

IRISH PRISONS INSPECTORATE

PORTLAOISE PRISON

PORTLAOISE INSPECTION: 9th, 10th, 11th
DECEMBER 2002

Role of the Inspector of

Prisons and Places of Detention for Ireland

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

TERMS OF REFERENCE

To -

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

GUIDELINES:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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CONTENTS

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

REPORT ON VISIT TO PORTLAOISE PRISON

COMMENCING THE 9th DECEMBER 2002 TO 11th DECEMBER 2002

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On the 9th, 10th and 11th of December 2002 a inspection of Portlaoise Prison was carried out by the Inspectorate Team which consisted of:

Mr. Justice Dermot Kinlen	Inspector of Prisons and Places of Detention
Mr. James Woods	Special Advisor Prisons Inspectorate
Mr. Martin McCarthy	Prisons Inspectorate
Dr. Jim Ledwith	Consultant
Prof. Claire Carney	Consultant

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

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

2. BACKGROUND.

- 2.1 Portlaoise Prison is one of the oldest in use in the Irish Prison System and is located on the Dublin Road, Portlaoise, Co Laois. The present buildings replaced the old county jail which was built in 1830. The “E” block was built in 1902 on the site of the old jail. The site consisted of 36 acres, 30 of which were used as farmland that grew vegetables, potatoes, etc. for use in the prison. The farm ceased operation in the early 1970s for security reasons and this area now has the staff training centre, staff houses, new Midlands Prison plus other buildings located on it. In the period 1922-1923 the prison was placed under military rule but was returned to civilian rule in 1923. At the time of changeover, it was designated as a convict prison, that is, for those sentenced to penal servitude. (serving sentences of 3 years and upwards to life imprisonment.) It remained like that until 1973.
- 2.2 In November 1972, the prisoners held in Portlaoise were transferred to other prisons, mainly Mountjoy, and the subversive prisoners in Mountjoy were transferred to Portlaoise. It was the biggest movement of prisoners ever to take place in one day in the history of the Service. The Army and the Gardai took up duty at Portlaoise on that day to augment the security provided by the Prison Staff and their presence have remained there ever since. The number of gardai involved in prison duties has been reduced considerably, but the army personnel still patrol the roof of the prison and guard the boundary walls plus the entrances and exits.

- 2.3 The prison mainly consists of two cell blocks with office / administration, visiting area, etc. located adjacent to the cell blocks. In one of the cells blocks is held “ordinary” prisoners who are transferred from other prisons. They are employed at the various works which takes place within the prison such as kitchen, cleaning, painting, etc. They can also attend education classes and the gym. This is an extremely old cell block and in need of demolition and replacement. The cells are small, with very small windows and the doors very narrow and low.
- 2.4 The second cell block is a four storey building and is very much divided between the various categories of prisoners held there. Each category keep to themselves and generally do not mix with the others. The gates separating each landing are generally locked throughout the periods of cell unlocks. The fact that each of these groups of prisoners cannot mix with each other results in separate services being provided for them. This entails a lot of duplicating in areas such as the education, food serving facilities, workshops / craft shops, church services, recreation rooms and exercise yards. In the case of workshops, gyms, and exercise yards, separate rosters for their time of use is made out in advance and one group cannot enter until the other group has vacated. The reason for keeping each group separate is for control and security purposes.
- 2.5 It is the top security prison within the Irish Prison Service. The prison has its own compliment of Chaplains, Teachers, Probation & Welfare Officers, etc in addition to the other prison staff.

3. GOVERNOR'S BRIEFING.

- 3.1 The Inspection team consisted of The Inspector Mr Justice Dermot Kinlen, Special Advisor to the Inspector Mr. Jim Woods, Inspector's Special Assistant Mr. Martin Mc Carthy, and Visiting Consultant Dr Jim Ledwith. We met the acting Governor Ms C Comerford, Deputy Governor Mr. F Greeney and Acting Chief Officer W Stackpoole on the first morning of our inspection 9th December. (We met the Governor the following morning and we also had on that day Professor Claire Carney with us as part of our inspection team.)
- 3.2 The acting Governor outlined that they had 135 prisoners in custody on the morning of our meeting. She outlined that D block was condemned for use and was supposed to be knocked and replaced, but that due to the shortage of cell accommodation throughout the system, this building work was put on hold. The castle area of the prison (now administration) was built in 1830 but renovated in recent years while E block was built in 1902. The subversive prisoners were transferred from Mountjoy Prison to Portlaoise in 1972. Staff from Mountjoy came with them and some of them stayed. Some of the subversives have now been transferred to Castlerea Prison while a considerable number of them have been released as a result of the Good Friday agreement. Approx. 60 subversives were detained there at the time of our visit. None of the cells have sanitary facilities and slop-out takes place after each unlock. TVs are installed in all of the cells. In view of the different groupings of prisoners within the prison, work, education, exercise activities, etc. are staggered so that each group are kept separate for security/control purposes.

3.3 Ms Comerford outlined that there was no doctor attached to the prison and despite advertising seeking a new appointment, there was no response. They also sent tender documents out to all doctors within a 20 miles radius of Portlaoise but again got no response. The doctor attached to the nearby Midlands Prison is helping out at present and comes in each evening from around 5.00.p.m. He performs about 18 hours per week extra to his work in the Midlands. This is a most unsatisfactory arrangements and places extra responsibilities on this willing doctor. There has been no psychologist attached to the prison for the past two and a half years. It is hoped that one will be appointed to the Midlands Prison by mid summer and that he/she will help out in Portlaoise Prison at least one day per week. The psychiatrist who provides a service to the prison is located in Carlow and he is on a sessional basis. There is one full time nurse but the requirement for the prison is eight nurses. The dentistry services are provided by the Midlands dentistry staff in their own surgery, generally every Thursday and is quite good.

3.4 Access to the Central Mental Hospital was another issue raised by the Governor. She outlined that due to the shortage of beds at the C.M.H there was difficulty in getting prisoners transferred for in-patient treatment. The psychiatric hospital directly across the road from the prison will not take any prisoner referrals, in fact will not even do a psychiatric assessment on a prisoner for court reports. If a psychiatric assessment is required, the prisoner has to be escorted to the C.M.H.and returned on completion of the assessment. This is a terrible waste of money with the cost of such escorts,

when such could be carried out in the adjacent hospital at a fraction of the costs.

3.5 She outlined that the number of staff has fallen by almost one hundred over the past three years and have not been replaced. There was a problem in getting staff to work overtime, particularly on certain days of the week. Most of the staff have years of experience and stress is an occupational problem for some. The regime which operated in the prison in the early 70s and 80s compelled staff to work long hours overtime but many of these staff are now unable or unwilling to continue working such long hours. The age profile of the staff attached to the prison is high with 23% of them aged 50 and upwards. The Governor stated that the management and the union had a good working relationship and that there were no outstanding major issues unsolved.

3.6 The inspectorate team were supplied with the use of the boardroom for the duration of our visit and all the necessary backup facilities required. Staff were also made available to us which we greatly appreciated.

4. STATISTICAL INFORMATION

4.1 The prison consists of two block of cellular accommodation known as D and E Blocks.

D Block Cell Accommodation

D1 6 Cells

D2 14 Cells

D3 14 Cells

Total: 34 cells. On the day of inspection there were a total of 44 prisoners held in this block, resulting in some of the cells holding more than one occupant.

4.2 Of the 44 held there, 42 were sentenced and 2 were for trial. Breakdown of sentences are as follows:

- 5 Serving sentences of 1 year and under 2 years imprisonment
- 6 Serving sentences of 2 years and under 3 years imprisonment
- 3 Serving sentences of 3 years and under 4 years imprisonment
- 4 Serving sentences of 4 years and under 5 years imprisonment
- 9 Serving sentences of 5 years and under 6 years imprisonment
- 3 Serving sentences of 6 years and under 7 years imprisonment
- 7 Serving sentences of 7 years and under 11 years imprisonment
- 5 Serving sentences of 12 years and under 18 years imprisonment
- 42 Total sentenced
- 2 For Trial
- 44 Overall Total

All are Irish Nationals, except one, who is from Nigeria

4.3 Age Profile D Block

Nil less than 20 years

26 aged between 20 and 30 years

11 aged between 30 and 40 years

6 aged between 40 and 50 years

1 aged between 50 and 70 years

4.4 E Block Cell Accommodation

E1 35

E2 35

E3 39

E4 35

Basement 5

South End 5

Total= 154

On the day of inspection the total numbers held there was 86, all of them in single cells, 5 of them were for trial while 81 were sentenced.

4.5 Breakdown of Sentence

Nil serving	0 - 3 years
32 serving between	3 and 6 years
16 serving between	6 and 9 years
10 serving between	9 and 12 years
6 serving between	12 and 15 years
3 serving between	15 and 18 years
5 serving between	20 and 25 years
4 serving	40 years
<u>5</u>	serving life sentences
81	Total sentenced + 5 for trial = 86 overall total

4.6 Breakdown of Ages

Nil	under 22 years
7	between 22 and 25 years
7	between 25 and 27 years
9	between 27 and 30 years
15	between 30 and 35 years
11	between 35 and 40 years
13	between 40 and 45 years
6	between 45 and 50 years
11	between 50 and 55 years
4	between 55 and 60 years
<u>3</u>	60+ years
86	Total

5. MEETING WITH THE VARIOUS GROUPS

Meeting with Probation and Welfare Officer

5.1(a) The Inspector and Professor Claire Carney met with the Probation and Welfare Officer. The duties of the Probation and Welfare Officer within the prison is carried out by one full time officer who is based in Government Buildings in Portlaoise town. The post is actually shared by two officers operating half time each at present. The appointment of one or ideally, two additional officers working within the prison on a full time basis is considered necessary for the service to respond more effectively to the needs of the prisoners and the Inspector recommends same.

Relationships with other prison staff

5.1(b) Relationships with the Prison Governor and with other members of staff were said to be very satisfactory, as also were those with the prisoners themselves. The prison environment was described as being integrated, rather like a small town, than functioning merely as a disparate group of buildings. The probation and welfare staff members had not however had contact with members of the Portlaoise Prison Visiting Committee.

Focus of Service delivery

5.1(c) The probation and welfare service endeavours to ensure that all new prisoners are interviewed on arrival at Portlaoise prison. The forms of intervention planning subsequently undertaken depend upon the nature of the offence and the length of the sentence being served. The most frequently encountered problems occur as a consequence of drugs, including alcohol

abuse. Intervention priorities focus upon improved inter-personal and anger management skills to control impulsive behaviour. Many also need help in learning to recognise the gravity of their crime with the purpose of reducing the risks of re-offending. Other priorities include the preparation of the prisoners for release, with particular difficulties in accessing money and accommodation particularly for those who have served long sentences.

Policy Issues

5.1(d) Current probation and welfare staff members acknowledge that the necessary levels of service appropriate to a prison such as Portlaoise are far from being achieved. This deficit is attributed to a number of causes.

- (a) The absence of overall Prison Service guidelines in relation to the role of such prison-based officers. As a consequence, their work within the prisons is described as having developed on an ad hoc basis, with considerable variations in the work being carried out countrywide. Prison probation and welfare assignments, therefore, are found to be unpopular in preference to assignments within the community. Officers newly appointed to work in prisons are expected to remain three years in the post, but these vacancies, it is said, frequently remain unfilled, or the least experienced staff members end up working with the most high-risk offenders. They are moved out of the prison after their 3 years tour of duty and placed into community work irrespective of whether they want to leave the prison or not.

- (b) Because the Probation and Welfare Service itself also has failed satisfactorily to establish its prison role, current staff members find themselves “inundated with queries about release dates, requests to support applications for temporary release, half remission, as well as general enquiries”. It is recommended that such queries should be handled by a separate citizen’s advice type facility.

Preparation for Release

5.1(e) A number of day to day working environment problems also were noted, the most significant relating to the prisoner’s concern about money access and accommodation on release. County Councils and Dublin Corporation refuse to accept applications for the homeless until the day of release. Places in hostels, especially for offenders, are very limited. There also appears to be no standard automatic entitlement to a financial payment for such prisoners and they are not permitted to register for benefits in advance. These difficulties are considered to lead to a high risk of re-offending within the first few weeks of discharge. Surely the authorities concerned in providing these facilities can meet and arrange that such prisoners could be placed on the housing list at least six months prior to his release date. The Probation and Welfare officer cannot apply for a house from the local Authority on behalf of the prisoner. The various Government Agencies should streamline a lot of these problems and the Irish Prison Service at Headquarters should pursue same which the Inspector strongly recommends.

Meeting with Teachers

5.2 The Inspector and Professor Carney met two members of the teaching staff. They outlined that there are 33 teachers involved in the prison education with 28 of them employed by Laois V.E.C and 5 are from the national College of Art and Design (N.C.A.D). Eleven, of them are full time while the rest are part time. This is an excellent number of teachers for the amount of prisoners held in the prison and it should facilitate a considerable amount of one to one tuitions. Education is the main occupier of the prisoners time as there is very little work or workshop activities at the prison. Other educational agencies who contribute to the school at the prison are the Open University, The Arts Council and the Prison Library. The fact that there are so many different separate groups of prisoners within the prison results in the educational facilities/class rooms being spread all over the prison.

5.2(a) They stated that 61% of the prisoners participate in education and cover the following subjects:- English, Irish, Maths, French, German, Spanish, Dutch, Art, Social Studies/Sociology, History, Geography, Economics, Crafts, Technical Drawing, Guitar/Banjo, Tin Whistle, Horticulture, Career Guidance, Boadhran making, First Aid, Sports Injuries, Pyrography Tiling, Pottery, Literacy, and Lifeskills.

5.2(b) Facilities are very dispersed throughout the whole prison complex which leads to a very inefficient use of resources. Most of the groups only received one period a week in a subject. Recently the Governor provided them with a large multipurpose room for educational use which allows for three groups to

come together for plays, concerts, readings etc. The cultivation of a small garden has proved a most successful project. It is a blaze of colour at present and described in the Prison Service Magazine as “The Secret Garden”. It is a pity that so many of the prisons, including Portlaoise, has no green/grassed areas and the policy appears to be, that if a green space is available, build on it.

5.2(c) In the past year 3 prisoners entered for the leaving certificate, 7 for Junior Certificate, 30 entered for the foundation level of N.C.V.A. Other examinations entered were, 9, Open University, 1, College of Arts, 4 in Correspondence courses while 3 participated in the Leinster School of Communications.

5.2(d) The Teachers and the Governor outlined that they hope to build a new educational unit where all of the class rooms, teacher facilities etc, would be in the one area. It would be better use of the teachers time and more accountable to have them located within the one unit. However, from the reports received concerning new works/refurbishment at the prison for the next two years, it does not appear on the “priority” list. Another matter raised by the teachers concerned the location of the new school being taken from inside the cell accommodation area, thus removing the opportunity of them meeting prisoners, who may not be attending education and can encourage them down that road. They stated that there was a problem in the Midlands in that it was only the Head Teachers that could go into the prison proper, so they did not want a similar problem to arise in Portlaoise. If the opportunity of

meeting prisoners who are not attending education is removed from the general body of teachers, then there could be a drop off in the numbers attending school. So to have a few classrooms within the cell blocks would be seen as essential from the teachers viewpoint.

5.2(e) The teachers would like an increase in their garden space for horticulture training and to get more involved with other agencies working within the prison. They would like to get involved in prisoner programme planning, rehabilitation and sentence management.

Meeting with Doctor and Medical Staff

5.3 The Inspector and Dr. Ledwith met medical orderlies and the doctor attached to the Midlands Prison who is providing an 18 hour per week service to Portlaoise Prison. There has been no doctor at Portlaoise Prison for a number of months and despite advertising the vacancy nationally and contacting approx 40 doctors within the county and surrounding counties to County Laois, there was no response. This is a serious situation in which the Irish Prison Service, Headquarters should seek a doctor's appointment as a matter of urgency.

5.3(a) A general nurse was assigned to the Prison about a month ago and there are six medical orderlies, between one and three are on duty during the day with one on night duty. Because of the problems associated with some prisoner, two medical orderlies need to be present for some procedures. The orderlies outlined that they wished to share the opportunity to do courses such as a

Samaritan and a bereavement course and to be updated on the C.P.R course. They dispense medicine under the doctor's instructions and supervision, but they cannot give inter muscular injections.

5.3(b) There is only one prisoner on a methadone maintenance programme. Illegal drugs do come into the prison but we were informed that they are not a major problem. We were also informed that illegal alcohol (hooch) is also present in the prison and is made in the cells at weekends. There was one serious suicide attempt in the past year but thankfully the patient recovered.

5.3(c) Occasionally they would deal with a drugs overdose, but again this is not a common problem. The prisoners can be seen quickly and sent to the local general hospital if necessary, however the local psychiatric hospital do not take prisoners. The doctor stated that he had 2 or 3 quite ill patients in Dublin hospitals at present and that he took all bloods samples and gave all vaccinations himself.

5.3(d) An issue raised by the doctor was concerning requests he receives from prisoners looking for different type of runners, change of mattress, change of furniture, variation of diets, etc which are not medical matters and should be addressed by the Prison Management. He stated that he would deal of course with special diets such as diabetes etc. The Inspector recommends that local management make decisions on non medical matters as outlined so that the doctor's time is not wasted dealing with issues outside of his remit.

5.3(e) Another matter raised was the difficulties encountered in getting medicine at weekends from the chemist. The prison had a contract with a nominated local chemist for the supply of medicine for the prison. The local chemists operate a roster system at weekends and bank holidays resulting in the chemist who has the contract is only open one Sunday in six. This is an unsatisfactory arrangement and the doctor should be able to have access to all of the chemists and given discretion to purchase from them when the nominated one is closed. The doctor was encouraged to use Oileau and UID in Dublin but it takes seven days to get the medicine down from Dublin which in an emergency is useless.

5.3(f) The doctor and medical orderlies felt that the 18 hours service provided by the doctor to the prison was adequate. The doctor sees prisoners with both mental and physical problems. There is a part time optician which is adequate and the dental services were deemed reasonable. There is no dietitian and the pharmacist is based in Irish Prison Service, Headquarters. For security reasons it was felt that a prison officer should be placed outside the surgery door during consultations.

5.3(g) The surgery itself is too small and is shared with the psychiatrist. There is no psychologist. The medical area needs basic improvements and updating. Fire exits could be a problem. The files should be centrally located. There was some concern about the confidentiality of the files and of them being transferred to Mountjoy on the prisoner's discharge from custody. There was a problem in getting referrals to the C.M.H as there was not sufficient number

of beds available in the hospital for prisoners. The doctor stated he had no problem with the prison administration and he had no problem with the prisoners either. He felt that there should be an adequate treatment room provided. He outlined that homosexuality was a problem but not a very common one. He also gives a note to the prisoners on discharge for their own local G.P but generally they don't have a G.P.

5.3(h) Dr. Ledwith had telephone consultation and the Inspector met with the psychiatrist attached to the prison. The psychiatrist stated that he was unhappy with the provision of psychiatric services at the prison. He outlined his concerns as follows:- The administration of medicine and how it was issued to the prisoners. No rehabilitation programme. Alcohol problems not being addressed and no alcohol Counsellor. No support services available such as a Psychologist or a Social Worker and no opportunity to have any consultation with family members of prisoners. No relationship with local psychiatric services. He was also of the opinion that the "defaulters" group of prisoners were being treated in an inhumane way.

5.3(i) Overall the Inspector considers that the medical services at the prison are in need of major improvements. The appointment of a doctor immediately is essential as well as a psychologist and nurses. The medical area should be updated and proper storage of confidential files in a central location, better use of p.c's and arrangements made concerning the supply of medicine from local chemist at week-ends would all go some way towards improving the situation.

The Inspector recommends the appointment of the required medical personnel, updating the medical facilities and proper use made of the P.c's and filing system within the medical area as matters of urgency.

Meeting with Prisoners

- 5.4 The prison having its various groupings of prisoners resulted in the Inspector meeting with small groups of prisoners from each of the categories. Some of them stated that they were speaking on behalf of all those whom they represented or "their members". The main concerns raised were as outlined.

Hygiene

- 5.4(a) They outlined the lack of in cell sanitation and having to use chamber pots. It was a degrading experience to have to walk the landings with the full contents of a chamber pot to empty it in the toilets at the end of the landings. The effect this practice may have in relation to health issues, was highlighted. To have to live in those conditions was deplorable. They suggested that chicken wire should be placed over the cell windows outside to prevent excrement "parcels" being thrown from the cell into the yards outside. A party of prisoners had to go around the yards and grounds each morning collecting these "parcels" which was most unhygienic.
- The condition of a toilet block in one of the exercise yards was highlighted and it was stated to be unusable.

Temporary Release.

5.4(b) This was a major concern for a lot of the groups. They quoted a number of incidences where compassionate leave was refused, and where a prisoner did not see his mother for 15 years as a result of the restrictions placed on the temporary release conditions. The whole application procedure in applying and the procedure regarding the response from the Prison Service Headquarters and the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform was unsatisfactory. No set policy within the area. Nothing in writing! No guidelines as to how temporary release applications are considered or goals or standards expected from the prisoner in achieving temporary release. They were seeking guarantees from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. that they would grant temporary release if the prisoners met the required criteria. They spoke of temporary release for those who were ill in hospital, as they have been refused in the past, even though they gave guarantees that they would not escape. They felt that all the privileges of temporary release was mainly granted to the Provos. Others were simply not considered. They also stated that the nature of the offence should not be considered if all the other requirements were met, such as length of time served, conduct and prison rehabilitation programmes completed. They stated that all of their problems related to the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform and Irish Prison Service Headquarters but not with the Governor or local staff.

Financial Support on release (accommodation on release)

5.4(c) Prisoners who were imprisoned for a long period and had no financial support from family were released with practically no money. They have to spend their gratuity (cash) purchasing cigarettes, toiletries etc for use while in prison. They were seeking a fund to assist prisoners in these circumstances.

5.4(d) They also highlighted the problem of finding accommodation on release and the lack of a pre release scheme. They also outlined that they had to work through the Probation and Welfare Officer to be put in touch with the Community Welfare Officer. They stated that the Probation and Welfare Officer should help with accommodation problems, but that most of the prisoners had no belief in the Probation and Welfare Service. The prisoners therefore did not avail of their services.

Education

5.4(e) They stated that the education was too academic based and there was no practical education such as a trade. They also complained that there was not sufficient work areas, such as carpentry, plumbing, painting, brickwork for prisoners to be able to learn the trades skills.

General Complaints

5.4(f) They had no complaints regarding the regime although some of them stated boredom was a problem and the lack of activities. The food was reasonably good but its quality and taste had dropped since the last chef retired. There

was no racism problems in the prison. They had no complaints about the management and staff of the prison.

Medical

5.4(g) The fact that the prison had not got a permanent doctor was highlighted.

They also complained about the delay in getting to an outside hospital and when the prisoners were admitted to the hospital they were treated with contempt. They stated that the hospital authorities did not want them there especially when under such high security escorts.

They also stated that there was a difficulty in getting medical assistance in the prison after 8.00 p.m.

Use of Phones

5.4(h) They outlined that there was only one telephone (E2) for over 40 prisoners and this caused difficulties at times. There were only 3 periods throughout the day that the phone was available to the prisoners. An additional phone would be a benefit to the regime.

5.4(i) The Inspector is already aware of the state of the toilet in the exercise yard as well as the in cell sanitary position. No doctor attached to the prison is already covered in the medical section. T.R is a matter entirely for the Minister, however, if guidelines or criteria was outlined at least everyone would know the conditions which apply.

5.4(j) If there is a problem concerning the limited use of the telephone perhaps local management may amend accordingly and the Inspector recommends same. The finance on release and accommodation problems should be reviewed by the Irish Prison Service Headquarters. The Inspector has already made reference to this matter in his meeting with the Probation and Welfare Service.

Meeting with the Local Branch P.O.A

5.5 The Inspector met four of the Committee members of the local branch P.O.A. They outlined the type of regime which existed in the prison up until relatively recently when staff did not speak with prisoners, nor were they allowed to do so by management. Most of the communication was conducted via the prisoners spokesperson and a member of senior management. However, that has changed and there is much more open conversation between prisoners and staff now.

5.5(a) They outlined the difficulty experienced by staff when one of their members was assaulted on E1 and the entrance gate to the landing malfunctioned, resulted in staff being delayed in getting to the assistance of their colleague. This happened again about a month later when another member was assaulted by a prisoner who had H.I.V. The gate appears to malfunction at the most critical of times. The Inspector checked the gate on entry into the wing and it was working perfectly. However, this gate should be examined by the trades staff regularly and if found to be faulty to have same replaced as it is not good enough to have such entry impeded at vital times.

- 5.5(b) Counseling facilities for staff was raised, and the P.O.A were quoting the example of the assault by the H.I.V prisoner on their member with no counseling facilities for him or his family. This was a most traumatic experience which effected his entire family and management failed to offer any counselling help.
- 5.5(c) On further questioning, it appears that counselling services are available to staff, but the local branch wants such services to be offered rather than having to ask management for them. On the other hand, management state the facilities are available, staff know about them, and all they have to do is seek them. This appears to be a ridiculous almost childish “stand off” position. Both sides, P.O.A and management, should come to some agreement on counselling problems.
- 5.5(d) They agreed that excessive alcohol consumption was a problem among a lot of staff. Another matter raised was the attitude of a senior official from Headquarters who informed an officer that “it was the officer’s own fault that he was taken hostage”. They stated that it was the official’s lack of knowledge of the prison system which caused him to make such a statement.
- 5.5(e) They claim that Portlaoise Prison operates within a more relaxed regime now and that staff are much happier. They highlighted the good work done by Governor Lonergan who brought about some of the changes to the regime.

5.5(f) They highlighted their concerns regarding a particular prisoner who had no family support and that this prison was entirely the wrong place for him. He dances up and down the landing at times wearing a make shift skirt. There was a further concern that he may have been sexually assaulted in the prison by other prisoners. In conversation with the psychiatrist to the prison, he stated that this particular prisoner should be placed in a hostel and that the prison environment was damaging him. He agreed with the views of the local P.O.A on the matter. The Inspectorate team saw this particular prisoner and considers when he does get released he is certainly in need of a structured support. He maintains "Ireland is corrupt from top to bottom and wants to live out his life in Chad! Where there are fewer people and less corruption".

5.5(g) The Inspector has highlighted the issue several times, of prisoners with mental problems being held in prison when they should be accommodated elsewhere. The Inspector recommends that the Irish Prison Services Headquarters look at this prisoner with a view to an alternative location as so deemed necessary by the professionals.

Meeting with Other Members of Staff

5.6 The Inspectorate outlined that it is not in their terms of reference to look at individual cases as any grievances they had could be taken up by their union, or by writing to Management or Headquarters. However, they stated that they had important points to raise and that they felt their union did not represent them properly.

5.6(a) Some of the issues raised related to their application for promotion and the accompanying assessment form and the marking system as it operates. The assessment is done by management and the reasons for a bad mark is not explained or expanded upon. There should be an explanation as to why management says “no” on such forms. Other problems raised was the method of calculating sick leave days and not being paid when out sick. They also raised the question of returning to work off sick leave, even if they felt unwell, but as a result of pressure being applied by Management, and Irish Prison Service Headquarters, they had no alternative other than stay working.

5.6(b) Another item raised related to an assault by a prisoner, who was convicted of the assault in court. The officer felt he got no back up from the Prison Service. He and his family needed protection on their homes. No counseling services were offered for the trauma encountered. He thinks that such assault may also have effected his promotional prospects. He thinks he is paying a very costly price for just doing his job correctly and the Prison Service are neglecting him.

5.6(c) Some of the other matters raised related to harassment by management the unfair promotional system and completion of assessment forms when staff apply for promotion. Staffs lack of input into the assessment process. On questioning by the Inspectorate team it was found that a lot of the complaints related to years past and infact they stated that present management were all right.

Meeting with the Chaplain

- 5.7 There is one full-time Catholic chaplain attached to Portlaoise prison and some of the issues raised by him where as follows.
- 5.7(a) He felt that the overall contribution from the prison chaplains was not taken seriously enough by The Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform, The Irish Prison Service or by The Prison Officers' Association.
- 5.7(b) He was of the opinion that the chaplains were sometimes used in a public relations exercise, to show the general public the existence of an independent body of concerned workers within the prisons.
- 5.7(c) He was complimentary of the Governor and said that Portlaoise prison was fortunate to have such very skilled officers and staff. He said the visiting committee, according to the prisoners, was regarded as somewhat of a joke and that most of them were very non active in their role.
- 5.7(d) A major concern to him was the failure of the Irish Prison Service to introduce a serious programme of rehabilitation, or a through care programme for prisoners, which is found in other jurisdictions, and is regarded as a success. His main concern on this subject was that no positive structure for rehabilitation, or consideration for release of the prisoner was in place in any type of definite way in general.
- 5.7(e) He also commented on the fact that he has no church and that he has to celebrate Mass in a room which is unsatisfactory.

6. TOUR OF INSPECTION.

6.1 “D” Block.

Plans to close D Block were put in place but had to be abandoned due to national demand for cell accommodation. According to the visiting committee's annual report of 2001 this block was condemned as being unfit to hold prisoners over 40 years ago. A lot of prisoners held in D Block work in the kitchen, laundry, cleaning parties and gardening. They also attend school and are actively encouraged to do so.

D1

- 6.2 This is the segregation section and on the day of Inspection three of the four cells were occupied. There is one toilet and one shower in this area. Prisoners who are held here are kept separated from the main body of prisoners for security reasons. Three of the four prisoners are allowed to associate with prisoners on the E 1 landing and have designated access to the gymnasium and exercise. They are also involved in the education programme and attend the following classes, sociology, geography, personal development, physical education and music. These classes are held within their own area of the prison.

D2

- 6.3 There were 20 prisoners accommodated on this landing with two toilets, two shower units, three wash hand basins, and a slopout facility provided. The servery is equipped with stainless steel counter, dry food storage presses and is hygienically operated.

D3

- 6.4 This landing is very similar to D2 but not identical. There were 20 prisoners accommodated here with two toilets, four shower units, three wash hand basins and a slopout facility provided. There is a definite need for a water filtering system in this area. The servery is similar to that on D2 but we did notice a water stain on the ceiling.

The hours available in the gym to D Block prisoners are as follows:

6:15pm to 7:30pm Monday to Saturday.

5:15pm to 7pm on Sunday

9.00 am to 10:15am Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

D Block is in a very poor state of condition and it would be very hard to argue against its demolition. The lack of in-cell sanitation in D Block "as per the rest of the Prison" and the use of chamber pots in this day and age is a disgrace. Prisoners who work in the kitchen are unlocked at 07:30am. All other prisoners are unlocked at 08:30am for breakfast. Lock up is at 07:30pm.

The Laundry

- 6.5 The laundry for D block is equipped with three washers and one dryer and each prisoner has his own basket of which the contents are laundered twice per week.

E Block

E1

6.6 On this floor there were 39 persons held in single cell accommodation. There is one TV room that can take a maximum of 21 people and two smaller TV rooms that can take a maximum of 10 people each. There are two hot-water boilers, a milk dispenser and a toaster which are available to all on the landing and at any time, with the exception of lock up.

6.6(a) On each side of the landing there were two toilets plus urinals, two wash hand basins, two shower units, a slopout facility and a fresh drinking water fountain. There was an acceptable level of cleanliness and hygiene.

6.6(b) Off E1 landing there is an art workshop and the Inspectors were very impressed with the quality of work produced here. It was really of a very high standard.

6.6(c) The recreation room which is also off E1 landing had two punch bags, skipping ropes and yoga mats.

6.6(d) There are two exercise yards off this floor, one is for the use of E Block with staggered times of access for each particular group of prisoners. The second yard is for the exclusive use of D Block.

6.6(e) The back exercise yard off E 1. has a facility which houses one toilet, one urinal plus two shower units. This was found to be in an absolutely filthy

condition and the plumbing definitely needs attention. It requires immediate attention to make it operational or alternatively its demolition. The Inspector recommends that local management have these facilities brought up to an acceptable level of hygiene and whatever repairs/replacement work that needs to be carried out as a matter of urgency.

E2

6.7 There is a recreation room and two pool tables, a computer room and a leather workshop, a kitchen for domestic science training, also the laundry for E2, E 3 and E4 is housed on this landing. The laundry is equipped with four washers and four dryers.

6.7(a) There are 5 shower units, 6 toilets, 2 slop-out facilities, 6 wash hand basins 3 urinals, 2 stainless steel sink units and 2 fresh water drinking fountains for the use of the prisoners held on this landing.

E3

6.8 The cell accommodation is similar to that of the other landings in this area. There is a well equipped Gym, TV room, 2 Snooker Tables, 3 Education Classrooms, a Computer room and a Kitchen for Domestic Science training. The facilities available to prisoners held here are 8 toilets, 2 slop out facilities, 4 urinals 8 wash hand basins, 3 showers and 2 stainless steel sink units.

E4

6.9 There are 35 single cells on this landing as well as a computer room, education classrooms, a kitchen for domestic science training, arts and crafts, a well equipped gymnasium and a room with floor mats for yoga and meditation practice. This room has a toilet and wash hand basin just off it. There is a video service and a good Library which is very popular and well used. A table tennis table and pool table is also available.

6.9(a) The sanitary facilities available to prisoners held on this landing are as follows, 8 toilets, 4 urinals, 8 wash hand basins, 2 slop out facilities, 2 stainless steel sink units, 3 showers and 2 fresh water drinking fountains. The standard of hygiene in the areas was acceptable.

The servery areas of E2, E3 and E4.

6.9(b) These areas are fitted with lifts from the kitchen. They have stainless steel counters, fridges and wall presses for the storage of certain types of dry food.

6.9(c) E Block is clean and reasonably well kept considering the condition and age of the building. This block requires urgent attention and should be rebuilt with immediate attention to in-cell sanitation in recognition of the basic human dignity of the prisoners and the working conditions of the staff.

Isolation Unit.

6.10 Prisoners are held in this unit as a result of disciplinary proceedings or arising from security issues.

6.10(a) There were five prisoners held in single cell accommodation here. There was a small kitchen which had a fridge, hob, milk dispenser and kettle etc, for the use of the prisoners held within this area. One toilet one shower and one slopout facility is also provided.

6.10(b) There is also a small exercise room and exercise yard, but the prisoners have access to the gymnasium and education at appointed times.

We met with one prisoner in his cell which was both tidy and clean. He informed us that he was held in this unit for his own safety. He said if he were held in the main block his life would be in danger from other prisoners.

The Reception

6.11 All prisoners are processed here on committal and release. On committal they are photographed and all particulars taken and recorded in a record book and also on computer.

The prisoner is then seen by a nurse officer who will deal with medical records, special diet requirements and suicide risk assessment.

The prisoner will generally see the doctor the following day.

The Control room

- 6.12 This is the monitoring station for the fire alarm system and the radio control room for the prison. We met with a number of officers working here and there were no issues raised or identified. This a small area and equipment appears to need updating. Conditions are cramped.

Gymnasium

- 6.13 This is the main and biggest gym within the prison and it is located in a area away from the cell blocks. Prisoners are brought here from the various landings in the different blocks at appointed times and as per the schedule.

It houses a lot of equipment with everything that is available in a purpose-built gym and is very popular with the prisoners.

The Officers' Mess

- 6.14 Catering for the officers is provided by an outside catering company. A number of officers were questioned and seemed to be reasonably satisfied with the service provided by the caterer. The Inspectorate was concerned that on examination of the gents toilet it was found to be in a bad state of hygiene and needed to be cleaned.

Kitchen

- 6.15 The kitchen is modern, well-equipped, and it was very obvious that hygiene and cleanliness is high on the list of priorities in this area. There are on average 9-10 prisoners/trainees working in the kitchen under the

supervision of four officers. At the time of our inspection they stated that they were producing 147 meals four times per day.

6.15(a)The prison operates under the regulations set out in I.S.340. This ensures that the staff working in the kitchen must have a minimum of a basic skills course in addition to an introduction to the H.A.C.C.P. These achievements are the basis to all further courses.

6.15(b)HACCP focuses on the safety of the product and fits in with existing Quality Systems such as the Quality Mark and ISO9000.

Haccp Principles:

1. Identify potential hazards and measures for their control.
2. Determine Critical Control Points (CCP).
3. Establish critical limits which must be met to ensure each CCP is under control.
4. Establish a monitoring system.
5. Establish the corrective action to be taken when monitoring indicates that a CCP is not under control.
6. Establish Documentation for procedures and records.
7. Establish verification procedures to confirm that the HACCP system is working effectively.

6.15(c) Offenders are trained in the performance of their duties in the kitchen and this is done by the kitchen staff. These courses are done on an ongoing basis and records kept of same. The following is a list of courses which are currently compulsory to prisoners training.

1. Basic hygiene
2. Kitchen safety
3. Induction training
4. Safe use of equipment
5. Cleaning chemicals
6. Food and nutrition (N.C.D.V.). This course is not mandatory, but is made available to kitchen workers, through the educational section within the prison and can be followed to a Certificate level.

6.15(d) The menu operates on a 14 day cycle and in addition to this a good number of prisoners with special dietary requirements are catered for.

The Inspectorate sampled the prisoners' food on each day of the inspection and although it was reasonably good, it was felt that it wasn't as good as the meals produced in some of the other prisons.

The Visitor Centre

6.15(e) Persons wishing to enter the prison must present themselves here. We found the Portacabin building to be clean and comfortable. There is a fresh water drinking fountain, a baby's changing room, ladies and gents toilets, which on inspection, were found to be clean hygienically presentable, and well-equipped with wash hand basin, hand dryer and soap.

6.15(f) High-security is very much a priority in this prison and on arrival at the centre one must give details and information to the officer with regard to the business or reason for the visit. After this process is complete and the officer is satisfied with the legitimacy of entry to the prison, one is taken to a search area which is manned by both male and female prison officers. There a very thorough search of the individual is carried out by the officers. The person is subjected to a rub down body search. All baggage and items being carried are examined in great detail. This procedure is applicable to all wishing to enter the prison and is without exception to anyone, including the Governor, Prison Officers' and staff who work there. During the period of our inspection we found the officers involved in this process to be polite, courteous and very conscientious about their role.

The Visits Area

6.15(g) There are three boxes for professional visits one of which is soundproofed. Visits to prisoners from D Block and E 1 landing are conducted in 2 unscreened boxes and sometimes a professional box is used if available. There are six small family friendly rooms with tea and coffee provided.

6.15(h) There are 2 rows of visiting boxes for the use of subversive prisoners and their visitors and this area has a specific allocation of use for the various subversive groups and individuals.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY (*fire aspect*)

- 7.1 During the course of the visit the inspectorate had a meeting with the senior staff members responsible for Health and Safety issues but especially for the fire aspect of Health and Safety.
- 7.2 They produced the “fire and general registrar” within which is recorded all of the checks, examinations and particulars of inspections/checks etc carried out within the prison by prison staff. It also contains records of inspections, dates examinations, etc of outside contractors’ work carried out for the prison in relation to Health and Safety matters. The following is an example of some of the outside contracts carried out:- Apex co - fire extinguishers, Vistee Ltd - gas check, Jeff Castle Engineers - steam boilers, Micro Laboratories Ltd - quality of drinking water, McAllister, Deveraux & Keating - asbestos audit Seridan - breathing apparatus appliance etc.
- 7.3 The fire extinguishers are clearly marked and placed in strategic locations throughout the prison. They are checked regularly by the trade staff and yearly by the outside contractor. The fire hydrants and pumps are checked every two months with water pressure within them at 7.2 bar which is compatible with the fire brigade engine. The pressure of the water supply for domestic use is 3.2 bar. There are wet risers up to the top floors of both cell blocks with exits off them at each floor level. Hose reels are located behind a wire mesh (on E Block) and at the end of each landing. They can reach the furthest point at the opposite end of the landing to their location. These hose reels are checked 3-4 times per year by the trades staff

according to the records. The fire brigade personnel are familiar with the location of the hydrants, hose reels, etc and have been in the prison on familiarisation tours. However, the fire brigade personnel are not full time, therefore the authorities at the prison are reluctant to call them out for practice runs, even though they have done so in the past. The security levels at the prison prevents fast access for the fire brigade/ambulance as they have to be thoroughly checked prior to entry and a considerable number of gates to pass through before reaching the inside of the grounds. Generally it is the rear gate that is used for such emergency vehicles.

7.4 There is a smoke extractor system installed in the E Block and B basement which sucks out smoke and draws in fresh air. There is no smoke extractor in the D Block. Fire alarms are checked regularly by the trades staff as well as yearly by the outside contractor and when activated, a light displays on a control panel in the control room and at the entrance to the Block as well as the siren/bell sounding. There are also break glass push button fire alarm points. Emergency lighting is also installed and the generators are “turned over” weekly by the trades staff. The generators have a six day capacity and its the U.P.S system emergency lighting that is in use. This lighting system can be used in the event of a disturbance and when the other main electrical supply is cut off. There are no water sprinklers installed in any cells.

7.5 There are emergency exits from D Block at the end of each landing while the emergency exits from E Block is by the stairs on the outside of the gable building. Breathing apparatus evacuation training (donning and doffing only)

and familiarisation/training in the use of fire hose reels and extinguishers takes place with over 100 staff having participated in the past year. No fire drill evacuation training has taken place this year nor has any full B.A evacuation training. The reasons given were shortage of staff and that the age profile of the staff was not conducive to B.A training for medical reasons. This is a serious situation and I recommend that it should be examined by the Irish Prison Service in Headquarters.

- 7.6 The width of the landings and of the cell doors in D Block is another area of concern regarding the use of a stretcher. The space to turn a stretcher, especially if there were a patient on it is very confined. This unfortunately was experienced prior to our visit, when an officer collapsed on the upper floor and they had to maneuvered him down to the ambulance on the ground floor with great difficulty. The fact that there is no smoke extractor in the D Block is another concern of the Inspector and a decision should be made by the Irish Prison Service, Headquarters regarding the future use of the block. If it is to continue to accommodate prisoners, then smoke extractors should be installed and the Inspector recommend same.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That an appointment of an additional full time Probation and Welfare Officer be assigned to the prison. Page 10, 5.1(a).
- (2) That a citizen's advice type facility should be established in the prison . Page 10, 5.1(b).
- (3) That the I.P.S Headquarters set up meeting with other Government Agencies responsible for housing and social welfare issues regarding prisoners entitlements. Page 12, 5.1(e).
- (4) That local management make decisions on non medical issues so that the doctor's time is not wasted. Page 16, 5.3(d)
- (5) That the appointment of the doctor, psychologist, updating of files and facilities and supply of medicine (weekends) to be expedited immediately by the I.P.S. Headquarters Page 18, 5.3(i).
- (6) That local management arrange to install another telephone for the use of prisoners on E2 landing. Page 23, 5.4(j)
- (7) That local trades staff examine this gate on a regular basis and if found faulty to have same replaced. Page 23, 5.5(a)

- (8) That the I.P.S. Headquarters addresses the issue of prisoners with mental problems being detained in prisons. Page 25, 5.5(g)
- (9) That local management have toilet/shower facilities in exercise yard brought up to an acceptable level of hygiene and whatever repairs/replacement work needed to be carried out immediately. Page 30, 31 6.6(e).
- (10) That the Headquarters examine the situation regarding staff training in general (especially B.A training in view of the age profile of the staff involved). Page 40, 7.5.
- (11) That a decision should be made immediately by the Irish Prison Headquarters concerning the future use of D Block and if it is to continue (against my advice) as cellular accommodation that a smoke extractor system should be installed. Page 40, 7.6.
- (12) That in view of the age and condition of the prison consideration should be given to rebuilding the whole premises. The Inspector strongly recommends the demolition of the prison. Page 29, 6.4 and Page 32, 6.9(c)
- (13) Provision of an adequate and complete CCTV system immediately. Page 46

9. CONCLUSIONS

The first thing to strike one on entering Portlaoise Prison is the high level of security and being searched on arrival. The other impressions are the number of gates and doors one must pass through before gaining entry. The lay out of the prison blocks and the various other buildings adjoining them are very cramped. It is surprising that a prison that originally had considerable space available to it (approx 36 acres) had built such a lot in quite a small area. There are no green-field facilities such as football pitches etc provided and the area is now entirely covered with buildings, car parks etc. So the possibility of any green/grassed area is gone, which is a pity to put it at its most polite.

The prison consists of two cell blocks, one with “ordinary” prisoners transferred there from other prisons. The second cell block is made up of various groups of prisoners, generally committed directly from the Special Criminal Court.

The cell block with the “ordinary” prisoners operate the work of the prison in kitchens, laundry, cleaning, trades work etc and most of them gain half remission of sentence, while the normal remission is a quarter. This cell block is quite similar to other prisons in that there is a working interaction (buzz) about it even though the physical conditions of the block are very poor. The landings, cell doors, and cell windows are not the normal modern size of present day building standards.

The second cell block operates entirely differently in that most of the various groupings of prisoners have their own spokespersons “to communicate on their behalf”. There is practically no work for the prisoners and their time and energy is mainly taken up with gym work and education. Some remain in bed quite late and there is not a lot of structure attached to their day. The regime is very much based on a security/containment policy without much activities which is quite boring for both the prisoners and staff. In fact some of the prisoners raised the issue of boredom with the Inspectorate team.

The need to update the medical facilities and the appointments of a doctor and psychologist are urgently needed. Again in this prison, as in other prisons visited, there are a few prisoners detained here who should be accommodated in a psychiatric hospital or hostel setting. The lack of available beds in the Central Mental Hospital for prisoners as in-patient is another problem. The fact that the facilities of the local psychiatric hospital cannot be used by the prison authorities is a terrible waste of money. It is also an inconvenience having to bring prisoners under escort for over 100 miles return on a journey to and from Dublin when such reports could be done in the hospital 500 yards from the prison. At the end of the day it is all the taxpayers money irrespective of which department or organization it is coming from.

The lack of useful activities for the prisoners is another concern which should be addressed. The placing of the “defaulters” (those involved in the hostage scene in Mountjoy) in such a confined area and no plan for them to progress or outlet in sight for them to improve themselves is soul destroying and may possibly make them more resentful and aggressive. There should be a structured regime for these type of prisoners with goals to aim for and a progressional system built into it which would lead to eventual transfer to other prisons if they met the criteria.

Most of the staff have years of experience and have been based in Portlaoise Prison for over 20 years. They have experienced difficult times in the past relating to security issues and have also worked very long hours. The regime at the prison has changed and there is now more interaction between the staff and the prisoners. However some staff appear to find difficulty with the change in their role. The need for developmental training is very evident, which they are not receiving. The only training being carried out is the donning and doffing of the B.A equipment plus familiarisation in the use of fire hoses, hydrants, extinguishers, etc. The age profile of the staff is another concern in regard to them using B.A masks and also they need to have sufficient numbers of trained B.A staff on duty at all times. This is particularly required at night time when there is difficulty in gaining fast entry into cells with the security precautions that are in place.

The prison should be provided with an adequate and complete CCTV system immediately. Overall the prison is reasonably hygienic considering the age of the buildings. The need to replace the cell blocks is very evident. There should be more activities for the prisoners. The morale among the staff is quite good but the need for further training and the development of them is essential.