctor, etc, may get the 1 hour in the exercise yard, have a shower and are locked in their cells for the rest of the time. So they spend a considerable part of their day locked in their cells.

All the cells are fitted with a w.h.b and toilet and those that are doubled have a bunk bed . There is one shower just off the landing for all the prisoners in this area. There are cell call-bells. If activated they ignite a light over the outside of the cell door and also displays a light on the control panel in the class officers' office indicating which cell call bell has been activated.

There are 2 cells in the isolation section of D1 which is divided off by a steel barrier on the corridor. There was one prisoner detained there at the time of inspection. The mattress of the bed is placed on a raised concrete base and there is a shelf/table top attached to the wall and a seat attached to the floor. The walls, bed base, seat, etc, are covered with a heavy plastic type material and each of the cells has a stainless steel toilet and wash hand basin. There is a T.V in a protected frame high up on the wall and the floors are tiled. The windows are reasonably large and the prisoner can control the air flow and the natural light with a venetian-type blind inserted between the two sections of perspex sheeting which is opened and closed by turning a small knob.

There are smoke detectors and water sprinklers installed in the cells as well as the push button bell call. There are quite large viewing panels in the cell doors with a flap covering them. The shower in the separation section is the only showering facility for those prisoners in the isolation section. The cells in the isolation section were clean and tidy but the cells and general area of the separation section were just reasonably clean.

On checking the records there were 18 prisoners held in the isolation cells from January '06 until date of inspection (20/6/06). There are forms and a

book record of those detained in the special cells. The headings in the book read: date, class, prisoner's name, reason for transfer, time in, time out, injuries (if any), pad/strip, officers present, authorised by "in" "out". The book or the forms do not record if the prisoner was visited by the doctor, chaplain, Governor, chief officer, etc. Such visits are recorded in the officers' duty report book. The records on the forms and in book generally omitted to record when the prisoner was removed from the special cells. The Inspectorate recommends that such information be recorded on the forms and book provided and that a space be provided for the management staff to initial and date the time they inspected the special cells.

D2 Landing

There are 16 cells on this landing which 20 prisoners occupy. (4 double cells, the rest are single). There is a class officers' office with table, chair, computer and various electrical display panels. There are sanitary facilities in all of the cells and at the end of the landing there are stainless steel toilets, w.h.b's and 2 showers. This facility has both the walls and floor tiled and was clean and tidy. The cells inspected were also clean and tidy. Some of the cells had a lot of posters on the walls, some had a towel over the window which prevented the natural light from entering the cell and others had posters of pop stars or flags on cloth material attached to the ceiling. The landings have handrailings and are bright as a result of a considerable amount of natural light from the roof windows.

Library (just off D2 landing)

The opening hours of the library were displayed as Monday - Friday 9.30 a.m - 12.15 p.m and 2.15 pm - 4.00 pm. There was one officer assigned to library duties at time of inspection. There are two officers assigned full time to library duties who work "back to back" to each other and when they are off it is the relief officers thereafter. The library operates independently of the prison's education unit and they receive exchange of books from Limerick City library about twice per year. [The library provides the education unit with any material they require and they work in harmony with each other.] There is no librarian from the outside library service involved in its operation. They carry a stock of approx 3 thousand books and have a law book reference section from which books are issued directly to the prisoners when requested, not like some of the other prison libraries which just issue a photostat of the section sought. They stock a limited number of talking books and the daily newspapers are available free of charge. The stock and exchanges are recorded on computer. It is quite limited for space with free standing rows of shelving on the floor and shelving all around the walls. There are no facilities to sit and read in this space. The library is not generally open at the times displayed as it is one of the staffing posts to be stripped if there is a shortage. The Inspectorate were informed that, on average, it is open only about 2 days per week. This is unacceptable.

D3 Landing

This landing is identical in layout to D2 with 16 cells and 20 prisoners, 4 of the cells doubled and a class officers' office. The double cells have an

observation problem with the staff's viewing of the cell restricted. There are standard cell lockers which are quite tall and prisoners have a habit of laying their towel over the locker and when this happens, it then restricts the staff's viewing of the prisoner in the bed. This is a problem throughout the prison with the "double cell" accommodation. The Inspectorate also received complaints from prisoners that the upper bunks of the double beds are uncomfortable as the mattress is placed on a solid steel frame with no springs or air ventilation. It prevents the mattress from "breathing" which results in them "sweating" and having sore backs. Local management should check these complaints. There are two showers, toilet and w.h.b off the landing, all tiled and clean. The cells inspected varied in cleanliness; some were reasonable, others could be improved. [Management stated that they never received on complaint about the bank beds but would have them investigated.]

Fabric Shop Arts and Crafts (Off D3 landing)

There were 2 prison staff, one teacher and an "outside" instructor operating this workshop at time of inspection. [In fact, it was the outside instructor's last few hours working in the prison as he had resigned having worked there for almost 17 years. He said he came in to give instructions for 14 days and lasted 17 years!!)

There were 8 prisoners working there and I was informed that they take an average of 7-10 per day. The shop began operation by designing and making "whites" for the kitchen staff and the medical staff's coats, etc but have now moved on into all other areas such as making duvets, cot blankets, stage

uniforms, plus designing various articles of clothing. The teacher was giving instruction on a new computerised embroidering machine and the prisoners were sewing the embroidered patches onto children's duvets, blankets etc. The designs of the clothing and the embroidering work are very impressive. They have entered several outside competitions and have received 1st prize regularly. They have all of their winning prizes (rosettes) proudly displayed on the wall which also includes certificates.

The prisoners on entering the shop receive instructions on health and safety and on all aspects of the machines. On completion of this section, they then begin to operate the machines. The workshop is a certified training centre under the guidance of Fas and then further advancement to City & Guilds standards. They now are operating the Fetac standards. Several prisoners have received the recognised certificate from City & Guilds/Fetac and some of them have taken up employment on release at this type of work. They outlined that one particular prisoner who received his full qualification within this workshop and not having worked at this type of work before, is now running his own very successful business on the outside. The prisoners working in this workshop were fully engaged and appeared to like this work.

D4 Landing

This landing is similar in design to D2 + D3 with 20 prisoners held in 16 cells, 4 of which are doubled and a class officers' office. There are 2 education rooms off the landing which are directly over the fabric shop on D3. This

landing is brighter than the others as it is directly under the roof windows. It has the showers, toilet and w.h.b off the landing which were clean, tiled and tidy. The cells inspected were also clean and reasonably tidy with the usual posters, etc, attached to the walls.

Exercise Yard (off D1 landing)

This is a reasonably small exercise yard enclosed with high wire mesh fencing, tarmacadamed and with a few white lines painted on the surface for volley ball or tennis games. There is a small seating area under a section of a building which allows prisoners to shelter and get fresh air in inclement weather. The yard is covered with netting (it appears that a second net was placed over an existing net) which very much darkens the yard from natural light. The netting is covered with waste material thrown from the cell windows overhead. The waste comprises plates, bread, potatoes, papers, plastic, etc which looks terrible and is most unhygienic. There is a phone in the yard for prisoners' use. There is a toilet and w.h.b which were filthy and appeared not to have been cleaned for a considerable time. Overall, it is a most depressing yard, with poor natural light, dirt of all descriptions on the netting and the toilet facilities unhygienic.

Gym of D1

The area designated as a gym is also used for recreation in the evening time (from 5.30 - 7.15pm). It is quite small, fitted with gym equipment which can be stored away when being used for recreation. Apparently, it is seldom used

since the T.V's were installed in the cells. There is a communal T.V in the corner of the room. It was clean and tidy.

"A" Wing

The "A" wing is one of the old wings of the prison and has been in use for well over 100 years. It is different from the old conventional prisons in that the cells are on one side of the landing only; normally there are cells on both sides. The width of the landing outside the cells appears to be narrower than normal. There is no in-cell sanitation in this wing and each cell has a chamber pot which has to be carried to the end of the landing for its contents to be emptied. The cell windows are of the old small type, small panes of glass/perspex which do not allow much light into the cells. Some of the panes were broken to allow in more fresh air. Some of the cell windows were covered with a towel or piece of cardboard which left the cell almost in constant darkness. The cell doors are smaller than those in the new wings, are of wooden material and steel-plated on the inside. The overall door opening is smaller than normal and one has to stoop on entering or leaving the cell.

A1 Landing

This ground floor landing was accommodating 12 prisoners in 9 cells on the day of inspection. The bunk beds are attached to both the floor and wall by bolts as the single beds are attached to the floor. Each of the cells has lockers, the front of which are covered with a cloth (curtain type). The floor of the cells are of cement material which has been painted but with the wear and tear the paint is chipping off in some of them. The landing is tiled with

the old-style black and red tiles. There are 2 showers, 2 stainless steel toilets, 4 w.h.b's and a stainless steel slop hopper or sluice at the end of the landing. The floors and walls of the dividing cubicles are tiled and were reasonably clean but the tiled floor was in need of cleaning. There is also a class officers' office on the landing. The cells were reasonably clean and most of them had posters on the walls. The entire area looked old and in need of replacement.

A2 Landing

This landing had 10 cells all doubled, which accommodated 20 prisoners, and a class officers' office. The cells were the same as those described on A1. There is a passageway at the end of the landing which leads into a sanitary area that contains 2 toilets, 2 showers, 4 w.h.b's with mirrors over them and a sluice hopper. The area is tiled and there is a storage area for bins which were overflowing with rubbish. The landing is enclosed with wire mesh and the gate leading from A1 onto this landing is locked. There is wire mesh also separating A2 from A3 landing. The cells were reasonably clean but again the darkness of the cells is noticeable especially those with a towel or cloth over the window.

There is a phone for prisoners use on A1, A2 and A3 landings and in "A" exercise yard.

A3 Landing

The landing is of the same design as A1 and A2 with 10 cells, all of which are doubled, accommodating 20 prisoners and a class officers' office. Some of the cell floors had adhesive plastic type tiles while the cell floors on A2 were mostly timber floorboards. The passageway at the end of the landing leads into the sanitary facility area which consists of 2 toilets, 2 showers, 4 w,h,b's with mirrors over them and a sluice hopper. The prisoners were scrubbing the floor of this area at time of inspection and the toilets, w.h.b etc were clean and tidy. The cells and sanitary facilities on this landing are much cleaner than A1 or A2 and the level of hygiene is at a very acceptable level. There is a wire grid along the entire landing enclosing it.

Exercise Yard off A1 Landing

This is a reasonably small tarmacadam-surfaced exercise yard, enclosed with high wire mesh fencing and razor wire on top of fence. There is a hoarding along one side of the yard to prevent access to the adjoining wing which is being built at present by outside contractors. There are no prisoners' toilets or w.h.b in the yard and there is a telephone for their use. There is a hut for the officers at the entrance gate.

A.C.O's office in circle area

There is an office for the A.C.O.'s use in the circle area of the prison which is a wooden structure with "frosted" panes of glass in it. It has a desk, chair, computer, printer, small storage space and has the control panels for the lights, roof fans, etc. The ACO's office contain duty records, notices, etc for everyday duty requirements.

Control Room

The control room is a high security area of the prison and the entrance is monitored on C.C.T.V. Entry to this area is controlled from within the locked room and there is a double door at the entrance, so after having gained admission through one door, it is then locked and the 2nd door is only then unlocked. Staff within observe the screens which display the visiting boxes, inside some parts of the prison, exercise yards as well as other security areas. This area also outputs the D.V.D's to the cells as well as operating the walkie-talkies, the public telephone, and controlling the access/exit doors that are computerised. They also have a recording system in operation that displays the records of palm prints of people who use the various doors/gates that have palm print devices attached to them. There are several control panels and screens that display the prison's fire alarm, electrical faults, cells smoke alarms, etc. Just off the main control room area there is a small staff kitchen and off that are toilet facilities. The whole area is modern, clean, tidy, and very well fitted out for the needs of the prison. There was a complaint that more staff were required for that post as the ones on duty at the time of inspection were extremely busy.

B Division

The "B" wing of the prison is the original wing and like the "A" wing is well over 100 years in operation. There are no in-cell sanitary facilities, the cell doors and windows are quite small and the cells are generally dark from the lack of

natural light. Like the "A" wing some of the prisoners put towels or cardboard over the cell window which renders the cell almost in complete darkness.

There are telephones for prisoners' use on all of the 3 "B" division landings.

All of the cells have T.V's. Chamber pots are still in use in the cells of this division.

B1 Landing

The entrance from the circle to B1 landing contains the servery area which accommodates the prisoners from both B & C wings for the serving of their meals. This area had stainless steel containers to hold the different selections of food, the walls were tiled and it was neat, clean and tidy. The landing has 7 cells plus a class officers' office and the dental surgery is also on this landing. There were 11 prisoners there on the day of inspection. The floor is tiled with the old-style red and black tiles. There is an electronic noticeboard on the landing wall outlining the news of the prison which included the Inspector's inspection. The end of the landing had 2 showers, 3 w.h.b's with mirrors over them sluice hopper and an open space (cubicle) with seating for prisoners dressing/underdressing using the showers. This whole toilet/shower area was tiled and clean. The double beds in the cells are free standing and not attached to the floor or wall. Each cell has a reasonably large locker with a cloth covering the front of it. The floors of the cells are of cement material and painted but in some of them the paint is flaking off. The cells are kept reasonably well and were clean.

A corridor off B1 landing leads to the educational area and also for the entrance to the exercise yard.

"B" Exercise Yard

This small yard is not covered with mesh netting. It is enclosed with wire grid fencing and has a tarmac surface. There is a phone for prisoners' use. There are no shelters for prisoners if it is raining and there are no toilets for them either. There is an officer's hut at the entrance gate. It is small and not suitable for football games.

B2 Landing

It contains 10 cells, 1 class officers' office and holds 20 prisoners as each cell is doubled. The cell floors are of timber material and some of them are painted. A wire grid mesh encloses the landing from the top of the handrail to the next upper landing. There are 2 showers, 3 w.h.b's with mirrors over them, 2 toilets, a sluice hooper with w.h.b over it at the end of the landing. This area is tiled and there is a cubicle or changing space for prisoners' use when using the showers. The toilet/shower area, cells and landing were quite clean, neat and well maintained for an old building.

B3 Landing

This landing is similar to B2 with 10 cells, a class officers' office and 19 prisoners contained there at time of inspection. All of the cells are doubled. There are timber floors in all of the cells which are painted. It contains the

same toilet/shower facilities as described on B2. The wash/sanitary area, cells and landing were very clean and kept very well.

Craft Shop (off B1 landing)

The work/craft shop is under the auspices of the teacher attached to the education unit. They make coffee tables, lamp and coat stands, timber dessert bowls, guitar frames etc. Some of the material produced goes out to various charitable organisations while some of the prisoners give the items out to a member of family (dolls' houses etc). The teacher normally has about 8-9 prisoners there constantly and there appears to be great interest in this type of work.

C Wing

C1 Landing

This landing contains no cells. On entering from the circle there is a very large "L" shaped gym and this same area is used for recreation purposes during recreation period 5.30 - 7.15 pm. There is a storage facility for gym equipment when not in use. Just off this landing is an entrance to the exercise yard. The gym was not in use at the time of inspection. This wing of the prison was built only a few years ago and replaced another old wing.

"C" Exercise Yard

This exercise yard is covered with close netting but it allows natural light through it and is brighter than the other yards which have netting covering

them. There is a phone in the yard for prisoners' use. Seating is provided for a small number of prisoners in a covered shelter area. The yard surface is of tarmacadam material and there is a toilet and w.h.b within it which was in need of cleaning. The yard is enclosed with wire mesh fencing and razor-edge wire on top of the fencing. The yard is also covered by c.c.t.v. It is a good size and suitable for 5/7 a side football. There is a hut for officers at the entrance gate.

"C2" landing

There are 30 cells on this landing and they were holding 42 prisoners within them on the date of inspection. There is also a class officers' office with desk, computer, etc. In-cell sanitation is provided within the C division and the entire floor area is covered with non-slip floor covering. The cells are fitted with a table (bench) which is attached to the wall, chair, bed which is attached to the floor with bolts. The cells are fitted with bunk beds, which are attached to both the floor and wall. There were complaints from prisoners that the upper bunk bed frame is solid and not comfortable. There is a small wall dividing off the toilet area. The prisoners on this wing can control the lights from inside the cells. There are 2 showers and a toilet off the landing, all of which were tiled and clean. The end (gable) wall of the landing is built with glass blocks which allows additional natural light onto the landing. The landing and cells were clean, tidy and were maintained with the usual posters etc stuck to the cell walls.

“C3” Landing

There were 28 prisoners, 24 cells and a class officers’ office on this landing. It is mostly of the same design as C2 with the 2 showers, toilet & w.h.b off the landing which were tiled and clean. The landing is shorter than C2 and at the gable end there is quite a large workshop but nobody operating it. The workshop wall at the end of the landing and the end gable of the wing is built with glass bricks which give additional brightness to the landing but it is not as bright as C2 landing as the light here has to penetrate the two glass walls. The overall level of hygiene on this landing was good.

“C4” Landing

This landing is identical in design to C3 landing as already described. It is brighter as it’s the top landing of the wing and has additional natural light from the roof windows. The workshop space at the end of the landing was not being used at time of inspection, apparently it is used for meetings, some classes and as a consultation exhibition area at times. The landing cells, shower/toilet area were clean bright and well maintained.

Reception

The reception area is where the prisoners are brought on committal into the prison or on discharge or on temporary release. They are processed there, searched, their property/clothing recorded, stored, showered and issued with prison clothing. All of their clothing is tagged and numbered. They are issued with an information booklet of the prison’s regime, entitlements, facilities and where or how to get applications for courts, bails etc. They are

also given forms to nominate the visitors they wish to visit them and an application form to allow them to use the prison phones. An information booklet on AIDS is also enclosed. The committal is first brought to the general office where particulars regarding his warrant, plus whatever cash, watch, rings, next of kin, etc are recorded. They are then brought to the reception area where they are seen by a nurse or medical orderly. The records of the reception are held on computer. There are 400 lockers available for prisoner clothing which is sufficient for the numbers in custody. The locker rooms are kept clean and tidy. The area has two holding cells with seating around the walls, tiled floors and clean. There are 3 cubicles for prisoners changing their clothing, 3 showers and a toilet, all of which were clean. One prisoner works there with two staff.

Laundry

The laundry does the total laundering requirements of the prison and no clothing is sent out. It is operated by 2 officers and 15 prisoners. Each of the wings or landings has its own "laundry day". The prisoners are issued with a laundry bag on reception and each item of clothing plus the laundry bag is tagged with name and number. They place their laundering requirements in the bag, it is collected on the landing in the a.m, checked back into the laundry bag and returned to the landing on the same p.m. When prisoners are discharged, their sheets, duvet, pillow, etc, are washed on the day of discharge. The laundry is equipped with 4 washers, 5 dryers, 2 pressers but one of the washers and one presser was broken and they are waiting ("for ages") to have them repaired. There is a room at the back of the washer

area which holds the chemicals and washing powders which are fed automatically into the washers. The officers informed the Inspectorate that the area is to be modernised, the equipment is to be replaced and training of prisoners to certification standard to commence once the redevelopment takes place, which he hopes will be this year. It is a well run laundry, the prisoners were busy doing their own individual tasks allotted to them and the area was clean and tidy for a working environment.

Kitchen

The kitchen is operated by an industrial supervisor, 2 assistant industrial supervisors and 20 prisoners. It is a trainee training centre for Failte Ireland and is also a recognised Fas Training Centre. Certificates are issued (Leonardo) to those who reach the required standards from Fetac. In the last year 19 prisoners received certificates. The training is done in the main kitchen and there is no separate training kitchen like some of the other institutions. The vegetables and meats are delivered fully prepared for cooking but for those who are doing the training, unprepared vegetables and meat are purchased for their learning/training purposes. They have also received the hygiene award for the past four years from Excellent Ireland. The kitchen is also subject to unannounced inspections from officials attached to the local Health Board and a favourable report has been forwarded to the Governor on each occasion following their inspection. The kitchen is further subject to 4 internal audits per year and the audit team includes an official from Prison Service Headquarters in Clondalkin.

The kitchen is divided into separate zones such as preparation, cooking, distribution, washing, storage, etc plus the different colour codes apply, e.g vegetables, meat, bread, etc. Each prisoner has his own area of responsibility and all of the jobs are rotated in order to give experience in the different areas, although at times, some of the prisoners ask to remain in the one area as they become used to it and are happy doing the same work. In an area off the main kitchen 3 prisoners were busy making up packages containing bread, butter, tea bags, jams, scones, sugar, salt, pepper, etc for each prisoner to collect at the servery areas at teatime and bring to their cells.

There are various corridors and rooms off the main kitchen area, consisting of small dining rooms for the prisoners who work there, toilets, showers, w.h.b's staff locker room, small laundry where all of the whites are laundered and ironed plus all of the cold rooms, fridges, freezer rooms, dry stores, etc. There is another outshoot off the main kitchen where all of the cardboard is packaged and recycled.

The equipment is all of stainless steel. The cooking area is the centre of the floor with a large canopy over same. The floors and walls are tiled. The storage shelving, washing facilities, preparation areas, sinks, etc are all of stainless steel and attached to the walls. The entire areas were very clean, tidy and well maintained even though the kitchen was in full use preparing the next meals.

The officer in charge informed the Inspectorate that the kitchen is due a complete revamp in the coming months and when this is happening they will

be operating from a “field kitchen”. This will be difficult but the officer is confident that they can do it although some of the menus may have to be changed temporarily. The present kitchen is very bright and cheerful with roof windows in a lot of it but it is not very compact with corridors off in different directions. Overall it is a very impressive, well organised kitchen and the meals were very well presented and tasty.

Visiting Rooms

There are 3 main visiting facilities. The “C” facility is divided by a folding partition allowing for a “family type” visit to take place in one section of it. The other side has a bench/table top down the centre of the floor with chairs on both sides and a small barrier of approx 9 inches high down the centre of the bench table. C.C.T.V is in operation and there are high chairs at the ends for the officers’ observation.

The main visiting box can take approximately 18 visits at a time with similar type seating on both sides of the table top and small barrier down the centre. There are high stools for the officers to supervise from a raised position at both ends and centre of room. There are several C.C.T.V cameras in operation.

“D” visiting box is only for prisoners who reside in D wing and takes 8 - 10 prisoners at a time. Again same design as the others with bench/table top down the centre of the room, chairs on both sides, high chairs for staff to

supervise and C.C.T.V cameras. There is a barrier of approx 9" high down the centre of the bench.

The closed visits are conducted in a Portakabin in the yard adjacent to the D visiting area. It can facilitate 4 prisoners at a time and is completely divided by a perspex screen from a table top $\frac{3}{4}$ way up and a wire mesh grid from top of perspex to the ceiling. There are chairs on both sides of the barrier. There are no facilities such as a phone or a grid with holes in it for visitors to talk to the prisoner but the Inspectorate were assured that they can hear each other quite well by talking through the perspex. There were no visits in progress at time of inspection and closed visits are not allowed on Saturdays. The entire visiting facilities were clean and tidy.

Censor Office

The officer in charge of the censor office also installs the prisoners' phone cards onto the I.T. system. There was no officer operating the censor office on day of inspection and the inspectorate were informed that it was due to staff shortfall. Apparently it happens quite often that the officer on this post is redeployed, consequently the letters coming and in and going out are delayed. The letter box [for collection] on E division on this particular day was overflowing with letters which had not been collected for some time.

Stores

The stores are managed by a Clerk I and 2 Clerk II and are located in a secure area outside of the main boundary wall. The fact that it is located just

outside of the prison means that all the deliveries received into the stores have to be reloaded and despatched into the prison when required. Even the daily victualling is first received into the stores and then transferred into the prison's refrigerated van and delivered into the kitchen.

It is a reasonably well stocked stores with rows of free-standing shelving on the floor and aisles between the rows but they have no forklift at present to place materials on the upper shelving, which has to be done manually. The "C.P.U" (central purchasing unit) is not fully operational and some of the paperwork is still been done the old style. "Oracle" finance system is installed but not fully working. Tendering for the victualling, clothing, furniture, beddings, etc is done through the I.P.S in Clondalkin. When these financial systems are fully operational, the 2nd Clerk II will be redeployed according to the new annualised hours system.

It is recommended that a forklift be purchased for the stores use to eliminate the manual lifting of materials to the upper shelves.

Staff canteen

The staff canteen is operated by an "outside" contractor and they serve on average approx 90 breakfasts, 60 - 65 lunches and 30 teas, which include outside contractors who are working in the prison at present. The dining hall consists of 12 tables with 4 chairs at each and the serving areas at one end of the dining room. I was informed that no hot lunches/dinners had been served for the previous 3 weeks as the hot plate was broken and only returned repaired the day of the inspection. They stated the fact that no hot

meals could be served resulted in a drop-off in attendance. They hoped now that the hot meals were back on the menu that the staff would return. The kitchen and dining areas were clean and tidy.

The canteen is located in the staff's living quarters and is outside of the main boundary wall. Within the staff area there is a recreation room and a T.V room. Further on the corridor there is a "married men's" dining room which has 3 tables, chairs, sink, microwaves, fridge, etc. Another corridor leads to a snooker room with full-sized snooker table and chairs. There is also a weights room and a staff gym room. There is a changing room for those using the gym and a laundry room with washer and dryer. There are offices also on this corridor, such as the P.O.A office, the health and safety officers' office etc. Upstairs on 1st floor are the bedrooms which I was informed are not permanently occupied. They were not inspected.

Staff Locker room

The staff locker room is adjacent to the main gate and its entrance is from within the prison grounds. The ground floor area has a touch screen computer built into a booth which contains the personal details of each officer's overtime worked, duties, annual leave, sick leave, time of clock-in-out of the prison etc. There are also two public phones for staff use as well as a drinking water facility. Off this area are staff toilets, 3 shower cubicles, 3 wash-hand basins with mirrors over them all. All are tiled and clean but there was an unhygienic smell from the area.

Upstairs is the male staffs locker room with rows of lockers on the floor and around the walls. There is no seating facility within the locker room. The locker room was clean and very tidy with no clothes , shoes, towels, etc left lying around, unlike most staff locker rooms in other institutions.

Tuck Shop

The tuck shop is open every day Monday to Saturday for prisoners' use and also on Sundays for stocking up the shelves, completing the weekly accounts and preparing orders for deliveries for the coming week. Each of the prison wings is assigned a time schedule for their purchases but new committals and those on remand can obtain an order practically every day. It is quite a well stocked tuck shop with the following available:- breakfast cereals, cakes, sauces, coffee, tea, soups, vitamins and cod liver oil tablets, chocolates and various chocolate bars, biscuits, tobacco, cigarettes, sweets, cigarette papers, writing material and envelopes, craft material, minerals, quick lunches, tinned fruit, toiletries, toothpaste, soap, batteries, mixed cards, newspapers. There was a fine display of fresh fruit such as oranges, pears, bananas, kiwis etc. The computer within the tuck shop is connected into the "pris" system and as each prisoner signs off for the total amount of his order it is recorded on the computer and deducted from his account. Such deductions are also recorded on the computer in the general office. The prisoner also receives a receipt for the goods purchased and the cost of each item. The staff can also purchase goods within the tuck shop and such purchases are recorded separately from that of the prisoners.

Punishments (P19's)

The Inspectorate viewed the manual records relating to the misconduct reports (P19's) and they show that a total of 250 (male) prisoners were on disciplinary reports from 1st January until 15/6/06. It appears that one prisoner was awarded loss of remission of sentence. The majority of the reports related to illegal or prohibited substances or being in possession of or attempting to receive such illegal substances. There were a considerable number for having in their possession or attempting to obtain mobile phones. The Governor has a policy that anyone either in possession of or attempting to obtain prohibited substances is awarded the loss of all privileges for 2 months and screen visits for 6 months. This is the standard punishment imposed for all such misconduct. The punishment imposed (except for the illegal substances) generally ranged from 7 days to one month loss of privileges while some prisoners received consecutive loss of privileges where they had repeated offences. On the day of the examination of the records , 47 prisoners were placed on screen visits and 29 were listed on the loss of privilege records, while 18 of those prisoners named were on both the screen visits and loss of privileges lists. Overall, the punishments imposed do not appear to be too severe and for only one prisoner to lose remission is quite lenient. However, the records from the computer printout re misconduct reports which accompanied the pre inspection questionnaire, show considerably more prisoners as having lost remission, so the Inspectorate are not sure which records are accurate, the manual ones which we examined or the computer print out. [Management state that the computer records

includes punishments imposed on prisoners transferred from other prisons and local records only include punishments imposed at this prison, thus the difference.]

Main Gate

The main gate is the control point for everyone entering or leaving the prison including the vehicular traffic. There is a pedestrian entrance/exit at the side of the main double gates which is electronically controlled by staff from within the office at the main gate. There are two holding cells just off the main gate area which have seating all around the walls. They are tiled and were clean and tidy.

Visitors waiting room

The visitors waiting room is just off the main gate area and visitors have to enter the first outside gate before gaining admission to the waiting room. On entering, the visitors present their I.D and state whom they wish to visit. The officer then checks to establish if the I.D corresponds with those already nominated and to check if the prisoner is entitled to a visit. If in order the visitor is then given a "visiting pass docket" and they are allowed through the 2nd locked gate and proceed to the visiting room area. In the meantime, the officer inside the prison would have collected the named prisoner and accompanied him to the visiting room.

The visitors' waiting room is quite small with bench-type seating back to back down the centre of the floor and around the walls. The floors are tiled and the walls are painted a bright colour so it is quite bright and cheerful. There is

small outshot off the room with a worktop/counter type table at the entrance and personnel from Bedford Row provide tea/coffee biscuits to the visitors from this little kitchen area. There are toilets and baby-changing facilities off the waiting room. The room was clean and tidy but appears too small to cater for the additional visitors that will be arriving if the planned expansion of the prisoner population takes place.

There are no creche facilities for the children and the people from Bedford Row stated that they would operate it, if it was provided. They stated that they have the necessary skilled people to do so.

E wing. Female Prisoners' Section

The "E" wing consists of 10 cells all of which are doubled and even accommodate sometimes three to a single cell. The building was renovated a few years ago and it has in-cell sanitary/washing facilities (no showers in cells). There is one special observation cell which has a raised bed fixed to the floor, a shelf as a table fixed to the wall and a seat attached to the floor. It has a stainless steel toilet and wash hand basin. There is a T.V high up on the wall placed in a protected screen box enclosure. The window allows in plenty of light when the venetian blind inserted between the two perspex sheets is in an open position, likewise with the air flow, both of which can be controlled by the prisoner occupying the cell by turning a knob.

There is a push button call-bell within the cell, which if activated, ignites a red light over the outside of the cell door and also displays a light on a control panel in the officer's office. This cell was not occupied on the day of inspection.

All the cells have bunk beds, a locker and a table. The cells are quite small to hold a bunk bed and are really suitable only for single occupancy. The entire area is very small and the prisoners are constantly in one another's company, consequently there are arguments and disagreements. There are different age groups, different length of sentences, some are on remand, some who are drug addicts, while others are drug-free and not involved in any way in drugs, so all this mixture contained in a very confined area is not conducive to happy living.

The Gym Room

This is quite a small room with some gym equipment (e.g treadmill, walking machine etc) placed on the floor. The floor is tiled and there are a few mats on it for exercise purposes. The Inspectorate were informed that one P.E teacher attends once per week to give P.E instructions.

Laundry

Another small room with 2 washers and 2 dryers with one of each not working, they stated, for quite some time. The floor was tiled and the walls painted and each of the prisoners does her own laundry requirements.

Surgery

The surgery is fitted with an examination couch, desk, computer and wash-hand basin. Apparently this room is used for many purposes e.g governor's parade, phone calls for prisoners, reception, particulars of new

committals, outside agencies such as N.A., A.A., psychologist, etc. It was explained that it is the only available office in the building for such uses but it is unsuitable as a surgery if every other person as outlined is also using it.

Reception & Shower area

The reception is also very small with 20 lockers in it, no desk, no searching facilities and black plastic bags full of clothing piled on top of each other on the floor. It is a dreadfully cramped room and unsuitable as a reception area. There are two shower cubicles which are tiled, clean and tidy. There was water on the shower trays which was not going down the outlet.

Exercise Yard

The entrance to the yard is from a corridor on the ground-floor area. It is not covered with netting and is quite small with a tarmac surface. There are no prisoners' toilets in the yard and it is very dull with grey stone walls. The staff have a hut at the entrance. The prisoners have no shelter if it is raining.

Recreation Hall

There is a pool table, table and chairs and a television in this quite large room, which apparently is also used at times as a classroom and for group meetings. There are 2 presses in the corner which is the library. Just off the room is a toilet but it is not used as a toilet and a phone is installed there for prisoners' use, which is most unsuitable.

Servery Area

The food for the female prisoners is cooked in the main kitchen (male prisoners' section) and wheeled in bain-maries to the servery area which is located in the old female prison section. The walls and floors are tiled, there is a fridge and 2 stainless steel wash-hand basins there provided. There is a small table at the side of the servery area. The prisoners collect their meals on trays and return with them to their cells. The area was clean but it is situated in the very old section of the building which is quite dilapidated.

Education

The education in the female prison section, we were informed, consisted of cooking in a well laid-out kitchen, computers, art and crafts and a few literacy classes.

Health and Safety (especially fire aspects of Health and Safety)

The Inspectorate met the senior staff responsible for health and safety within the prison. They outlined that there is a fire plan for the prison which is updated at least once per year. They stated that all staff are familiar with the fire plan and that maps/drawings of the plans are displayed in some areas of the prison. There are no booklets of the fire plan (pocket size) for individual staff and prisoners have no access to them. Prisoners receive no written instructions re fire prevention/precaution or written instructions to follow in the event of a fire. If the fire plans are changed or altered the staff are informed of same on parade and on the noticeboard. The present fire plan maps do not include the entire prison building as outside contractors are in the process

of building a new wing at present and there are other large maintenance works being carried out, so on completion, these will be added to the maps. The plans do include an outline of the location of the fire hydrants, stand pump connections, fire hose reels, hand-held fire extinguishers, fire alarms, emergency exits, staff and prisoners' assembly points but do not include the "cut off" points of gas/electricity or of any hazardous materials (which are very limited if any). The fire plan was last updated/reviewed in April/May 2006.

There is a fire awareness/prevention committee within the prison. Regarding prison policy in the storage of paint both pre-and post-issue, the paint is stored in a concrete store outside the prison boundary wall and unused paint returned back there for storage.

There is a ring water mains supply surrounding the prison as well as a domestic water supply which all come from the local city's supply. There are 20 hydrants fitted to the mains which are clearly marked with a "H" sign and the lids painted. There are two dry risers in C & D wings and a wet riser in the circle, in "A" and "B" wings, as well as hose reels and fire fighting equipment plus connections within the prison. There is also a "first aid" hose reel which extends to the furthest point of requirement. The prison is not fitted with water storage tanks for emergency/firefighting purposes but the supply from the city's system is adequate. The fire brigade personnel have carried out checks on the water pressure and have connected their fire engines into the prison's system. The last time such an exercise took place was early in 2005. There are water sprinklers installed in the 3 special observation cells.

There are 180 hand-held fire extinguishers located at various points throughout the prison and other buildings. They are not located in steel cabinets (as in some other prisons) but are generally attached to the wall. The extinguishers are the powder/foam type and there are 12 fire blankets located at the various cooking areas as well as an in-built fire-extinguishing capacity in the canopy over the cooking area of the main kitchen but not in the staff canteen kitchen.

Smoke detectors are installed in the cellular areas of C,D and E wing but not in A & B wings. They are installed in other areas such as offices, stores, etc. Those installed in the cells are of the air sampling type while in the other areas they are of the passive detective system. The smoke detectors are linked to control panels which indicate the location of the smoke. Such panels are located in the main control room and “repeaters” in other areas. If the detectors detect smoke in the system, they automatically activate an alarm on the wing and control room. Then after 5 minutes, if not cancelled, it goes into fire alarm mode which sets off the fire bells on the wings. In the event of the fire bells being activated, instructions are given from the control room as to the procedures to follow re evacuation of the building or whatever steps are deemed necessary. There are also fire alarm break-glass units installed at various locations throughout the prison which are exclusively for fire only and not security. There is a smoke extraction system installed in the prison which is of the passive type on A, B, C, D wings and power-assisted on E wing and the circle. It is activated by the fire alarms/smoke detection but can also be operated manually from two different locations. The extractor

also controls the roof vents. There are no fire doors on the corridors or on the stairwells.

There are emergency exits from all of the cellular accommodation and from all of the workshops, except one. All of the other occupied areas such as offices, stores, restrooms, etc have emergency exits and some of the emergency exit signs are illuminated while others are not. Emergency lighting is installed throughout the prison and such lights are protected by grids in areas where prisoners have access. The prison has its own power generator for emergency purposes.

The prison has a service contract with various companies to carry out servicing of emergency equipment and local trades officers also carry out checks and some servicing. The contract outlines if it is monthly, quarterly, half -yearly or yearly services that are required and the records state the dates of such service having been carried out. The particulars of same are as follows:- fire extinguishers (all types) hose reels and fittings, 6 monthly, last service conducted 13/6/06.

Extinguishers over cooking area in canopy - 6 monthly 13/6/06

S.C.B.A (self-contained breathing apparatus) - 6 monthly 13/6/06

B.A. Cylinder pressure tested - monthly - 25/5/06

(smoke detectors, fire alarms, control panels, break-glass units, - quarterly last serviced 15/5/06

Smoke extraction system done yearly, the last service on 14/12/05

Emergency lighting and emergency cut-off points, quarterly done 10/2/06

The local trades staff replace hand-held extinguishers from stock and check the B.A equipment and cylinders monthly. The record shows that the last such check was carried out on 19/6/06. They check the hose reels daily and the emergency exit doors several times during the day as they are unlocked every time the prisoners are locked in their cells. There is no register maintained of daily, weekly, monthly inspections of escape routes, emergency exits, emergency lighting and fire-detection systems, although according to management they are inspected as required. There are service records maintained for all fire and emergency equipment.

Regarding staff training, 130 staff received part refresher training in B.A (donning and doffing only) while no staff received the full B.A refresher course. No training took place in C & R, either in phase one, two or three. There were no refresher training modules in the use of hose reels, stand pipe connections, hand-held extinguishers, donning of protective clothing, etc in the past year. The prison staff and the other prison agencies such as teachers, etc receive no booklets regarding fire prevention/fire evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency within the prison and their responsibilities in such an event. The prisoners are informed verbally that a fire drill exercise is taking place and to follow the instructions to evacuate. There are no fire prevention/evacuation procedures placed in the prisoners' cells. There are emergency exit signs displayed throughout the prison the majority of which are illuminated, but there are no assembly points signs displayed at the assembly areas. The cells on C,D,E wings have an

inundation facility in the cell doors to allow the head of the hose reel into them but cells on A & B division do not have this facility. Regarding the removal of a locked cell door or barricaded in the event of an emergency, the same wings as those outlined have these facilities.

The local fire brigade (which is stationed about 300 yards from the prison) have had several familiarisation tours of the prison; they have brought in their fire tenders and have connected their hose reels into the prison's fittings. Both are compatible with each other. There is an understanding between prison management and the fire brigade personnel regarding procedures to follow in the event that they are called to the prison in an emergency, such as, who meets them at the gate, location of fire or emergency, ways and means to reach the area re locked gates, cell doors, etc. The last time the fire brigade personnel were on a familiarisation tour of the prison was February 2006.

The prisoners receive no notices re fire prevention at committal stage.

Prisoners are allowed to smoke in their cells and in the exercise yards.

Those restrictions appear to be well observed as the Inspectorate did not see any prisoners smoking outside those areas. Staff are allowed to smoke only in open external areas. The prisoners are allowed to have cigarette lighters but no matches in their cells. There are restrictions regarding the amount of combustible materials allowed in prisoners' cells. They are allowed the following:- T.V, radio, electric kettle, PlayStation one and an electric razor.

The stores staff have written into the suppliers contract that all cell materials,

cell furnishing, bedding, etc should conform to flammable standards. The special blankets used in the special observation cells are washed after each use while the duvets in the ordinary cells are laundered every six weeks. The duvet covers are washed weekly. No checks are carried out on the special blankets, duvets or duvet covers after a number of washes to establish the retention of the fire retardancy within them. There are no fire-risk assessments prepared for each area of the prison or of the offices, stores, etc.

There were seven fire drill evacuation exercises carried out from December 2005 until mid-June 2006. Wings A, B,C, D were evacuated in these exercises (all wings of the prison). A total of 526 prisoners were involved in the exercises but the time it took to evacuate the wings was not always recorded. However, the shortest time recorded was 3 minutes while the longest was 8 minutes. The time of day/night that the exercise took place, the time it took to evacuate the area and the number of staff involved (not just the staff i/c of the exercise) should be recorded. It is commendable that so many evacuation exercises took place in that period.

The staff health and safety officer representative was off and not available to meet with the inspectorate.

Meeting with Various Groups and Individuals

Meeting with local branch P.O.A.

The Inspector and Mr. Woods met three representatives of the local branch officers of the P.O.A. The Inspector welcomed them to the meeting and they

said that they appreciated the opportunity to meet with the Inspector and express their views.

They said that following the annual Prison Officers' Conference in Killarney this year, the Inspector gave a press conference in which he outlined that 5 prison officers were under suspicion of drug trafficking, and that this statement was a very serious cause of concern to their members. They said that they questioned the Governor about it and he outlined to them that no staff from Limerick Prison was under suspicion. They felt such a statement painted them all with the same brush when in fact they were innocent. If such was true, then the Inspector should report such information to the Gardai for investigation. The local committee, they stated, would fully support action taken against anyone found trafficking and there was no place in the prison service for them as they are endangering their fellow officers. The Inspector stated he got the information from the Minister himself.

The P.O.A officers stated that the new annualised hours are not working in Limerick Prison despite the best efforts of the union to make it work. The local management refuse to agree and adopt their own strategy which results in serious shortfall of staff. The staff are fearful for their safety as there are now "managed" staff shortages with recognised posts not being filled just to live within budget plus further shortfalls with staff going sick "on the day" or absent. There are 5 staff down each day and then the sick on top of those five, resulting in services to prisoners being affected, such as censor office, phones, exercise, etc. The reduction of staff during lock-up period compels

an officer to supervise two wings which is impossible and not compliant with the fire plan or fire regulations. There was a shortfall of staff prior to the annualised hours and a new wing was opened with the closure of Fort Mitchel which took 10 extra staff to operate but those posts were taken from elsewhere within the prison.

They outlined the various criminal gangs within the prison resulting in their having to divide, separate, isolate the various sections to try and eliminate serious trouble among them. Intimidation from other prisoners was another factor and all of these problems were being managed with under-staffing and budgetary constraints.

The prisoners' food requirements were even reduced with the same amounts being purchased now as when there were nearly 100 fewer prisoners in the prison. The prison is overcrowded. The Minister closed Fort Mitchel (Spike Island), and now the revolving door has started again or else he will have to reopen the same institution.

The Inspector enquired about the "Connect" project and was informed that it does not exist, that 5 posts are cut daily of which 3 were assigned to the Connect Project. The question of bullying was raised and the Inspector was told that it does exist with prisoners on fellow prisoners but was not evident with staff on prisoners. The P.O.A officers stated that gangland-related intimidation/bullying was becoming more evident with the different groups,

factions, etc, placing pressure or threats on each other. They felt that racism was not a problem in the prison.

They said that staff are concerned about the amount of psychiatrically ill prisoners that are being held in the prison and felt that they should be in a psychiatric hospital. The Inspector agreed with their views. They felt that prison staff are not trained in dealing with these unfortunate people although they receive a very caring and compassionate service from prison staff.

The P.O.A officers outlined the lack of in-cell sanitation on the A and B wings and the degrading practice of "slopping out" continues daily. It is humiliating and demeaning for both prisoners and staff. The Inspector said the sooner this practice is discontinued the better and both of these wings replaced with modern facilities. This concluded the meeting and the Inspector thanked them for their attendance and frank discussions.

Meeting with "Heads of Functions"

The Inspector and Mr. Woods welcomed the "Heads of Function" which included Chief Officers, Clerk Grade I's, Chief Trades Officer, Industrial Manager, C.O in charge of detail/duties.

The Inspector outlined the benefits of an inspection. It was an "outside" eye with a fresh or different approach to the service. It was good for public confidence and also good for both staff and prisoners.

The following were the main points raised and discussed:- positive sentence management - prisoners not leaving the prison without financial support or accommodation. The P & W staff are the keystone to this policy.

- “Pris” I.T operating very well. The information booth for staff installed but not working very well as there are problems with pin numbers.
- “Oracle” (Central purchasing unit) not connected and as result they are still paying bills manually.
- Assaults committed within the prison are recorded on computer.
- They have 8 trades staff at present but according to the new annualised hours they should have only 5 trades officers - 3 are to be redeployed to discipline duties, but this so far has not happened.
- The “sort” staffing levels did not provide for escorting outside contractors around the prison - who should do this - trades staff or discipline staff? To be sorted out as trades staff doing it at present
- Outside contractors are called into the prison at weekends if there is a fault or failure recorded. The maintenance of the prison is slipping as a result of the new agreement. Outside contractors do only what they have been called in to do but will not do the general maintenance which may be causing the problem “back the line”.
- Two new industrial workshops opening (A) computers on D4 with ECDL training given by 2 Assistant Industrial Supervisors I and (B) the industrial cleaning workshop to be established to certified standard with 1 Industrial Supervisor and 1 Assistant Industrial Supervisor.

- The carpentry workshop will be opening shortly following its redevelopment and also a craft shop.
- A new post for the female prison with an Assistant Industrial Supervisor in charge of a beauty therapy shop, also a new embroidering shop with the most up to date machine
- The kitchen and laundry to be revamped, work starting in July.
- The placing of foreign nationals for deportation in prison is wrong and they get a lot of such prisoners from Shannon and Cork airports.
- The annualised hours have not allowed for sufficient staffing levels. The staff have worked 100% of their additional hours in the last quarter and it will be the same for the current quarter. Unlimited demand to supply the courts but the prison cannot meet the demand.
- Overcrowding in the prison is a problem. There is also a serious drug problem. Gangland problems/feuds are also all major forthcoming concerns.
- A lot of prisoner-on-prisoner violence resulting in harassment and leading to them being placed on 23-hour lock-up. Threats to family members outside to bring drugs into the prison.
- The Gardai have been active in this area of preventing drugs getting into the prison. They have arrested visitors, some of whom have been convicted and sentenced.
- New drug detection (X-ray type) machine purchased for use in the prison
- Increase in staff sick leave is a direct result of them not being able to get their time off.
- Nobody promoted from the liaison officer's promotion panel and no training officer in the prison as a result.

- A high percentage of prisoners here are suffering from mental illnesses and there is difficulty in getting prisoners transferred to the Central Mental Hospital. Prisoners transferred to the C.M.H recertified to appear in court, certified again and returned to the C.M.H. Either a prisoner is sane or not within the same day?

This concludes the discussions and the Inspector thanked them for their attendance and contributions to the meeting.

Meeting with members of the Bedford Row Project

The Inspectorate met 3 ladies from the Bedford Row Project, two of whom provide tea/coffee, etc to the prisoners' visitors in the waiting room while the 3rd person works from their family resource centre in Lower Bedford Row, Franciscan Friary in Limerick City.

They would like to see addiction services for the prisoners. They know that detox and some counselling takes place but there should be further therapy services. There is a need for more A.A and N.A counsellors as it is impossible for the present counsellors to cover the entire prison population including the females. Mental health problems were another of their concerns where again they feel that there is an inadequate level of psychiatrists, psychologists and counsellors.

The fact that there is no "drug-free wing" or area in the prison is a problem for those prisoners who get off drugs or those who have never taken illegal drugs

as at present they are living in a drug culture environment with constant pressure to get involved. They are also under pressure for their families on the outside to get involved.

They complained of the lack of services/programmes for prisoners such as life skills, anger management, Connect, etc not operating within the prison. They spoke of the outside work projects such as the assembly workshops in Castlerea Prison and why such type of project could not be done in this prison? It would give incentives to the prisoners.

Regarding education for prisoners, they felt some of the prisoners are dyslexic and there were not sufficient numbers of teachers to provide a one-to-one education for them. They suggested that there should be more flexibility regarding allowing outside people to come into the prison to provide extra educational classes, perhaps even retired teachers who may be willing to give a few hours free of charge.

The prisoners' children are not allowed contact with their father on the visit and they feel this is a rather harsh regime as it is the children that are being punished for the wrongdoing of their father. Discussions took place regarding drugs being brought into the prison even in children's clothing, so balances have to be struck. They said that they were able and willing to run a creche facility for the children when visiting the prison but that there was no room available to provide this service.

Discussions took place regarding the Parole Board and its functions. They felt that the Parole Board make suggestions for prisoners to follow re programmes in order to get favourable reviews later in their sentences but that a considerable number of the programmes cannot be adhered to as the prison cannot provide the programmes offered.

Meeting with Officers

The Inspectorate met a few officers who requested to meet the inspector. They outlined their concerns regarding their long distance travel of approx 300 miles per day to and from work. They had been stationed in Fort Mitchel and Cork Prison but were now permanently transferred to Limerick as a result of the closure of Fort Mitchel. They are aware of the exigencies of the service and its requirements which resulted in the transfers. However, they feel that they have homes and families living miles from thier present location and its having it's effects on family life. In addition they are unable to give of their best service due to tiredness from such amount of travel. They also feel that it is a health and safety issue. Added to the problem is the fact that they have to work their 90 additional hours per quarter, resulting in none of the additional time off. They have to work their occasional Saturdays when due off at week-ends, resulting in less time at home and more travel. There are problems with the duties' roster. Some staff are not allowed to work any annualised hours, some staff who are junior in service are getting onto the roster while more senior staff are not allowed onto it. Some staff were on a 7-day liability with no annualised hours but this has changed to 8 - 5 duties with annualised hours. The staff that are affected by the transfers and the

annualised hours system are frustrated and disappointed with the service. They feel that they have got an unfair deal. Management state that they hope to get additional staff, that some of their other staff are awaiting redeployment and when the staffing levels reach their proper levels, that a lot of the present problems should diminish.

Meeting with the Probation and Welfare Officers

The Probation and Welfare Officers met the Inspector and Mr. Woods. They outlined that their staff consisted of one full-time officer working in the prison, another officer who works part-time here (2 days per week) and a senior who works part-time in the prison and the rest out in the community. They feel the proper staffing levels should be 5 officers and one senior, all full-time.

They explained that working in the prison environment is different from outside work in that there is a structure to a day's work outside whereas with the prison a lot of the work consists of solving problems as they arise on the spot.

Discussions took place regarding alternatives to prison and that prison should be the last resort. It was the opinion of the welfare staff that a lot of the prisoners serving life sentences started off in petty or small-time crime and if their offending behaviour had been challenged at an early stage and they had been given support at that time, they might not have ended up serving life sentences.

There are sex offenders in the prison but there are no sex offenders' programmes here for them. They are made aware of the programme in Arbour Hill Prison and can apply for same when they are seeking new applicants.

There is a lifers' course running in the prison at present with 9 prisoners involved . There is no anger management course but they hope to commence one in September next. The Welfare Officer stated that they have to prioritise their work, to work with lifers and long-sentenced and then other courses or programmes follow on from that.

The Inspector enquired about accommodation for the prisoner on release and was informed that if the welfare staff are aware of their leaving they generally can get accommodated with Limerick County Council's homeless unit. A person from the council's homeless unit comes into the prison and gives all of the necessary information such as phone numbers, location, times of opening, whom to contact, etc to those who are due to be released shortly.

If a prisoner has no money on release, the welfare staff talk to the Governor and they have never been refused a donation from him. The prison releases are organised, as far as possible, to be let out on a Thursday rather than Friday or week-ends when most places on the outside are closed to secure accommodation or to meet the community welfare officer. The prisoners on "organised" release are issued by the welfare staff with the community officer's telephone numbers and location of the Department of Social and Family Affairs office. The Community Welfare Officer telephones the

probation officer who confirms the dates of the prisoner's imprisonment and he grants the prisoner money until he gets his dole.

There are no pre-release courses at present but maybe there will be in the autumn. They are involved with the teachers regarding some information courses. They have placed posters in the women's prison today regarding courses for them commencing in the autumn.

They had to prepare 13 reports in the past year for the Parole Board. They are extremely time-consuming especially if it's the prisoner's first review and a lot of background information has to be gathered. Subsequent reviews of the prisoners are not as time-consuming. There can be a considerable amount of work stemming from the Parole Board's findings and their recommendations may involve further work.

Liaison meetings are held every Wednesday in which all the heads of functions attend and a number of prisoners' cases are discussed.

There are no access restrictions placed on the Probation and Welfare officers and they can move freely throughout the prison without an escort. They state that this has its advantages as sometimes a prisoner talks more freely at a casual meeting than within a formal office setting. The disadvantages are, of course, their own safety as well as several prisoners wishing to talk to them and not having the sufficient time to deal with them all. There are only 1.4 Probation and Welfare Officers for 300 prisoners.

The Inspector asked if there was racism in the prison to which they replied that they thought there was racism in every aspect of Irish Society, outside as well as inside. Prison was only a mirror of outside. It's the same people. They did have experience of racist remarks within the group that they were running but they condemned it right away and confronted the people responsible.

They were asked about the availability of interpreters for prisoners and they said that they had no problems in this area. If they needed them they were got, even for Eastern European countries. The same applied to embassies. They had no problems contacting them either and found them to be helpful.

This concluded the meeting and the Inspector thanked them for coming and giving of their time which we appreciated.

Meeting with the Visiting Committee

The Inspector met 5 members of the prison's Visiting Committee. He welcomed them and they outlined their delight at meeting the Inspector. The group outlined that the committee met once per month and that at each meeting 2 or 3 members are selected to visit the prison unannounced once or twice during the month. They said that they have good relationships with the Governor and staff. Their annual report for 2004 was provided as a more recent report was not to hand. They listed the problems with which they had to deal for prisoners:-

- (1) Transfers to other places of detention
- (2) Loss of privileges
- (3) Restoration of loss permission
- (4) Family visits
- (5) Medical treatment
- (6) General complaints.

The Inspector explained that he has absolutely no function in dealing with individual prisoners or relating to individual problems. Most of them pointed out that under Section 19 of the 1997 Act that there were appeals available. A few prisoners appealed the formed decisions of the Governor. This has in fact been highlighted to the CPT. However, the Inspector pointed out that it was subject to rules which have not yet emerged and which in the humble opinion of the Inspector having regard to the original mindset of the Department and its current Minister will never become a reality.

The Visiting Committee has welcomed the “Connect Project” as indeed does the Inspector. However, despite the fact that €60 million was provided for it to be rolled out in all prisons and the Minister had indicated that it was working in Limerick, this in fact is not the situation. The Connect Project is “not up and running” in this prison.

The Inspector raised the question of racism. The committee said they had no complaints about racism. The Inspector pointed out that the visiting Committee should be pro-active. They should seek out and ascertain whether there is in fact active racial discrimination between prisoner and

prisoners or prisoners and staff which can be found in bullying or in casual conversation. Most people will deny it.

The Inspector expressed the view that Visiting Committees should be much more pro-active than they were. He pointed out that he recommended this to another Visiting Committee. The first thing they did was to write a letter to the "Irish Times" with inaccurate information, attacking the Inspector himself!! So be it

The Visiting Committee seemed a dedicated and interesting group and are particularly anxious in becoming more pro-active.

Meeting the Catholic Chaplain

The Inspector met with Fr. Walsh who was only newly appointed to the post on our last full inspection of Limerick Prison in 2002. He told me that there had been a number of changes in prison chaplains in that Fr. Morris of Castlerea had now become a parish priest and that Fr. Blake, who was Chairman of the Catholic Chaplains and who was assigned to Arbour Hill Prison is also about to leave. However, as far as he knew he was remaining in situ. He agreed entirely with the annual report of the chaplains which the Inspector has highlighted in several reports. He is much alive to the various problems in Limerick Prison. They still have hope despite reporting the failures of the service over and over again. The system and mindset have failed. The Inspector had hoped for a visionary approach but sadly it has not happened and apparently will not do so during the current administration.

He has no complaints about his relationship with management or the Governor, staff or the prisoners.

Meeting with male prisoners

The Inspector and Mr. McCutcheon met with a group of 7 male prisoners.

It appears that the introduction of the new rota system (annualised hours) resulted in a slightly harsher regime, especially towards the end of the first quarter – this may be a case of teething problems experienced in the implementation of the new system. Nevertheless, it was reported that there was restricted access to the gym and educational services during this time. Complaints were made that certain items (e.g. runners) could not be brought into the prison. However, prison staff later informed me that the difficulty lies in the fact that illegal drugs such as heroin and cocaine had been found stitched into runners. In fact we were shown a pair of runners which had a considerable amounts of illegal substance placed in the sole of it , the sole reglued and then taken into the prison. It was found on the day of inspection.

Prisoners complained of the lack of counselling and support services. In particular, Narcotics Anonymous does not function in the prison, although many prisoners admitted to drug problems. By the same token anger management classes are not available.

As far as medical services are concerned, prisoners were generally happy with the nurses and medical orderlies. However, there were said to be long

waiting lists for the psychiatrist and dentist. Concern was also expressed about post-operative arrangements for prisoners who were facing surgery. Separately, Mr. Woods and Mr. McCutcheon met a small group of prisoners who were working in the kitchen. Two issues relating to pay for this work were raised. First, it was said that the pay rate was no different to that offered for less onerous work (such as cleaning) and thus was a disincentive to what is otherwise a valuable work experience. Secondly, the pay rate for kitchen work in Limerick is said to be significantly less than that offered in other prisons. I have made the point in other reports, that there is a strong case for implementing a similar pay scale for similar types of work across the prison system.

Meeting with Mr Billy Fox, ALJEFF

The Inspector and Mr. McCutcheon met Mr Billy Fox of "ALJEFF", a local organisation dedicated to combating addiction and suicide. Mr Fox explained that his organisation takes referrals through the school, welfare service etc. His organisation supply all four counsellors to the prison. They see between 30 and 40 prisoners per month. Mr Fox identified a number of difficulties:

Lack of space in the prison to provide their service: private rooms are needed;

Some counsellors are reluctant to work in a prison setting: pay and conditions are better elsewhere;

Residential centres are reluctant to take prisoners directly and there is a need for half-way houses;

Funding from the IPS was identified as a problem;

“ALJEFF” would like to work with families (especially prior to release) and to engage in group therapy.

Mr Fox did state that he found his attendance at the weekly multi disciplinary meetings to be helpful.

Meeting with female prisoners

The Inspectorate met a group of female prisoners. They raised a number of issues of which the following were their main complaints:-

- The place is too small and 2 or 3 prisoners to a single cell is terrible as they have to live with each other in such confined space and have a toilet in the cell with them.
- No locks on the toilet doors (not the toilets in their cells but those on the landing, recreation area, etc)
- Difficulty in seeing the psychologist - only comes 1 day per fortnight
- The pad in the old section of the prison used for 2 female prisoners

- Very poor food in this section of the prison.
- Prisoners having to mix with each other, some are drug addicts, some are sick while those who don't want to get involved in drugs must live with those who do abuse drugs.
- No work and terrible boredom in the place.
- No programmes for long-sentence prisoners and those serving long sentences must live with those on remand or those only serving a short sentence.
- Poor laundry facilities and lock-up too long in their cells
- Checked in their cells by male staff - should be all female staff.
- No facilities for their children if they come to visit them, also poor overall visiting facilities - no family visits.
- Problem with seeing the dentist and problem with library service which only consist of a few books in a press in the corner of a room.
- A male doctor and sometimes a male nurse attend to the female prisoners' medical requirements. Doctor does not see the prisoners on return from outside hospital.

- No dedicated telephone line to the Samaritans.
- Families not informed of prisoners going into an outside hospital as in-patients.
- Male prisoners held in the old prison block had use of their exercise yard and consequently they were locked up during the time the male prisoners exercised.

The Inspectorate's impression of the women's wing of the prison is that it is cramped, very confined and highly claustrophobic. More space is urgently required. The overflow of the male prisoners were accommodated in cells in the old wing adjacent to the females and did use the same exercise yard. This was as a result of overcrowding in the male prison. The female prisoners should not have their facilities curtailed because of the overcrowding in the male side. Management state that such only happens when they are extremely overcrowded and simply have nowhere else to put them. It does not happen very often according to management. The prisoners felt that the female wing in Limerick compares unfavourably with the Dochas Centre in Dublin. The food is the same as that of the male prisoners which was sampled during our inspection and found to be good quality, well presented and tasty. The fact that it is transported to the female wing in bain-maries should not take from its quality. The prison's doctor is a male and he deals with all of the prisoners both male and female. Generally it is a

female nurse who attends to the female prisoners' medical requirement but very occasionally, a male nurse is the only nursing staff available at a particular time to deal with the female prisoners. Apparently there is also a shortage of female staff attached to the prison and male staff have to supervise the female prisoners in their cells on occasions. There appears to be a lack of meaningful work and education is limited. (Although the teacher stated that more education classes are available but the prisoners declined to attend.) The fact that classes are restricted, the whole area is so cramped and that the prisoners are so crowded together is obviously causing friction among them and as they stated "getting on each other's nerves". A total of 8 - 10 prisoners in single cells would be much more suitable for this area.

Meeting with the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher briefed me on the education programme in the prison. Although they have improved somewhat since my last visit, the educational facilities leave much to be desired. However, I am informed that better provision will be made when the new wing, which is currently under construction, is completed.

Prisoners can take a variety of courses from elementary courses in literacy through a range of FETAC programmes up to degrees – eight prisoners are currently taking Open University courses.

While some prisoners complained of inconsistent access to educational services the head teacher painted a somewhat different picture of inconsistent attendance on the part of prisoners.

At present prisoners are not allowed computers or DVD players in their cells, even where these are sought for educational reasons. Consideration should be given to reversing this policy where there are genuine educational needs.

Meeting with the Nurses

The Inspectorate's doctor met the nurses. They outlined that there are five nurses and five medical orderlies. There are two staff on during the day and one on at night. They are happy enough with one person being on at night however, before the additional 104 new prisoners were admitted to the prison, there were still only two staff on during the day time. There was a need for one extra staff as a ratio of one nurse or medical orderly per 100 prisoner is the norm, I was informed.

Methadone is given either by one of the nurses or by the medical orderly. There is a deep concern that if methadone is to be given on a wide scale, regular drug testing must accompany this, as they feel there is not a sufficient awareness of the physical danger of giving methadone to someone who may take other drugs at the same time. In essence this needs extra staff to manage a full methadone programme.

The post of healthcare supervisor has not yet been advertised but there is a need for one and they are unsure of this person's duties. Will they be used as a third nurse or what?

The nursing staff are at present being used for non-nursing duties and this they tell me is not acceptable. Management state that they are not used on discipline duties within the prison but on some occasions may be used to escort a prisoner to a hospital.

The service is computerised and all the staff are computer literate. This is very good and they tell me they are the first in the service to be computerised.

They have a good relationship with the outside general hospital although the waiting list for E & T and orthopaedics is very long. The prison authorities know well in advance of a prisoner's appointment to the hospital for follow-up visits. However, they can be cancelled at the last minute owing to staff shortage. This is not acceptable, I was informed. Management state that it is not usual to cancel an appointment at the last minute. If it has to be cancelled, generally a week's notice is given.

I was informed that the medical equipment is excellent. However training in its use is a problem. They have for example emergency rescue packs but they have not yet been trained how to use them.

Retraining in the use of all equipment is necessary on a regular basis, I was informed.

They feel a small number of prisoners should be in a psychiatric hospital and not a prison and that prisons can be used as a "dumping ground".

Regarding the female prisoners, there are no private facilities for discussions on medical matters and there should be 2 present to do a smear test for ethical reasons. A library in one of the prisons would also be very helpful.

Phlebotomy training is also needed.

Currently the pharmacy is in a secure unit away from the main prison. This will be moved when the new medical unit is established where prisoners will not have access to it.

There are no problems in obtaining medication even at weekends when medication can be obtained from the local pharmacies.

Prisoners on discharge are given a prescription for a small supply of medication but prisoners can be discharged with medication occasionally when there is pressure on accommodation. The prisoners on a methadone list can be a problem.

A methadone clinic based in a surgery is an absolute necessity in any modern service where methadone will be dispensed in a safe environment with two people present to witness its administration.

A health promotion service is not available in this prison

Meeting with the Prison's doctor

Dr Ryder was seen on June 21st. There is a conflict with regard to his attitude to the medical orderlies and the nurses. Dr. Ryder feels that the skills of the medical orderlies are not fully appreciated and they have a greater knowledge of the prisoners and are more helpful to him. He was recently assaulted and he feels that if a medical orderly were present this could have been prevented.

He feels that the computerised system is very cumbersome. There are problems with other prisons who do not have computers and prisoners can be transferred without computer information available.

There is not as yet, he informed me, a policy on methadone and there has been no discussion between him and "the authorities" about it.

He was not asked, he informed me, to have an input into the design of the new medical centre. He wonders if it would be possible to view prisoners providing urine samples, those who are on methadone.

He often does not know when prisoners have been discharged so that they maybe given short-term prescriptions by him.

He feels that nurses should work from 9.00 - 5.00p.m separately from the medical orderlies.

He agrees that prisoners on occasions are not able to attend out-patient visits to consultants when they have been planned well in advance.

The safety of medicines being distributed in the units is in question and he is of the opinion that the prisoners should come down to a central point to receive their medication.

He would like to meet with “the prison authorities” on a regular basis.

His own secretary types relevant letters re prisoners.

Prisoners with psychiatric conditions are still being sent to prison rather than to psychiatric services.

Meeting with the Psychologists

Dr. Ledwith met with the two psychologists Dr. O’Sullivan and Mr. O’Connell who provide a service to Limerick Prison. One told him that he visits once every two weeks for a full day from 9.00am - 12.00pm and from 2.00pm - 4.30pm and that he works with female prisoners.

Dr. O’Sullivan makes one full day visit a week. She is working solely with male prisoners.

Mr. O'Connell spoke about the small amount of space in the female prison including their open yard which fronts onto a male yard. He deals with substance abuse and uses behaviour therapy.

He does feel that he is getting results and that acting out behaviour has lowered.

Limerick is seen as a less desirable prison than Dochas, he informed me. Dr. O'Sullivan spoke of the number of "lifers" who need special help and of the advantages of good therapy.

A full-time psychologist is to be appointed to Limerick Prison soon, she informed me, but she and Mr. O'Connell would still continue to attend as before.

Prisoners with problems of addiction need specific counselling and she does not believe that there is sufficient counselling for them at present.

A multidisciplinary team approach to prisoners who have mental health problems is, she told me, "the way to go" as the service develops.

She finds the prison staff to be very helpful.

Murderers, she informed me, have huge mental health problems and these are not being dealt with at present. They should be seen by a

multi-disciplinary team and very rarely do they ever get to a psychiatric hospital.

Meeting the Dentist

The Inspectorate's Dr. Ledwith met Mr. McMahon, the dentist, who informed him that he had been in Limerick Prison for the past 26 years.

He sits every Thursday from 2.00pm - 4.45pm and he sees about 8 to 10 prisoners per session.

Prisoners are referred via the prison officers, nurses and doctor. There was a waiting list about three weeks ago with about 36 on it and he was able to clear it.

If a waiting list develops again he would have no problem in coming in more often. There is a problem in seeing female prisoners as all the males have to be removed before they are seen. The dental surgery is in the middle of a male wing.

The new unit will however change all this.

Dr. McMahon brings his own nurse.

He says the equipment is fine but needs repairing from time to time and he has found somebody locally to do this.

In order to get new equipment there is a problem because all new equipment has to be sent out to tender at least in triplicate.

An O.P.G is needed and he informed me that it would make a huge difference if one was installed in the new unit, as at present, the prisoners have to go to Cork for X-raying O.P.G. This is an expensive exercise.

He tells me that he has to do a lot of dental extractions because of the state of the prisoners' teeth, especially those on sugar-based methadone. This, in fact, is no longer used. Molar root canal work is not allowed, he informed me.

He is very keen to treat dental pain as quickly as possible.

Meeting with the Psychiatrist

Dr. Ledwith met Dr. Grojanur or Dr Raj as he is known in the prison.

Dr. Grojanur attends Limerick Prison on Tuesday afternoon and a Friday afternoon for about three hours in each session.

He informed me that he sees new referrals on a Tuesday, usually about two new prisoners and about 3 - 5 return cases. The list is made for him by the prison staff. On a Friday he mostly sees return patients. There was a main waiting list, he informed me, but there is not one now.

Court reports are needed from time to time and he can see one other prisoner on the date of the court report.

In the past five months he sought referral of a prisoner to the CMH only on one occasion. He did not succeed but the prisoner did improve to such an extent after a while on medication that there wasn't a need to send the prisoner to the CMH.

He does not use benzodiazapines for night station but uses other medication if necessary. He sees prisoners with depression, with psychosis and with psychotic reactions related to drug addiction.

He is not involved with methadone administration, he informed me, but Dr. Ryder deals with that himself.

He does have referrals from Dr. Ryder but he has only met him on two occasions.

More than 50% of prisoners have a drug problem, he informed me, cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy, and these prisoners particularly look for benzos but he uses alternative medicines instead.

When prisoners are discharged he does not often know when this is to happen. If he does, he tries to make sure that they are followed up by the local psychiatric clinic, but he has noticed a reluctance of psychiatric clinics to take ex-prisoners.

At times he does not know why prisoners are referred to him and he feels that there is a communication problem in the prison. He does not get any feedback from the psychologists.

He is of the opinion that a multidisciplinary team meeting would be of benefit. He tells me that he will continue to work in the unit until a full-time psychiatrist is appointed.

He has quite a few prisoners on lithium and he does not always know what happens when they are discharged from prison. He hopes that they will visit their GP's and continue to take the lithium.

He has no contact with the addiction counsellors. There should be, he believes, a designated person whose responsibility it is to see that discharged prisoners know their GP's and know what medication they have been discharged on.

He tells prisoners himself their diagnosis and the name of the medication that they are on and why they are on it.

He has had no formal meetings with the Governor.

Travellers on discharge are a particular problem as they have no regular general adviser to attend after they are discharged.

Recommendations

1. That local management have the upper bunk beds used in the double cells checked to ensure that they comply with the required standards (pages 37,47).
2. That the records maintained for prisoners held in the isolation cells be amended to include the suggested information (page 35 + 104).
3. That the hygiene levels as outlined in some areas of the prison be brought up to an acceptable standard (pages 34,37,39, 41,46)
4. That arrangements be made to have the waste bins on the landings emptied regularly (page 41).
5. That if possible, to have the waste material which is littering the netting over the "D" exercise yard removed (page 39).
6. That a forklift be purchased for stores staff's use to eliminate the manual lifting of materials to the upper shelving in the stores (page 53,54).
7. That additional information be recorded when a fire drill evacuation exercise takes place (page 68).
8. That prisoners get an equal payment for similar work across the entire service and the Prison Service Headquarters look into this issue (page 83).

9. That if male prisoners are accommodated in the old female section of the prison, the female prisoners' activities/facilities should not be curtailed as a result (page 87)
10. That a new O.P.G. (dental X-ray machine) be installed in the new building wing's medical facilities (page 96).
11. That a local multidisciplinary team consisting of representatives from the medical, psychological, counselling, welfare, and prison management be formed and meet quarterly to discuss medical matters relating to prisoners' Welfare /programmes (page 98)
12. That the local prison doctor (G.P.) have an input into the medical requirements/equipment needed in the fitting out of the medical section of the new building (wing being erected at present) (page 92).
13. That the Probation & Welfare staffing levels for the prison be increased (page 79 + 107).
14. That an additional psychologist be appointed to the prison as soon as possible (page 94)
15. That the number of female prisoners held in the prison should be reduced and that provision for a new female prison for the Munster region should be planned. (page 59 + 110)

Conclusions

A lot of building and improvement work has been carried out at Limerick Prison since our last inspection. The prison is very old and the knocking down of the old wings and replacing them with new modern ones is very welcome. The last two wings to be replaced (A & B) should be done as soon as possible as their conditions are poor and the practice of slopping out which takes place in both of these wings is degrading for everyone involved. The new/redeveloped entrance to the prison is a wonderful improvement with the removal of the Portakabins from the front of the prison, the new waiting room for visitors, the new pedestrian entrance, the provision of the holding cells, etc. However, the visitors' waiting room is somewhat small and if the proposed expansion takes place there will certainly need to be a large increase in this area. The office provided for the staff to deal with visitors is tiny and will also need much more space in the proposed expansion. The fact that there are no creche facilities for the visitors' children is a drawback.

The education is still being provided in scattered classrooms throughout the prison, as are some of the workshops and indeed the medical services.

There is a new wing in the process of being built which will accommodate all of these facilities within the one general area, which is welcomed. This wing is due for completion next January or February if the contract is completed on time.

Prisoners are issued with phone cards after committal and they can nominate 3 family members and make a call daily to either family member or their

solicitor. Extra calls can be granted by the Governor. The calls to family members can be monitored. They can also write and receive unlimited numbers of letters, which are censored. They can phone the Samaritans at any time and there is a dedicated telephone for that purpose. Such calls are not monitored. They can also telephone and write to their legal adviser without being monitored or censored. They have a library facility which holds approx 3 thousand books including a law book section but as a result of staff shortages its accessibility is curtailed. There is an extensive tuck shop with a good supply of goods and fresh fruit. Televisions are provided in the cells as are electric kettles. If prisoners wish, they can provide their own other electrical items such as radio, PlayStations etc. Prisoners are allowed two visits per week (sentenced) and two visits per day if on remand or for trial. Extra visits are granted generously by prison management. The visits are recorded on C.C.T.V and prisoners are searched at random returning from visits. There were 47 prisoners as of 14/6/06 listed as being placed on screen visits as a result of either having in their possession or attempting to obtain a prohibited substance. There are two gyms in the male prison with a daily average of 48 - 52 prisoners attending. The gyms are open Mondays to Fridays 9.30 - 12.00 noon and 2.15pm - 4.00pm. No gym during evening recreation period 5.15pm - 7.15 pm or on Saturdays or Sundays. There is a P.E teacher attached to the prison. It is surprising that the gyms are not available at weekends or during the evening recreation period as use of the gyms at these times are very popular in other institutions.

The Management state that there is no limit on the number of showers a prisoner can take per week but all take at least one. They can have two changes of clean underwear and socks per week as well as having their shirt, jumper, towels, sheets, pillowcases, duvet covers, etc laundered once per week. They can have a change of duvet every six weeks. All of the clothing is laundered within the prison. Prisoners, on completion of a session in the gym can have a shower.

Prisoners on committal receive a booklet outlining their entitlements, rules and regulations, how and where they can meet the various "heads" of functions e.g governor, doctor, probation and welfare officers, chaplain, etc. They also receive a booklet on "Aids". A prisoners can see the governor the next day after committal, the doctor 24 hours after committal, the probation and welfare officer, the chaplain and head teacher on request. A prisoner can make a phone call to family or friend on committal and before he sees the heads of functions.

250 prisoners were on disciplinary reports (p.19's) for breach of prison rules from 1st January to 15/06/06. One prisoner escaped while out of the prison under escort during the year. The major problem of illegal drugs getting into the prison is an ongoing concern and the p.19's reflect the extent of the problem. The various ways and means that prisoners use to obtain the drugs is incredible. The illegal drug problem is causing disciplinary concerns as it leads to gangs, gangland-type feuds, harassment, intimidation, crime bosses, etc resulting in prisoners being placed on protection and in segregation which

is affecting the whole regime of the prison. The disciplinary reports examined by the Inspectorate reflected that the prisoners were dealt with fairly and the punishments imposed were not excessive.

The number of prisoners placed in “special observation cells” for “security” reasons in the past 6 months was 18 while the number placed there for “medical” reasons was 2. The longest a prisoner remained in the special cell was stated as 3 days. The records retained at the special cell area did not always state the date the prisoner was removed nor did it indicate who in authority/senior management visited him while detained. There was no provision for an initial or signature of the senior officer to the effect that they visited. It is recommended that the recording of such information as well as what is already recorded be undertaken and complied with.

Work/training for prisoners is limited at present. The pre-inspection questionnaire states that 112 prisoners are engaged daily in catering, laundry, fabric, (not always open due to staff shortage), cleaning and gymnasium leaving a balance of 154 prisoners of which approx 28 are on remand. The educational statistics in the pre-inspection questionnaire outlines that a daily average of 50 prisoners attend, therefore approx 80 sentenced prisoners per day are idle. The Inspectorate were informed that the prison is awaiting the appointment of one industrial supervisor and ten assistant industrial supervisors which, when appointed, will provide an additional six work/training facilities to recognised certification standards. The sooner these extra work/training areas are provided the better.

The educational needs of the prisoners are provided for 8 full-time and 12 part-time teachers. The full range of subjects is available in the Junior and Leaving Certificates as well as Open University. Four prisoners sat their Junior Certificate while five sat their Leaving Certificate in 2005. A further 34 prisoners received accreditation certificates in 2005 from Fetac in health related fitness, sound recording, communication, personal effectiveness, computer literacy, also Fas/Fetac certs in woodworking and sewing. There are 15 prisoners involved in education who cannot read or write while 5 prisoners in education can only sign their name. There are two teachers involved in remedial teaching which entails 10 hours per day in literacy and numeracy work. The classrooms are scattered throughout the prison and the new wing which is being erected will bring them all together. This is welcomed and is urgent.

The prisoners' medical needs are cared for by a doctor (G.P) who is contracted to attend for 2 hours per day, a psychiatrist who attends about 6 hours per week, the dentist who attends approx 3 hours per week, two psychologists who work 1 1/2 days per week, the optician who attends approx 4 hours every 3 months and 10 nursing staff (five nurses and 5 medical orderlies). The pre-inspection questionnaire states that there is a waiting list of 1-6 weeks for the prisoners to see the psychiatrist while there is a waiting time of 2-6 weeks to see the dentist. Both of these professions state that the waiting lists are cleared and that they no longer exist. It is stated that there is a 1-2 week waiting list to see the psychologists.

During the past 6 months, 12 prisoners attended the prison's surgery as a result of accidents while 9 attended as a result of incidents/assaults or self inflicted injuries. There were 7 attempted suicides in the same period. There was one death in custody in the past 12 months (which appears to be from natural causes. However, it is unknown at present as they are awaiting a coroner's inquest). There were 72 prisoners referred to outside general medical hospitals and 7 as in patients in the past 6 months. 2 prisoners were transferred to the Central Mental Hospital for assessment/court reports as outpatients and none transferred as inpatients. The prison received 2 prisoners from the C.M.H who had been inpatients. There is an average of 10 prisoners per day on a detoxification treatment course while a further 10 are on methadone detox treatment. There is a drug and alcohol counselling service being provided with 4 addiction counsellors and one psychotherapist part-time providing same. There are "no smoking areas" within the prison, there are no-smoking programmes and patches are provided. Prisoners can receive anti-hepatitis vaccine if they request it and staff also can receive same. There are general healthcare educational programmes conducted within the education area of the prison. Overall, there appears to be good medical care provided for the prisoners. Of course, it could be improved with additional staff, especially counsellors.

Regarding rehabilitation programmes, the Connect Project is not working in Limerick Prison. There are staff "posted" or "detailed" for it but these posts are never filled due to shortage of staff and the new annualised hours do not allow for it within the present staffing levels. There is one full-time probation

and welfare officer, a second officer part-time and a part-time senior which is a reduction in the Probation and Welfare's staffing levels since our last inspection. The welfare officers supply reports to the parole board, they refer prisoners to the linkage programme if they are seeking employment and they contact the various agencies seeking accommodation for those prisoners who have gone on release. Some prisoners are excluded from hostel accommodation due to previous behavioural problems and these cases are extremely hard to provide with a place to live on release. The welfare officers are not involved in many in-prison programmes but they hope to commence some next September. However with the staffing levels at present and approx 270 prisoners daily in custody, it would be almost impossible to have the time to provide programmes as their time is taken up in dealing with current everyday problems. There is an urgent need for an increase in the probation and welfare staff.

The chaplaincy service is provided by a full-time R.C chaplain, and clergy of other denominations are invited into the prison when the need arises. Like other prisons, the chaplain appears to do work away and beyond his own role and both prisoners and staff were full of praise for him.

The staff/management relations appear quite good with both sides appreciating each other's role. The staff/prisoner relationship is also good in general, however, there were some concerns expressed on both sides regarding the staffing levels within the prison, staff's safety, etc while prisoners were complaining of their services being cut or curtailed as a result

of no staff to operate such services, and a cutback or reduction in time on recreation, visits, receiving letters etc. There is a disquiet among some staff concerning their compulsory transfers from other prisons to Limerick and the long-distance travel on a daily basis they have to undertake to get to their place of work. Dissatisfaction has also been expressed concerning the duties roster, the annualised hours and problems with time off. It was evident that there is discontent among a considerable number of staff which does affect the overall harmony of the operation of the prison. The sooner these problems are resolved, the better it will be for the prison. Despite the discontent among some staff, there are only 2 staff seeking a transfer out of the prison.

The annualised hours were introduced into the prison last January and they are not working satisfactorily as there are staffing level problems.

Management state it will take at least another 3-4 months to sort out. No staff refresher training took place in the past 12 months in breathing apparatus operation (in the event of fire), C & R or familiarisation training in the use of fire hose reels, stand pipe connections, fire extinguishers etc.

Management state that the city's fire brigade is based within 300 metres of the prison and therefore would be at the prison and ready to tackle the problem faster than prison staff who would have to put on protective clothing, get the equipment etc. Several fire drill evacuations were carried out during the past 6 months which is commendable. A more detailed recording of information on each exercise should be undertaken (e.g date, area/wing evacuated, number of staff involved, number of prisoners involved, time

commenced, time area wing completely evacuated, overall time involved to evacuate, any problems or obstacles encountered during the exercise and the name of the officer in charge of the operation).

There were other staff training/courses that did take place in computers, nursing, counselling, management, environmental health and safety, project management, gas welding, catering, work training (cleaning and laundering) safety awareness etc. It is good that such training has taken place but a lot more needs to be done. There are provisions in the annualised hours programme for staff training but due a shortfall in staffing levels, this training cannot be undertaken. There is an increase in the number of staff taking sick leave. When the annualised hours were first introduced there was a drop in the level of sick leave but it has increased since and has well exceeded the daily average prior to the annualised hours commencing. It appears from enquiries that because staff have great difficulties in getting time off, they now take sick leave instead. Management and Prison Service headquarters should examine this problem.

The female prisoners' section is extremely small and cramped. It has 10 single cells which are almost permanently doubled, resulting in a population of 20 prisoners. Their facilities are limited with little work or other activities to occupy them. The fact that they are so cramped, they are confined in each other's company throughout their entire time both out of cell and even when in cell, as they are sharing, leads to tension and frustration. The whole place is claustrophobic. There should be a reduction in the numbers held there in

the short term and a proper facility provided for female prisoners in the longer term with plenty of space for single cell occupancy as well as work, recreation, and education facilities. A female prison for the Munster region should be considered in the present plans for new prisons, either in Cork or Limerick.

Overall Summary

It is a well run prison. The hygiene levels in some areas need to be improved. The work/training and Connect projects should be introduced as soon as possible. The staffing problems highlighted should be examined. The introduction of the annualised hours and the overtime cutbacks introduced in 2004 are having an adverse effect on the services and facilities for prisoners (workshops, library, censor office, prisoners' telephone cards etc). It is my opinion that services and facilities were not intended to be curtailed when the new working arrangements were being discussed and agreed. It is disappointing that it is now happening. Hopefully this situation will improve. There is a need for additional probation and welfare staff as well as an additional psychologist. Replace A & B wings with new modern building. Provide for additional waiting room for prisoners' visitors with creche facilities if the number of prisoners detained in the prison is increased. Provide full employment/education for all prisoners and bring all of the work training workshops to recognised certification standard of training.

I wish to thank the prison management and staff for their support and assistance throughout the Inspection. The provision of the liaison officer, the

use of offices and rooms to conduct our business and the tea/coffee/fruit facilities which were put at our disposal is much appreciated. I wish to thank the other members of the Inspectorate team who gave of their expertise in assisting with the Inspection. They are all very much appreciated and their contributions were received with sincere gratitude.