

# *Irish Prisons Inspectorate*

## *WHEATFIELD PRISON*

*Wheatfield Prison Inspection :*

*10th-12th and 19th-21st April*

*2nd, 3rd & 16th May 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 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 enquiries or comments about the inspectorate should be directed in the first instance to:

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**Report on Inspection of Wheatfield**



- 2.1 Wheatfield Prison is located on Cloverhill Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22 on the west side of the city. A greenfield site was purchased by the Minister for Justice and both Wheatfield Prison and the adjacent Cloverhill Prison were built on the site. Work commenced on the building of Wheatfield Prison in September 1980 and it was officially opened on 8th June 1989. It is a two-storey building over basement and consists of twenty living units that open off a main spinal corridor and each of the units has sixteen cells. On the opposite side of the main corridor to the units are the workshops, educational facilities, administration office, church, visiting areas, reception, etc. It was built with the intention that each cell would be of single occupancy, but with the problem of overcrowding in other prisons, some of the cells have been converted to two-person occupancy. The conversion to double-cell occupancy consisted of the installation of a double bed (bunk bed) plus a vanity unit around the toilet facility. Each of the cells is fitted with toilet, wash-hand basin and television, and a radio is built-in as part of the facilities. The cells' windows are designed with steel bars on the outside like conventional prison cell windows. The window consists of three long strips of glass or perspex with an opening in the centre piece. The inner part is wide and is covered in stainless steel material that reflects the light into the cell, while the outside of the window is sufficiently narrow to prevent a person passing through it.
- 2.2 The total capacity of the prison is 378 while on the first day of our inspection there were 358 in custody plus two in an outside hospital. The capacity of the prison has been reduced by 20 to allow contractors to carry out maintenance work installing emergency-exit fire doors from the accommodation units so a unit at a time is empty to allow the contractors to work undisturbed and, on completion, they move onto the next unit.
- 2.3 The planners of Wheatfield Prison envisaged that a range of purposeful activities would be available to everyone in custody, so work-training and education were the two main focuses. It was envisaged that these two components would complement each other with as many prisoners as

possible taking part in both: at least part of the time in work-training and the other part of the time in education. The policy of work-training/education has worked quite well and each prisoner on committal is assigned a work area. He same will also be assigned educational classes if he so requires and accepts.

### **3. Governor's briefing**

- 3.1 The Governor, Mr. Whelan welcomed the Inspectorate Team to Wheatfield Prison and gave an outline of the facilities available to them throughout the duration of the inspection. The Governor then introduced his senior staff. The Inspector apologised to the members regarding the non-availability of Dr. Jim Ledwith who had just informed the Inspector that he was ill and would be unable to attend at the inspection for the next two days as had been originally arranged. Arrangements were made to reschedule his inspection days to the 2nd & 3rd May 2006.
- 3.2 The Governor then outlined that there were 358 in custody on that morning which did not include two inpatients in hospital. He has a total capacity for 378 prisoners. He outlined that the new annualised hours were introduced to Wheatfield Prison with effect from the 21st January 2006 and that they were working very well. Arising from the annualised hours he has received two additional Class 2 Chief Officers who work back-to-back on weekends. He now also has a Chief Officer-in-charge of Detail duties as well as two Industrial Managers, one of whom is the senior manager who looks after the workshops and laundry. He acts as Assistant Governor-in-charge of Work and Training when the person in that position is off.

The Governor then informed us that since our last inspection, a new laundry has been built and the prisoners working there can receive City and Guilds certification if they reach the required standard. The laundry needs of Wheatfield and part of the laundry requirements of Cloverhill prison, are catered for with over 1,000 items per day being laundered. The prisoners working in the laundry operate a longer working day than in any other part of

the prison, in that they receive their dinner within the laundry area and are not locked up during lunchtime. This adds to their working day. They work from 8.30 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. The prisoners are specially selected to work in this area and there is a waiting list of those wishing to work there.

New development works that have been carried out in Wheatfield since our last inspection include the redevelopment of the wood-workshop area where the equipment, saws, etc. are being replaced with new machines. The metalshop has been re developed and expanded. Outside contractors are working at converting the old padded cells into newly designed cells in the segregated area. There are new fire escapes being installed in each of the accommodation units, also new smoke-detectors in all of the cells. There are new fire doors being installed on the main spinal corridor. When the work is completed on the new fire escapes, the numbers in custody will be increased by twenty, as the Governor had to empty a unit each time the contractors moved in. All this work is due to be completed by the end of June 2006.

- 3.3 The Governor spoke of prizes which had been awarded to the prison. They won the supreme award for catering, which is the IEIQA Award and they have also received a Public Service Award from the Taoiseach for the new laundry. It is the first time that a prison has achieved the supreme award within Europe.

The meeting then heard that prison management host a breakfast morning for potential employers and other employers who have given work to prisoners who are either on temporary release or whose time has expired. This has proven to be a very worthwhile exercise. The Governor said that the prison was fortunate in having an Employment Officer who liaises between employers and prisoners. She is invaluable for the amount of work that she does in establishing good relationships with employers and securing employment or courses for those prisoners referred to her.

3.4 The Governor then asked the Chief Officer in charge of the detail to give an account of the annualised hours, to which he responded that they are working quite well. They came into existence in January 2006 and they were on target within allocation of overtime at present with approx 75% of the hours for this quarter used. He went on to outline the problems with inpatients in hospitals which creates a considerable amount of overtime hours. These in-patient duties were to be performed by the escort corps, but unfortunately, they are unable to do so at present due to staff shortage. The Chief then said that the annualised hours were quite well accepted by most of the staff. However, some of the staff were reluctant to accept the new working arrangements. The Chief outlined that the annual leave was now scheduled in advance and in so doing gives the staff the opportunity to volunteer for their overtime hours in accordance as it fits in with the schedule of leave. He also outlined that staff, on some occasions, had to be detailed on duty when others failed to come into work on overtime. In such cases the prison had to operate and they had no alternative but to detail staff on an overtime basis. He said that the training in C&R and B.A. was well advanced. The Chief stated that there was an increase in the sick-leave since the introduction of the annualised hours.

The Industrial Manager outlined the certified training that takes place in the various workshops. He said that the "Leonardo" training is ongoing in the kitchen and next July they were starting the City and Guilds training. He said that within three years, a prisoner could be a qualified chef, as the prison will have the same standards as that which apply in a catering college. They will be able to sit the same exams as those outside. He stated that the prison was awarded the I.S.O 2200 award, and that they were the first prison in Europe to achieve same. This is a new award which was introduced into this country a short time ago. He described the difficulties there are in remaining at this high standard which has to be worked at on a constant basis.

3.5 The Governor then stated that there were now two drug-free units within the prison, 10G and 6F. Both hold 16 prisoners. There was a waiting list of

prisoners wishing to get into either of these units. Prior to this there was difficulty in getting prisoners to participate in such courses. These two drug-free units are occupied by (A) prisoners who were drug abusers and (B) prisoners who have never taken drugs or do not want to get involved in them. The Governor feels those who never took drugs are a great support to the others in the value of being drug-free. While they are waiting to get into these units, urine samples are taken to ensure that they are fully committed to the new regime within the drug-free area. The only reward for those in the drug-free units is some extra facilities and perhaps a transfer to the Training Unit.

The Inspector then asked how the drugs were getting into the prison and was told that it was mostly through visits. They had an experience of a girl coming in to visit a prisoner and she had €1,000 worth of heroin within her mouth. They also outlined that drugs are thrown over the wall from the nearby hospital grounds where there is a field at the back of the hospital. They go into the field and catapult the drugs over the wall from there. A fence has now been erected which should considerably reduce the supply from that area. The new laundry operation has helped to reduce the supply whereby the movement of clothing in and out for laundering has ceased. The Inspector then inquired about the prison staff and was informed that an officer had been found in possession of drugs on the outside, away from the prison entirely and was being dealt with by the courts. The Governor said that prisoners coming and going from the Courts were often found with drugs on them. They have also introduced a new visiting policy whereby only nominated visitors are allowed to enter and each of them must have an ID. H.Q are also considering the introduction of drug-sniffer dogs, on a trial basis, in one of the other prisons and if successful, they may be extended to other prisons. There is a drugs policy document which they have received from the Minister's office but so far the Inspector has not seen this document. The Governor explained other steps that have been taken to prevent illegal of drugs getting into the prison such as new CCTV cameras being installed and they are also seeking a new digital recording system. They have also got

netting erected over the exercise yards which has improved the situation. The Governor stated that they get good co-operation from the Gardaí at all levels. The Gardaí have been operating outside the prison to try and detect the people who are throwing the illegal substances over the wall. The Gardaí had some serious altercations outside the wall where people with balaclavas arrived on motorbikes and when they went to arrest them, one of the Garda received a broken arm as a result of the fracas.

- 3.6 The Clerk in charge of the stores outlined that the new 'Oracle' system is working very well in the control and management of stock which is quite cost-effective. The clerk also operates the purchasing of the victualling for the prisoners. There is a twenty-eight-day vegetarian diet as well as the ordinary twenty-eight-day menu. He outlined that there was a health-promotion week (particularly healthy eating) once a year for the prisoners which was delivered by officials from the Department of Health and Children.
- 3.7 The Governor then called on the Assistant Governor to give an outline of the new Samaritans' Listener scheme which had been introduced into the prison since our last inspection. The Assistant Governor stated that the scheme was working very well, that they had a listening suite and ten prisoners trained as listeners. There were two prisoners involved on the committee within the prison, which was a major breakthrough from former times. The prisoners who are involved in the Listening scheme are allowed to bring their families into the prison for one afternoon in recognition of the work that they are doing. The families can also give them moral support as well. The Inspector was informed that there was one serious attempt at suicide about five months ago, but thankfully since then they have had no other incident.

One of the Chiefs gave an outline of the daily routine of the prison, times that they are locked, times for work, recreation, meals, etc. It was calculated that prisoners were approximately ten hours out of their cells in a twenty-four cycle.

3.8 The Inspector inquired regarding driving instruction and was informed that there was none in existence. There was a motorbike repair workshop some time ago which has ceased, but there was no driving instruction in motor vehicles or motorcycles. The Governor outlined that there was one project done for an outside charity per year and also gave details of the charities that had benefited from work done in the workshops, including the Special Olympics. The Governor informed the Inspectorate about the induction course for all prisoners on committal which has been in operation since January 2006. It consists of a five-day programme with various speakers talking to the prisoners regarding facilities, support services, education, work-training, the roles and responsibilities of various “heads of functions” etc.

The Industrial Manager gave an outline of the prisoners’ proposed industrial cleaning workshop which is starting shortly. The Irish Institute of Cleaning Science will issue the certificate if trainees reach the required standard and this certificate qualifies them for employment at cleaning work on the outside. Fourteen prisoners can be accommodated on the course and if they successfully complete level one (i.e 8 weeks) they can then continue on to the 14 weeks course, which allows them to enter the employment market at supervisory level. Some of the employers at the breakfast meeting outlined the benefits of this course, as cleaning is one of the greatest job opportunities at the present time on the outside.

3.9 The Officer in charge of Personnel Section gave an outline of her work which entails recording of sick-leave, dealing with social welfare acts, maternity-leave, increments, criminal injuries, etc. She stated that the sick-leave had increased by 33.3% since the annualised hours were introduced. She also gave the number of staff requesting transfer. The Inspector inquired as to why there was so many seeking transfer, to which the Governor replied that it was generally for travelling reasons and getting nearer to their homes. He gave an outline of the distances some of them were travelling to work here, such as Galway, Tipperary, Laois, Carlow, Tralee, etc.

3.10 The Governor then summed up the meeting by saying that the prison was working very well and it was generally very quiet. He said that he experienced extreme difficulty with one particular prisoner who had been transferred out of this prison to another prison for a short period. However, he has now returned and has been in isolation here since. He said that the prisoner was highly dangerous and he has threatened to kill some other prisoners, which must be taken seriously. The Governor stated that he also has a number of other high security and serious problem prisoners within the population.

He said that on average between 30 and 40 outside contractors work at the prison daily. Hopefully this will be reduced when the new work is completed.

This completed the meeting with the Governor and senior staff. We then proceeded to discuss the business plans.

#### **4. Prison's Business Plans 2004 - 2007**

##### **1 Financial Management**

##### **1.1 Manage within the overall budget allocation for 2004.**

1.1.1 Conduct Budget Meeting with Heads of Functions.

Result: Yes, done.

1.1.2 Identify need and prioritise costing of agreed requirements.

Result: Done.

1.1.3 Meeting with Director of Finance - final approval received.

Result: Done and meeting has taken place.

1.1.4 Monitor and review expenditure throughout the year.

Result: Yes, regularly - monthly.

1.1.5 Evaluate end-of-year report.

Result: Yes, done.

**1.2 Implement new Financial Management System as it is rolled out to additional Institutions (Cork and Limerick).**

1.2.1 Implement Financial Management System.

Result: Up and running - even upgraded.

**2 Operational Management**

**2.1 Ensure emergency planning in place to cover emergency situations, e.g., fire, riot, hostage-taking. Three separate sections.**

**Riot Plan**

2.1.1 Conduct review of existing Riot Plan.

Result: Done regularly.

2.1.2 Produce report and recommendations to Governor.

Result: Done.

2.1.3 Implement recommendations as approved by the Governor.

Result: Done.

2.1.4 Review training needs of staff in relation to Riot.

Result: Yes, done, all staff completed C&R Phase I, some of C&R Phase II, also some B.A. training

2.1.5 Produce report on training and recommendations to the Governor for approval.

Result: Done.

2.1.6 Implement approved training programme for staff.

Result: Yes, done as far as possible.

## **Hostage-taking Plan**

- 2.1.1 Conduct review of existing Hostage-taking Plan.  
Result: Done - new command room set up.
- 2.1.2 Produce report and recommendations to Governor.  
Result: Done.
- 2.1.3 Implement recommendations as approved by the Governor.  
Result: Yes, implemented.
- 2.1.4 Review training needs of staff in relation to Hostage-taking Plan.  
Result: Ongoing process.
- 2.1.5 Produce report on training and recommendations to the Governor for approval.  
Result: Done.
- 2.1.6 Implement approved training programme for staff.  
Result: Ongoing, being done.

## **Fire Plan**

- 2.1.1 Conduct review of existing Fire Plan.  
Result: Done on a regular basis.
- 2.1.2 Produce report and recommendations to Governor.  
Result: In-hand - being done with change of building programme.
- 2.1.3 Implement recommendations as approved by the Governor.  
Result: Yes, done.
- 2.1.4 Review training needs of staff in relation to Fire Plan.  
Result: Done on a regular basis.

2.1.5 Produce report on training and recommendations to the Governor for approval.

Result: Yes, done.

2.1.6 Implement approved training programme for staff.

Result: Yes, done.

## **2.2 Implement new system for recording assaults in the prisoner population.**

2.2.1 Conduct user-acceptance test.

Result: Yes, system up and running.

2.2.2 Receive Guidelines from Operations based on new classification system.

Result: Yes, received.

2.2.3 Receive new computer system from IT.

Result: Yes, for recording - done.

2.2.4 Train end-users in the system.

Result: Yes, completed with some staff (not all staff).

2.2.5 Implement the new system.

Result: Done.

2.2.6 Review.

Result: Done regularly.

2.2.7 Conduct initial audit of assaults in 2004.

Result: Done.

**3.2 Manage staff resources within overall budget allocated for overtime for 2004.**

3.2.1 Ascertain exact budget for 2004.

Result: Done.

3.2.2 Agree measures to remain within budget.

Result: Yes, done.

3.2.3 Communicate measures to all staff.

Result: Yes, done.

3.2.4 Implement measures.

Result: Done.

3.2.5 Review measures in light of monthly expenditure returns.

Result: Done monthly.

**3.3 Implement whatever new attendance arrangements are agreed with the Prison Officers' Association.**

3.3.1 Review new agreement.

Result: Yes, done.

3.3.2 Identify implementation requirements.

Result: Done.

3.3.3 Communicate system to all staff.

Result: Yes, done.

3.3.4 Implement system.

Result: Done.

- 3.3.5 Review.  
Result: Daily/weekly - being done.
- 3.4 Introduce PMDS for Prison Service grades from Assistant Governor (and equivalent) to Governor.**
- 3.4.1 Identify participants and arrange for attendance at training courses.  
Result: Done - except for two new Chief Officers.
- 3.4.2 Prepare Role Profile forms for all participants.  
Result: Yes, done.
- 3.4.3 Monitor ongoing individual performances.  
Result: Yes, ongoing.
- 3.4.4 Conduct Interim Reviews.  
Result: Yes, ongoing and completed.
- 3.4.5 Conduct annual review.  
Result: Yes, done.
- 3.4.6 Evaluate outcome.  
Result: Done.
- 3.6 Ensure adequate number of trained staff for emergency situations, e.g., C&R training, B.A training.**
- 3.6.1 Review training needs - C&R and B.A.  
Result: Done.
- 3.6.2 Review arrangements with Emergency Services.  
Result: Yes, done and ongoing.

3.6.3 Identify number of hours allocated for same.

Result: Done.

3.6.4 Produce recommendations to Governor.

Result: Done.

3.6.5 Implement approved training programme.

Result: Yes, being carried out.

#### **4 Regime Development**

##### **4.1A Prioritise education against the background of budgetary restrictions following the Government decision of 11 November 2003.**

4.1A.1 Establish and monitor participation rate.

Result: Yes, being done.

4.1A.2 Offer all new committals interview for Education Unit.

Result: Yes, done.

4.1A.3 Enlist the assistance of other agencies in Wheatfield in promoting education.

Result: Yes, being done.

4.1A.4 Provide a positive learning environment for students.

Result: Yes, good classrooms/regimes.

4.1A.5 Prioritise literacy provision (particularly in light of Prison Adult Literacy Survey).

Result: Yes, being done.

4.1A.6 Establish ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) Programme.

Result: Being done as far as possible with resources available.

- 4.1A.7 Produce Physical Education Development Plan for 2005.  
Result: Yes, done.
- 4.1A.8 Offer provision five days and four evenings per week.  
Result: Yes, happening.
- 4.1A.9 Biannual Report to Mr. K. Warner, Annual Report to Mr. V. Sammon -  
C.D.V.E.C. and the Governor.  
Result: Yes, done.
- 4.1B Workshops Training against the background of budgetary  
restrictions following the Government decision of 11 November  
2003.**
- 4.1B.1 Maintain prisoner numbers in vocational training as far as possible during  
ongoing budgetary restrictions.  
Result: Done.
- 4.1B.2 Opening of new laundry facility with certified training - City and Guilds  
Result: Done.
- 4.1B.3 Maintain the present standards of awards - ISO 900/2000, IS343/2000,  
Excellence Ireland Emerald Award.  
Result: Done and achieved.
- 4.1B.4 Establish Multidisciplinary Group.  
Result: Up and running.
- 4.1B.5 Establish FETAC as the requisite for all work-training facilities.  
Result: Yes, ongoing - done.

- 4.1B.6 Conduct needs analysis.  
Result: Yes, done.
- 4.1B.7 Review the current work and training programmes and make appropriate recommendations.  
Result: Yes, done regularly.
- 4.1B.8 Seek approval from Governor to implement recommendations.  
Result: Done.
- 4.1B.9 Implement approved recommendations.  
Result: Done.
- 4.1B.10 Review changes.  
Result: On-going - being done.

**4.2 Provide for the personal well-being of prisoners, including Spiritual Care and Suicide Awareness.**

- 4.2.1 Provision of Religious Services, Catholic and Interfaith as required.  
Result: Yes, being done.
- 4.2.2 Continue group work and one-to-one meetings (to meet with committals within one week of arrival). Develop small group activities  
- Meditation  
- Choir  
- Alpha Programme (induction of Christian way of life).  
Result: Yes, being done mostly by nuns (chaplains).
- 4.2.3 Offer family support at times of special need.  
Result: Yes, being done.

- 4.2.4 Explore with other agencies a process of reintegration into the community.  
Result: Yes, on-going.
- 4.2.5 Organise the provision of counselling.  
Result: Yes, being done.
- 4.2.6 Continue to attend quarterly multidisciplinary meetings to review current and new suicide prevention measures and implement as appropriate.  
Result: Yes, being done and suicide awareness committee.
- 4.2.7 Implement recommendations as appropriate of the National Steering Group on Deaths in Custody.  
Result: Yes, ongoing but limited national meetings.
- 4.2.8 Convene special meeting of the Committee in the event of a death or serious suicide attempt.  
Result: Yes, system in operation.
- 4.2.9 Implement recommendations when approved by Governor.  
Result: Yes, done.
- 4.2.10 Access to Probation and Welfare Service to enable prisoners to address generic welfare issues.  
Result: Yes, being done.
- 4.2.11 Examine the feasibility of introducing the Listener Scheme.  
Result: Done - up and running.
- 4.2.12 Access to Psychology Service in respect of general mental health and adjustment-related issues.  
Result: Ongoing.

**4.3 Provide care and rehabilitation programmes, ensuring equality of access for all Prisoners.**

4.3.1 Continue to provide courses in Parenting, Personal Development, Addiction Studies and Pre-release.

Result: Yes, being done - ongoing.

4.3.2 Promote classes in the creative arts which offer stimulation, creative and emotional release for students.

Result: Ongoing, being done.

4.3.3 Encourage an appetite for independent and lifelong learning, by providing access to the Open Learning Centre and to distance courses including Open University.

Result: Yes, done and on-going.

4.3.4 Promote routes to certification through FETAC, D.E.S. and other accrediting bodies.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

4.3.5 Promote FETAC level two certification including M.O.S. expert as bridge between second and third-level qualifications.

Result: Yes, being done in education centre.

4.3.6 Referral of students to other appropriate agencies.

Result: Yes, when arises.

4.3.7 Library Committee to continue.

Result: Yes, in operation.

- 4.3.8 Continue to support referrals to the Intensive Supervision Scheme (Probation and Welfare Service), the Linkage Programme and other community based treatment programmes.  
Result: Yes, through the Probation and Welfare Service.
- 4.3.9 Facilitate St. Vincent de Paul, NA, AA, Samaritans, etc., continued access to those in need.  
Result: Yes, ongoing.
- 4.3.10 Continue to support offenders with the transition from prison to the community by referring them to appropriate support schemes including 'HOST'.  
Result: Yes, Done through the Probation and Welfare Service.
- 4.3.11 All new committals to be assessed by the Probation and Welfare Service within three working days of committal.  
Result: Yes, done, not necessarily within three days.
- 4.3.12 Parole Reports, Repatriation Reports to be completed on all appropriate prisoners within the designated time frame.  
Result: Yes, through the Probation and Welfare Service.
- 4.3.13 Long-term focused work with selected individual prisoners to address offending behaviours, including preparation and referral to prison based treatment programmes.  
Result: Yes, ongoing.
- 4.3.14 Develop a strategy for working with life-sentence prisoners.  
Result: Yes, being done.

4.3.15 Continue to provide Psychological and Therapeutic Intervention aiming at offending behaviour and/or Mental Health needs of prisoners (three clinics weekly).

Result: Yes, being done.

4.3.16 Continue to engage in preparation and motivation for prisoners for group rehabilitation programmes.

Result: Ongoing.

4.3.17 Continue to provide training for staff to supply rehabilitation programmes and initiative, i.e., DFU.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

## **5 Tackle the drug problem in Prison**

### **5.1A Implement measures to control supply of illicit drugs in Prison.**

5.1A.1 Install, to a high standard, netting over the recreation yard no. 2.

Result: Done.

5.1A.2 Ensure C.C.T.V. cameras in the visiting area provide high quality recordings.

Result: Not done - due to be done in 2006.

5.1A.3 Maintain policy of 'No personal contact on visits'.

Result: Yes, policy in operation.

5.1A.4 New Laundry to be commissioned to cater for the cleaning of all prisoners' personal clothing.

Result: Yes, done. Up and working.

- 5.1A.5 Ensure that staff are particularly vigilant on all visits, courts, escorts and reception.  
Result: Yes, ongoing.
- 5.1A.6 Report all prisoners endeavouring to procure or use prohibited substances.  
Result: Ongoing.
- 5.1A.7 Deal with all reported incidents in accordance with the 1947 Prison Rules and regulations.  
Result: Yes, being done.
- 5.1B Provide Drug Treatment and Addiction Services for prisoners.**
- 5.1B.1 Continue to engage the services of the visiting counsellors engaged in substance addictions.  
Result: Not fully operational.
- 5.1B.2 Continue our association with community based addiction facilities.  
Result: Yes, being done as far as possible.
- 5.1B.3 Provide medical treatment and care, methadone programmes to all substance addicted prisoners.  
Result: Yes, being done - ongoing.
- 5.1B.4 Maintain present Drug-Free Units and consider an expansion of initiative.  
Result: Yes, two now in operation.
- 5.1B.5 Review IPS Drugs Policy with a view to local implementation.  
Result: Yes, policy received, partly implemented.
- 5.1B.6 Make recommendations on actions/initiatives for Wheatfield Prison.  
Result: Yes, done.

5.1B.7 Implement recommendations.

Result: Yes, done.

5.1B.8 Deliver the multidisciplinary Drug Awareness Course X2 units for offenders.

Result: Done, up and running.

## **6. Prisoner Health Care**

### **6.1 Implement agreed Healthcare Standards as appropriate, to ensure Medical Psychiatric care for Prisoners consistent with standards that apply in the community generally.**

6.1.1 Healthcare Committee to remain in place.

Result: Yes, done. In place.

6.1.2 Refresh review of report and recommendations.

Result: Yes, done.

6.1.3 Review recommendations that may be implemented in Wheatfield Prison.

Result: Yes, whatever can be done is completed.

6.1.4 Review and approve appropriate recommendations.

Result: Yes, done and ongoing.

6.1.5 Implement appropriate recommendations.

Result: Yes, done as far as possible.

6.1.6 Implement whatever arrangements need to be put in place in regard to Prisoner Medical Records System, healthcare standards, etc., arising from conclusion of ongoing negotiations with Medical Officers in the Labour Relations Commission.

Result: Yes, done. Some aspects ongoing.

## **7 Facility Management**

### **7.1 Manage the agreed maintenance budget for the institution.**

7.1.1 Identify budget for 2004.

Result: Yes, done.

7.1.2 Prioritise works for the year.

Result: Done.

7.1.3 Review monthly.

Result: Done, also reviewed weekly at times.

7.1.4 Agree 2005 budget with Estates and Finance.

Result: Done.

### **7.2 Provide local input to construction works.**

7.2.1 Provide an all-weather sports pitch.

Result: Completed.

7.2.2 Provide a new floor to the sports hall.

Result: Completed.

7.2.3 New security fence to no. 2 yard.

Result: Yes, done.

7.2.4 Provide a means of egress from all units.

Result: In progress - due for completion end of June 2006.

7.2.5 Fire-alarm upgrade throughout the Prison.

Result: Yes, being done at present.

- 7.2.6 Security cladding to exercise yards.  
Result: Done.
- 7.2.7 Car park facility for Wheatfield and Cloverhill.  
Result: Done. Car park provided.
- 7.2.8 Condense-tank replacement.  
Result: Done, completed.
- 7.2.9 Supply security netting to staff car park.  
Result: Yes, done.
- 7.2.10 Upgrade facilities in Training Kitchen.  
Result: Done.
- 7.2.11 Upgrade kitchen equipment (Rosebowl has slowed this down).  
Result: Equipment replaced.

**7.3 Assist in provision of new electronic and manual locking.**  
Result: Not applicable to Wheatfield Prison.

**7.4 Ensure Safety Statement in place and updated as necessary, backed by effective health and safety procedure and practices.**

7.4.1 Review Safety Statement.  
Result: Yes, done and ongoing.

7.4.2 Identify areas requiring change.  
Result: Yes, ongoing.

7.4.3 Redraft where necessary  
Result: Yes, being done.

- 7.4.4 Construct updated edition.  
Result: Yes, will be done when building work completed.
- 7.4.5 Familiarise staff.  
Result: Ongoing, and new booklets will be issued in due course.
- 7.5 Establish arrangements to review and implement, where practicable, recommendations of the Inspector of Prisons and Places of Detention.**
- 7.5.1 Review recommendations of the Inspector of Prisons.  
Result: Done.
- 7.5.2 Set up Working Group (Heads of Function areas referred to in the report).  
Result: Done.
- 7.5.3 Prioritise and agree areas requiring attention.  
Result: Done.
- 7.5.4 Implement change.  
Result: Yes, done.
- 7.5.5 Evaluate and review.  
Result: Done.
- 8 Tobacco Control**
- 8.1 Implement new Tobacco Control Regulations as necessary in the Prison Service.**
- 8.1.1 Agree unified Smoking Policy with Headquarters and Governors.  
Result: Yes, agreement reached.

8.1.2 Set up team to evaluate and implement.

Result: Done.

8.1.3 Implement new Smoking Policy.

Result: Done and ongoing.

8.1.4 Review operation of new policy.

Result: Yes, done and ongoing.

## **9 Environmental and Waste Management**

### **9.1 In line with Irish Prison Service Environmental Policy Statement set up systems to improve Environmental and Waste Management in the Prison Service.**

9.1.1 Awareness Training for governors.

Result: Done, Governor with responsibility for waste management received training.

9.1.2 Appoint Environmental Co-ordinator in each prison as per Strategy Report.

Result: Done.

9.1.3 Provide relevant training for the nominated personnel and critical staff members.

Result: Yes, all necessary staff trained.

9.1.4 Set up an Environmental Management and Implementation team in each prison.

Result: Yes, done.

9.1.5 Implement local Environmental Management system.

Result: Yes, done and ongoing.

- 9.1.6 Carry out annual management review of EMS.  
Result: Yes, being done and ongoing.

## **5 Statistical Information**

### *5.1 Staffing by Grade 28 March 2006*

1	Governor
2	Deputy Governors
1	Assistant Governor
1	Assistant Governor (Work and Training)
15	Assistant Industrial Supervisors
1	Chief Officer I
4	Chief Officers II
1	Chief Officer (Detail)
14	Assistant Chief Officers
1	Chief Trades Officer I
1	Chief Trades Officer II
3	Clerks Grade I
11	Clerks Grade II
7	ITI Grade II
1	Industrial Supervisor (Catering)
3	Industrial Supervisors (Workshops)
2	Industrial Managers
3	Medical Orderlies
11	Nurse Officers
219	Prison Officers
11	Trades Officers

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## 5.2 Sentence profile of the Prisoner Population

Number serving sentences of up to and including 3 months	9
Number serving sentences of over 3 months and up to and including 6 months	21
Number serving sentences of over 6 months and up to and including 12 months	28
Number serving sentences of over 12 months and up to and including 2 years	44
Number serving sentences of over 2 years and up to and including 4 years	63
Number serving sentences of over 4 years and up to and including 7 years	81
Number serving sentences of over 7 years and up to and including 10 years	42
Number serving sentences of over 10 years	21
Number serving life sentences	38
Total	<u>347</u>

### *Untried Prisoners*

Number of remand prisoners for trial	9
Number of prisoners on remand only	<u>1</u>
Total	10

### *Sex Offenders*

Number of sex offenders	46
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### *Foreign Nationals*

Number of foreign nationals	26
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### 5.3 *Age profile of the prison population*

Number of prisoners aged 16, 17 and 18 years old (total number for the 3 years)	2
Number of prisoners aged 19, 20 and 21 years old (total number for the 3 years)	44
Number of prisoners aged 22, 23, 24, and 25 years old (total number for 4 years)	71
Number of prisoners aged 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 years old (total number for 5 years)	82
Number of prisoners aged 31 to 35 years old (including 35 year olds)	61
Number of prisoners aged 36 to 40 years old (including 40 year olds)	35
Number of prisoners aged 41 to 45 years old (including 45 year olds)	22
Number of prisoners aged 46 to 50 years old (including 50 year olds)	15
Number of prisoners aged 51 to 60 years old (including 60 year olds)	14
Number of prisoners aged 61 years and older	11
	<u>357</u>

## 6 **Tour of Inspection**

### 6.1 Cellular Accommodation

There are twenty cellular units of sixteen cells in each jutting off a very long spinal corridor, with ten units on the ground floor and ten on the first floor. Some of the single cells have been doubled and in those that are doubled, there is a vanity screen around the toilet area. The doubled cells are fitted with bunk beds and a double bedside locker. Each of the units is identically designed. On entry there is a large open space / recreation room with a

communal television. There is a double stainless-steel draining-board within each of the recreation units which has a supply of hot and cold water and a Burco boiler. Just off the main recreation area there is an archway which leads into a small games room which has a snooker table in the centre of it, and just off this games room there is a small telephone room for prisoners' use. The two units which contain the drug-free prisoners has a snooker table in the television area and the games area is fitted out with another television, a video and a DVD player. The drug-free unit prisoners also have washing and drying facilities in another small room off the main recreation area.

The cells are fitted with toilet, wash-hand basin, single bed, which is screwed to the floor while the bunk beds are also bolted to the wall, television, inbuilt radio, electric kettle, table, locker and noticeboards. Each of the cells has natural light from a three-panel window. A section of the centre panel can open to allow in air and is fitted with a grid to prevent articles from being thrown out. All of the cell floors throughout all of the units are tiled. The walls are painted but quite a few have posters pasted over the cell walls. The in-cell call-system, if activated, ignites a red light over the cell door and also in the console or hub area. If it is not attended to within a few minutes, another light will also be activated on a panel in the central control room or console room. The light over the cell door cannot be turned off unless a person actually goes to the cell and extinguishes it from the outside of the cell door.

Each of the units has a control or hub area where the class officer operates the movements, lockings, lights, air-controls, etc. from within. It is so designed that when the officer is within the hub area he or she can observe through the perspex panels the movements on the spinal corridor as well as within the unit. The locking systems are electronically controlled from this hub and therefore officers do not carry any cell keys. There are display panels within it that alert the officer if the cell door is not locked, or if other cell fittings are interfered with, such as window grids, door frames, etc. There is a small room off each hub which contains a w.h.b and toilet for the officer's use as well as a small storage facility for the class officer's needs such as toilet rolls,

soap, etc. The hub area contains book/report records as well as some security items.

Each of the units are fitted with three stainless-steel cubicle-type showers which are tiled and fitted with non-slip mats. The showering area in each of the units was inspected as well as a random number of cells within each unit. The level of hygiene in each was very acceptable, some better than others but overall very well maintained, neat and tidy.

## 6.2 Work and Training Office

There was one officer in charge of this office at the time of our inspection. The officer is involved in the arranging of work training for all of the prisoners within the institution. The officer works in tandem with the school's head teacher and they try to get them 50% of the time on work training and 50% of the time in education. All of the workshops, except the computer-shop, is regarded as a work-training centre and all carry certifications, including the computer-shop. The Officer was busy organising the induction week during which there are a number of speakers who come and talk to prisoners when they first arrive at the prison. They deliver about one course per month and outline the facilities/services that are available to the prisoners. They also allow them to walk the various workshops and the education area so that they can decide what work training or educational courses they wish to participate in.

## 6.3 Computer-shop

The computer-shop occupies seven prisoners daily and is generally always full. It very seldom has dropouts according to the officer. The prisoners within this work-training shop are now doing the City and Guilds Certificate course which is verified by another officer and not the officer who supervises there. It is also supervised from the City and Guilds certificate centre itself. They do not have access to the Internet.

#### 6.4 Computer-shop (PC) Unit

The prisoners within this unit are from the segregated sections of the prison and it can accommodate a maximum of sixteen. They generally have about eight prisoners on a regular basis as others would be attending school, on visits, etc. They do desktop publishing and they are also City and Guilds candidates.

#### 6.5 Print Unit.

On the day of our inspection there were eight prisoners working within the print unit, but they can take a maximum of ten. The publishing software used here can be used to create any kind of publication from a black and white business card to a multicolour magazine. This shop operates the full range of printing skills from print making, darkroom operation, basic computer skills plus all the other printing requirements such as guillotine operating, punch making, collating, perfect-binding, stapling, perforating, folding, punching and binding. FETAC level I is being introduced here shortly and on completion of the course they will receive a certificate if they reach the required standard.

#### 6.6 Index Unit

The project is co-ordinated by the prison librarians and is under the management of the assistant industrial supervisor. They have a maximum of ten prisoners working within it but they average about seven to eight prisoners per day. The work consists of dealing with school registers. They get old school roll-books and transfer the names on the roll onto cards which are then computerised. The computerised printout is checked for accuracy and then placed on disk which is checked again for accuracy. The final computer printout is checked against the original register and any further corrections necessary are made. This process is carried out to ensure as high a level of accuracy as possible. The final database is donated free-of-charge to the public library system and the project is registered with the Data Protection Commission. A copy of the database is lodged with the National Archives and a hard copy printout in alphabetical order is returned to each individual school along with the original roll-book. The index unit has also been affected

by the cutbacks and the officers no longer open the workshop at 9.30a.m as they are engaged elsewhere. The 2nd officer is often redeployed resulting in the reduction of prisoners working within the area. There is no trained relief panel of officers so when the regular officers are off on leave or sick there is nobody with experience to replace them. The unit is greatly curtailed when this happens.

#### 6.7 Paint-shop

The inspectorate then visited the paint-shop where there are number of bays for doing various types of paint projects such as, painting the side walls, wallpapering, painting different types of doors, staining, polishes, etc. There were no prisoners or staff within this area at the time of inspection and the inspectorate were informed that they were out painting within the main prison. Afterwards the same area was shown to us as the proposed new industrial cleaning workshop area, so some of the bays will be used as training areas for painting and the balance of the bays will be used as training in industrial cleaning training workshop. It was interesting to note that throughout the prison during the days of inspection there were only two prisoners observed doing any painting. However we were assured by management that there are twelve prisoners constantly employed at painting and that no outside painting contractor is engaged to paint any part of the prison.

#### 6.8 Reception area

The reception area is the location where the prisoners are received into the prison on committal and discharged on release or where they pass through on transfer to other prisons or go out on escorts to courts, hospitals, etc. The prisoners' clothing and belongings are recorded and held in lockers within this area. The officer in charge told me that there are four to five new committals per day passing through and there are on average ten to eleven from the courts who had already gone out that morning and would return in the evening. They operate both a computer system and a card system and when I inquired as to why they use both they said that it was faster to use the card system at the time of transaction and then put all of the information onto

computer at a later slacker stage. They had a sufficient number of lockers for the amount of prisoners in custody. They have holding cells on both the first floor level and ground floor level where prisoners are taken down from reception to the first floor and held there until collected by their escorts. They also have five showers in the reception area all of which were clean and tidy as were the holding cells. There is a big improvement in the hygiene conditions of the cells since the last time they were inspected three years ago.

## 6.9 Laundry

The prison acquired a new state of the art laundry in 2004. It is operated by one industrial supervisor, three assistant industrial supervisors and twenty prisoners. The number of prisoners working there seems to vary between 18 and 20. The laundry meets the needs of the laundering requirements of Wheatfield and some of Cloverhill prisoners which includes sheets pillowcases, duvets, towels, personal clothing, underwear, socks, etc. They have large plastic barrel-type containers which are wheeled into the various units and they collect the prisoners' clothing in bags and then return to the laundry. They record the items within each laundry bag which are then passed into the machines. The machines are programmed (for heat purposes) for the different fabrics of clothing. The washing detergents are self-fed from a central control area.

On completion of the wash cycle, the clothing is then removed from the washing machines and placed in the dryers. The clothing is then taken from the dryers, transferred to another section where there are industrial pressers and these operate at temperatures of 180°. Some of the clothing can go in slightly damp and come out dry and pressed. It is normally sheets, duvets, pillowcases, that are operated on that particularly presser. There are another two pressers which are steam-operated and all of the shirts, trousers, etc. are pressed in these particular machines. All of the clothing is then brought to another section which is the dispatch room. It is rechecked to ensure that what came in are the same items as are going out. They are put into bags,

placed in the barrels and returned to the various units from which they originally came.

There is a chemical room off the main laundry area which contains detergents, bleach, saffire, protective clothing, gloves, etc. and all of these detergents are programmed directly into the washing machines. If the detergents and washing powders are running low within the machines an alarm bell goes off.

All of the staff are qualified with City and Guilds certificates in supervisory rolls. The exam consisted of both written and practical work. Fifteen prisoners have qualified at present to receive certificates in laundering from City and Guilds and one prisoner has secured employment working in a laundry on release. They work from 8.40am - 4.10pm each day Monday to Friday and have their midday meal within the laundry area which allows the laundry to operate a longer day than the other workshops. Each prisoner can avail of the laundry services once per week.

It provides work places for around 20 prisoners, although the actual number of prisoners registered as attending for work tends to be somewhat lower (13 on the morning of the day of the visit; 12 in the afternoon of that day; 11 on the morning of 18 April 2006; 6 in the afternoon; 10 on 17 April 2006; 7 on 14 April 2006; 13 on 13 April 2006 (no separate attendance figures for morning and afternoon were recorded on the latter three dates)). Lower figures for attendance in the afternoon were partly explained by the fact that some of the prisoners allocated work places in the laundry took part in education / gym activities during the afternoon.

#### 6.10 *Proposed new Industrial Cleaning Project*

The Inspectorate also visited a proposed new industrial cleaning project, and 'Wheatfield Indexing Project'. The industrial cleaning project is to be located in a workshop area consisting of bays previously used to provide training in painting and decorating techniques. We were told as and from the 8th May

2006 eight prison officers will be trained (to 'train-the-trainer' standard) by the College of Cleaning Science in Ballina. Once they have satisfactorily completed this course the staff will be able to train up to fifteen prisoners at a time in industrial cleaning techniques. The performance of prisoners will be assessed and, if they reach the required standard, they may be awarded a recognised certificate in industrial cleaning upon which the name of the prison will not appear.

#### 6.11 Construction Unit

The construction unit is operated by one industrial training instructor and two assistant industrial supervisors and they had eighteen prisoners there at the time of inspection. They have a list of thirty-nine prisoners but as with the other work training workshops some were on visits, gym and elsewhere. The prisoners were involved in building brick walls, pillars, arches, fireplaces, etc. They use sand and lime and on completion of the work the bricks are then knocked down, cleaned off and reused. Some of the other prisoners are involved in the making of concrete slabs, garden ornaments, etc. and these items can be sold to members of the public, although it is mostly staff who purchase same. The prisoners here can achieve the FETAC certificate while some will go on and do the City and Guilds bricklaying certification course. The construction unit is quite large and they also have an educational classroom at one end of it where a teacher gives classes one or two days a week.

#### 6.12 Woodwork workshop

The Inspectorate team was shown around the woodwork workshop by the Industrial Supervisor. The workshop was not operational as it is being modernised and new machines are being installed. The officer informed us that when it is fully operational there will be one Industrial Supervisor, two Assistant Supervisors, a total of sixteen prisoners and it will also be FETAC certified. It is an extremely large workshop with plenty of space and they are waiting for the installation of some further machines and also electric power supply to some of the machines that are already in position.

### 6.13 Metal-workshop

The metal-workshop is operated by two Industrial Training Instructors and one Assistant Industrial supervisor and had sixteen prisoners at the time of our inspection. Prisoners operating within this workshop can achieve the FETAC certification as well as the City and Guilds, plus welding certificates in MEG, TIG, Arc and Gas. The prisoners who wish to work within this workshop are given one week's familiarisation course which consists of an introduction to welding and to EIS engineering. It is quite a large well laid out workshop and all of the prisoners were fully engaged in making various items. Some of them were making gates, others were making holders for flower pots while some were engaged in welding and different metalwork tasks.

### 6.14 Induction Unit

There is an Industrial Training Instructor involved in the presentation of induction courses and he organises these for all new committals. There are generally eight to ten prisoners per course and they invite various speakers from the different areas of the prison to speak on their particular topic and area of responsibility.

### 6.15 Gymnasium

Three instructors operate the gymnasium and it can take up to a maximum of twenty-six prisoners per session but they generally have just over twenty per session. The gym is well laid out with all the necessary equipment, e.g punch bags, walking-machines, leg and arm strengthening machines, and all of the usual equipment that one would find in a modern up-to-date gymnasium. The ceiling of the gym is quite low and in warm weather it may become quite hot within it. Just off the gymnasium there are eight showers and a large changing room, all of which were clean and tidy. There is a sports hall at the end of the gymnasium which was not in use as outside contractors were working within it at the time of inspection. Apparently the sports hall has been out of use for some time as the outside contractors are installing fire-stopping units.

#### 6.16 The Garden Workshop

The Inspectorate visited the garden where an officer and a teacher who works two hours per week therein had 12 prisoners involved in different aspects of horticultural work. Some were working in the glasshouse taking seeds from trays and placing them in large containers, others were weeding the vegetable area, another was spraying roses/plants while another group were involved in removing the old flowers from the flower beds between each of the units and replacing them with new flowers. There is a small lawn adjacent to the glasshouses with a water fountain and a prisoner was mowing the lawn at the time of inspection. Since our last inspection, a second glass house has been installed. They produce a considerable number of plants that are put into the flower beds and baskets which decorate the prison extensively. They also grow various vegetables and have a small vegetable garden surrounded by boxwood hedging. It was a hive of activity at the time of inspection and from talking to some of the prisoners involved in the work they appeared to really enjoy the “outdoor” life plus the quiet and restful setting in which they were working.

#### 6.17 The Library

The Inspector met the senior librarian who informed him that there were three librarians provided by the local authority for all the prisons in the Dublin area. She was based at Wheatfield. She was very concerned at the fall-off in attendance in the library. It is a good library. She says she gets great support from the Governor, the management and the staff, but since the cutbacks it has a serious impact on the use of the library.

In fairness, she points out that falling numbers have been attributed to television in the cells, lack of literacy skills among offenders and even the practice of placing men in double cells which may be a barrier to quiet reading and studying. However, she makes the point very strongly that the drop in numbers using the library also coincides with the introduction of library closures. However, she points out that in 2005 despite the high level of

closure 105 book requests and 24 law requests were received by the librarian indicating that amongst offenders there is an interest in reading and in utilising the library service.

The library is well stocked and has good resources for education, recreation and information. It should remain available to all offenders and the library officers should be freed up to assist the librarian in promoting the library and encouraging better use of the library amongst offenders. The library is used on Sundays for protection prisoners where they spend the entire afternoon.

The library has hosted several activities throughout the past year some in liaison with the prison's education unit while other outside speakers gave of their expertise to the prisoners. The library for the first time hosted dinner hour talks for staff on stress management.

The library is very well laid out and is quite large. It is divided with books on one side and a display and meeting area on the opposite side. The weekly newspapers are available, all of the books are computerised and it was very neat and tidy at the time of inspection. There is a law book section available. They can supply the law book within two days of the request but they do not actually hold them in stock.

The Inspector met a member of the teaching staff who conducted a number of classes in t'ai-chi and meditation as well as organising various speakers to come into the prison and give talks. The visiting speakers were invited in consultation with the librarian and the librarian kindly allowed the library to be used for such talks.

#### Activities with the library

##### 6.18 The Midterm break Talks

Two talks were held in the library for the men when the schools closed for two weeks in February. The St. Valentine's Day special was:- "How to attract the love you crave" talk by Kay Doyle. This was very well received. The other

talk was given by Julie Holmes, accompanied by two of her dogs, which was a dog training demonstration for an interested group.

#### 6.19 T'ai-Chi and meditation

The teacher held eight T'ai-chi and meditation classes in the library. Four were for the ordinary side and four for the segregated prisoners. They were an outstanding success. The teacher was able to create an ambience of calm and trust at each session. The exercises were quite physical but there was a sense that each session was a follow-on from the previous one and the men were learning more each week. They wanted the sessions to continue. However, the librarian stated that they had to limit them to four for each side of the prison. However, she agrees that this is an activity that might be reintroduced in the future.

#### 6.20 Stress Management Talks

In February Francis Deverell, a stress management therapist, commenced a series of six stress management talks which were held in the library. Offenders from the non-segregated side of the prison attended the morning sessions and the segregated attended in the afternoon. The talks were very well received by the men, many of whom attended all six. A list of available library books and audio tapes relevant to stress management and personal development was given to each participant and Francis recommended some book titles which were subsequently purchased and added to library stock.

#### 6.21 Tuck shop

The Inspectorate visited the tuck shop which is situated just off the main spinal corridor and was operated by three officers at the time of inspection. The shop stocks cereals, biscuits, chocolates, soups, no cold meats, cheese (no blocks of cheese), ham spreads, tins of fish, quick-lunch, toiletries, daily newspapers but not generally provincial papers unless specially ordered, greeting cards, minerals and fresh fruit. There are two storage rooms at the back of the shop where the various items are stored and they have a reasonable amount of space. The officer stated that the tuck shop is open

from 8 am to 8 pm Monday - Saturday and opens on Sundays from 8am until 5pm. Two tills are in operation, one for the sales to staff and the other for the sales to prisoners. The officer receives a printout of the prisoners' cash and gratuity at the start of each day's business and the sales returns are sent to the general office each evening. When questioned regarding not having cold meats or blocks of cheese for sale they stated that under the health and safety regulations these items could not be kept in the cells as they had no fridges and were not recommended from a health point of view.

#### 6.22 Central-hub office

This office is located off the corridor on the ground floor and deals mostly with prisoners' visitors. The officer in charge of the waiting room phones the central-hub and relays the name of the prisoner whom the visitor wishes to visit. They have index cards which give details of each of the prisoners in custody, the unit in which they are accommodated, where they are employed, etc. When the officer in the waiting room telephones the central-hub office, a docket is made out in the hub office then given to an officer who goes off and collects the prisoner and brings him to the visiting area. If the prisoner is not entitled to a visit or is prohibited, the visitors are informed accordingly. All of the recording is done manually and there is no computerised system in operation either in the waiting room or in the central-hub office.

#### 6.23 Search-room off the main corridor leading to visiting area.

There is a corridor leading from the centre of the prison to the visiting area and just off this corridor there is a search-room. It is quite a small room with a fitted carpet. Prisoners either going to or from visits can be brought into this room and searched. The records show that on Saturday 15th April 2006, twenty-two prisoners were searched and there were approximately 100 visits. On 17th April 2006 fifteen prisoners were searched and there were 48 visits on that day. On 18th April 2006 there were twenty-one prisoners searched and 55 visits took place. On checking the records it shows that since January 2006 six items have been recorded as being found in searches of prisoners returning off visits. The officer outlined that it might be possible that in some

instances articles found may not have been recorded but placed directly onto P19s. (misconduct report).

#### 6.24 Visiting boxes

The visiting box consists of 18 cubicles with glass/perspex divides at the side of each cubicle and open between prisoners and visitors. There is a tabletop with a low barrier dividing both parties in the centre. There are form-type seats attached to the floor on both sides of the cubicle with a single seat for the prisoner on one side and another to accommodate three visitors on the opposite side. However, the seat for the visitors is quite small and does not fit three adults very comfortably. The entire boxes are monitored with CCTV cameras which are due to be upgraded shortly. There are various high seats provided at the end and in the centre of the room for an officer to sit and observe the visits taking place.

There are three professional visiting boxes, plus one family room in another corridor off the main visiting area. The family room is carpeted, it has coffee tables and armchairs and there are no barriers or contact prevention devices between the prisoners and the visitors. The professional visiting areas have no barriers just a flat tabletop between the professional visitor and the prisoner. There are two screen visiting boxes which have clear perspex sheeting from tabletop to ceiling which prevents any contact from either side and they talk through a grid within the tabletop area.

#### 6.25 Censor-office

The censor-officer outlined that he was not the regular person and he was only there for that particular tour of duty. The recording of incoming and outgoing letters is done on computer. However, on the day of our inspection the officer was recording some manually in a ledger. There were 22 incoming letters on that particular day while on the day previous there were 46, while the outgoing letters average 50 to 100 per day. The censor officer also receives by post, money, clothing, photographs, Open University courses etc. The Open University material is forwarded to the school where the teachers

there look after it. On checking on the amount of letters that were waiting to be dispersed, it appeared that there was a backlog and when the officer was questioned, he stated that sometimes the officer in charge is taken away for other duties and there could be a delay of one or two days before prisoners' letters are posted. The officer said that there were also delays at times in prisoners receiving their letters due to the staff shortage. The officer said that he hoped to clear the entire backlog on the day of the inspection. The postmark on the letter indicated that they had been there for 2 to 3 days the majority of them being there for 2 days. The delay in receiving and posting mail is not acceptable. This point has been strongly denied by management who state that there is never a backlog and that all post received is delivered on the same day as is outgoing post.

#### 6.26 Staff Canteen

The staff canteen is operated by an outside contractor and they supply the entire staff for the area. The kitchen utensils and equipment are all of stainless-steel material and when talking to the chef he was not forthcoming re the usage of the canteen, the number of lunches, breakfasts, etc for that particular day. Just off the serving area is the dining area which contains sixteen tables and thirty-two chairs. The tables were large enough to facilitate four per table, but as there were only thirty-two chairs there is not sufficient seating for the number of tables. There was a shelf on the wall within the dining area which contained two microwaves and a toaster. On inquiring as to why they were separate from the kitchen/cooking area we were informed that they belong to the staff and that the toast was too slow in the morning time to wait for it from the kitchen area and also that the staff could bring in their own food and have it heated in the microwaves. The area around the toaster and the microwaves was in need of cleaning. The Inspector was informed that they normally supply 90 to 100 breakfasts and 50 to 60 lunches with fewer than that at the weekends. Within the dining area there are two coke-machines, one with chocolate bars, the other one contains minerals and apparently the profits from the sales of these items goes towards the local social club. The gents toilets were reasonably hygienically maintained

and the wash-hand basin was clean. Just off the entrance to the canteen there is a large room with a snooker table for staff recreational purposes.

#### 6.27 Unannounced visit to the staff canteen

The Inspector with his personal assistant had arranged with the Liaison Officer to lunch in the staff canteen on a day after the inspection. Several members of staff had complained about the conditions there. The Inspector raised this issue in his last report on Wheatfield. So he made a return visit to the canteen. There were three main dishes. Firstly, there was meat with broccoli and potatoes. Secondly, there was pasta with a cheese cream sauce and chips. Thirdly, there was sweet-and-sour pork with rice. The broccoli was overcooked as was the meat and mashed potato which was lumpy. The pasta at the very best could be described as adequate. The sweet-and-sour was mainly sauce and the pork could have been chicken or any other labelless meat in shreds. The rice was fine. The Inspector having sampled lunch with the prisoners during the visitation can certainly confirm that the meals provided to the prisoners were far superior to what was available in the staff canteen. In fact most people who used the staff canteen seemed to be construction workers, as they wore yellow jackets proudly proclaiming their company. Many prison officers bring their lunch into work rather than use this canteen. I was informed that the POA had criticised the canteen several times. The current catering contractor is capable of much better than is provided here. Of course, the meals cost only €4.95, so they are clearly well subsidised. However, I am sure that more prison officers would use it even if the price were increased as long as there was a great improvement of quality. There were two microwaves, one was acceptably clean, the other was filthy from spattered material. Surely the excellent prison kitchen could provide canteen services to the staff? There was also a complaint that there was no effort made to decorate the place suitably. In other words there were no decorations at Christmas or St. Patrick's day or on other festive occasions. The gents toilets were also extremely untidy, one wash-hand basin was filthy as was a cubicle. The floor in the dining area was much cleaner than it had been on the previous visitation.

#### 6.28 Staff (male and female) locker rooms

In the male locker room which I inspected, there were three rows of free-standing back-to-back lockers with seating in front of them. There were further lockers with seating along the walls, giving a total of 229 lockers. There is another small locker room off the main administration corridor which generally the Chiefs and the ACO's use. Just off the locker-room area there are toilets, wash-hand basins and eight showers. The paint surrounding some of the shower-trays is in need of replacing as it is flaking off. The wall immediately over the wash-hand basins needs to be repainted as the splashes from the wash-hand basins have obviously gone up on the wall and is unhygienic looking. The overall hygiene and cleanliness of the toilets, showers, and locker room was acceptable with the usual towels, runners, etc. left in some cases on top of lockers or on seating beside the lockers. Other than that, the place was generally clean and tidy. (The female staff's locker room was not inspected due to non-availability of a female officer to accompany the Inspectorate at the time.)

#### 6.29 Control Room

The control room is a high security area with the entrance doors under the constant supervision of the CCTV and the admittance is controlled from within. The CCTV cameras covering the various areas, such as the boundary walls, main-gate, visiting boxes, etc. are observed on screens and all of these are also being taped as they are recording. The room is also fitted out with the various alarms, such as fire-alarms, cell-call systems, the radios, the telephones, the walkie-talkie systems, etc and all are controlled from within this area. It is highly computerised with various screens to view and observe. They also record the night-duty patrols and can highlight various parts of the prison on screen. There were two staff operating there at the time of inspection. They said that there should be at least three, if not four, staff for the particular posts that have to be managed and observed within this area.

I was shown a new control room that is in the process of being finalised at present which contains a very large room and off it there are toilets,

tea-rooms, stores and washrooms. It is a big improvement on the area and space that the present control-room is operating from and it will be very modern. The views and observation aspects from this new facility are magnificent as one can see all over the prison and surrounding areas.

#### 6.30 Exercise yards and football pitch

Exercise yard no. 1 is a reasonable size with a Portakabin-type building within it in which the gym no. 2 is located. The gym was locked on the day of our inspection and there were complaints from prisoners that a lot of the time it remains locked and they do not have the use of it. The yard is covered in tarmac and it has one basketball net with seating for both prisoners and staff provided. There is a covering over a small section of the yard for use during inclement weather and there is no netting over it. The toilets and wash-hand basin within the yard were clean and tidy. The officer who accompanied me to this yard outlined that during the summer months when the gym is in use, they take the gym equipment out from the Portakabin and use it in the open yard area, which if the sun is shining can be very pleasant.

The exercise yard no. 2 is quite a large tarmacademed yard which also has a handball alley with netting over it. There is netting covering the yard about three-quarter way over it. There is also a shelter under the buildings with seating for prisoners during wet weather. There are toilets, wash-hand basin and a telephone within this yard, all of which (toilets and wash-hand basin) were clean and tidy.

The No. 3 exercise yard is a very large tarmacademed yard and is lined for both volleyball and basketball. It has permanently fixed basketball nets. There is seating around the yard and it is surrounded by a high fence with razor-edged wire on top and there is no netting covering this particular yard. Apparently football is not allowed to be played in this yard for health and safety reasons as there is a water-drainage system surrounding the yard which contains a dip or gully. Prisoners could injure themselves in the water-drainage gully, even though the dip is only slightly lower than the level

of the yard surface. There were toilets, wash-hand basin and urinals within the yard, all of which were clean and tidy. There was also a telephone there for prisoners' use. On the day of the inspection (and apparently for some time now) the yard was closed for prisoners' use as the outside contractors were working in it.

#### 6.32 New Football Pitch

Just off the no. 2 exercise yard an all-weather AstroTurf-covered football pitch has been installed since our last inspection. It is surrounded by a high fence and is synthetic green surfaced with a fully-fitted, full-sized soccer pitch with posts, lined and it is a wonderful asset to any prison. The Inspectorate inquired as to how often it is used by prisoners and was informed that it is not used as part of the daily exercises. However, it is used as part of the gymnasium programmes or when football teams are invited to play under the supervision of the officers or the PE teacher.

#### 6.33 Review of the use of disciplinary reports (P19s)

Wheatfield Prison's March 2006 responses to the Inspector's 'pre-questionnaire' indicates that the number of prisoners on disciplinary reports in the previous six months was 348 of whom 76 had forfeited remission.

These figures seem high for a prison with a total bed capacity of 384 and a relatively low turnover of prisoners; consequently on 20th April 2006 we reviewed the operation in practice of the use of disciplinary reports on prisoners.

A 'P19 form' is completed as a record of the disciplinary procedures conducted when a prisoner falls foul of the provision of rule 68 of the 1947 Prison Rules. The form sets out the prison officer's account of the prisoners' alleged infraction, the adjudicating Governor's account of the prisoner's response and the Governor's award of a disciplinary penalty.

The completed P19 form is sent in the first instance to the prison's key-room where the details are transcribed into a register book (known as 'locked-up-book') and - if the punishment includes deprivation of privileges - onto a card index recording the prisoner's location in the establishment. The purpose of recording the information in this way is to enable staff in the accommodation units to quickly check with the key-room whether a prisoner remains subject to a disciplinary penalty. From the key-room the P19 is sent to the Governor's secretary and thence to the prison's central office where details of any loss of remission are entered in the Irish Prison Service computer system (PRIS) and the P19 is filed with the individual custody record of the prisoner concerned.

On the 20th April 2006 there were twenty-eight undergoing punishment. According to the 'lock-up book' in the key-room, 201 prisoners have undergone punishment since the beginning of 2006. Of these, thirty had been deprived of privileges for 56 days, and thirteen were recorded as having forfeited remission of 7 days or more (five of whom have forfeited 14 days' remission).

Some prisoners had repeatedly forfeited remission, to a point at which they had virtually none left to lose. In one striking case a prisoner had lost a total of 80 days' remission since September 2005. On the last such occasion (3/4/06) he had forfeited 8 days' remission for failing to obey an officer's order to leave a carton of milk in his accommodation unit. As a result he was charged with "threatening and abusive behaviour towards an officer". Management have stated that this incident arose over the prisoner attempting to bring a milk carton into the yard which is not allowed and when asked to return it to his cell he refused and abused the officer. Previously milk cartons have been brought to the yard filled with boiling water and sugar and used as weapons, consequently they were stopped from bringing cartons into the yard.

It will be remembered that the Government through the Minister and his Department have assured the CPT that there are new powers to enable decisions of the Governor to be heard on appeal by the Visiting Committee in accordance with rules. The statutory provision in the 1997 Criminal Justice Act section 19 that this power is in pursuance of rules that have never been introduced and probably never will.

Within the time and staff available it was not possible to conduct a thorough and scientific analysis of the imposition of disciplinary punishments in Wheatfield. However, on the basis of the documents reviewed, the impression left with the Inspectorate is that prison officers are quick to resort to the use of the P19's and that the severity of the punishments imposed by the Governors is not always proportionate to the gravity of the prisoners' alleged infraction. There is insufficient available evidence on which to base a firm conclusion at this stage but this is an issue which merits further and more detailed scrutiny, perhaps during a future follow-up visit to Wheatfield.

#### 6.34 Inspection of the visitors' waiting area

The visitors' waiting area is located in a single-storey red-brick building immediately outside the main gate of the prison. Prison staff located in the waiting area perform a number of functions including: providing all information about which items are and are not permitted to be given to prisoners; receiving and processing items from visitors intended for prisoners; confirming the identity of visitors from photographs and issuing them with the visiting dockets that they require in order to enter the establishment. Photographs of those nominated and proof of identify must be forwarded to the prison and are retained for record purposes. Each prisoner is entitled to nominate in advance up to eight visitors over the age of fifteen and up to three adults can attend each visit. Children accompanied by a number of adults may visit prisoners and they need not be nominated in advance nor are they counted as part of a prisoner's three-person-per-visit entitlement. A number of children were present in the waiting area at the time of inspection.

A written 'notice of new visiting arrangements 4th April 2005' displayed in the waiting area incorrectly indicated that each prisoner may nominate six as opposed to eight visitors. [This notice was changed to 8 visitors the following days]. There is a chief officer's order outlining that, if visitors are delayed beyond 30 minutes waiting time, the fact should be notified to the chief officer.

The waiting area consists of one large neon-lit room with narrow benches around two walls. There is a soft drinks machine and a tea/coffee making machine in the reception area. There is a sink and presses with plastic type cups. There is an electronic screen with "Welcome to Wheatfield Prison" displayed on it.

There is a Nursery-room containing baby-changing facilities and three lavatories (one out of order).

The walls in the main waiting room are decorated with a few prints; however, it does not provide a particularly welcoming environment. More particularly child-friendly features (toys, children's books, play areas, etc.) are notable by their absence.

There is also a Portakabin adjacent to the waiting area which is apparently connected with the electricity supply, mains water and drainage. It had been designed to provide a tea and coffee service for visitors (to be operated by a charity) but - for budgetary reasons? - has never been brought into service!

### *Comments*

Visitors generally spend less than half an hour in the waiting area and it is, on the whole, adequate for this purpose. However, with little additional expense the benefits provided for visitors from this facility could be enhanced. The inspector recommends that

- (A) the written notice regarding prisoners' visiting entitlements in the waiting-area be amended to state that they can nominate eight as opposed to six visitors. (this has been done)
- (B) Information booklets be available to prisoners' visitors on their first visit to the visitors' waiting area.
- (C) Efforts should be made to make the waiting room a more child-friendly environment by providing toys, children's books and playing facilities, etc.
- (D) Consideration be given to bringing into service the Portakabin located next to the waiting area. It could for example, be used to provide a child-friendly play area.

#### 6.35 Visits to the kitchen

Five staff (the chef and four assistant industrial supervisors) work in the kitchen and there are 27 work places for prisoners. On the morning of the 20th April 2006, 22 prisoners had been working in the kitchen and according to the chef, the average number of prisoners actually present is usually between 18 and 20. Within three months of working in the kitchen, prisoners can be trained to the recognised standard of a EHOA primary course in food hygiene.

A smaller training kitchen is located next to the main-food preparation area and five prisoners at a time can take part in a sixteen-week 'Leonardo' training programme in this facility. At the end of this course prisoners are assessed and certified by members of a FETAC accreditation board. According to the chef, in the past there has been a 98% success rate; the name of the prison does not appear on the certificate that prisoners receive.

One prisoner has apparently gone on to a third level college to continue a course which will make him a qualified chef in two years' time.

We also visited the servery area for prisoners which is located on the ground floor and the stores area which is located on the floor below the main kitchen area. In common with the main and training kitchens, it was scrupulously clean and well ordered. The items received into stores are dated with a label attached for stock rotation purposes. The “last in first out” policy applies. We were shown a package each prisoner receives at tea time which contained orange juice, piece of fruit, yoghurt, tea bags, etc which the prisoners bring to their cells.

The Inspectorate enjoyed the sample of lunch every day and they also saw the prisoners being fed. The food was excellent, although there were complaints from vegetarians. However, it is hard to imagine great variations of a balanced vegetarian diet. There were also complaints from prisoners about chicken being served too frequently

In the initial report prepared by the Inspector on Wheatfield three years ago he was concerned that many prisoners complained of starvation during the night and suggested that the main meal should be in the evening rather than at 12.30 p.m. However, it arose that uniformity was invaluable for prisoners that were being moved from one prison to another. However, the very active and open Governor has increased the food available in the tuck-shop.

## **7 Meeting with Various Groups/Individuals**

### **7.1 *Meeting the Psychologists***

The Inspector met the Senior Psychologist. He had met her on the previous full inspection as recorded in that report. She was glad to report that there had been some improvements. She had taken her primary degree in University College, Dublin and her doctorate at Trinity College, Dublin and had also gained a qualification at the Institute of Creative Counselling in Psychotherapy. She now has a part-time Assistant Psychologist, but has supervisory duties next door in Cloverhill as well. As the Inspector has indicated on more than one occasion there is a chronic shortage of

psychologists in the Prison Service. He instanced his experience in the English sex-offenders prison at Wootton-in-the-Vale where there were fourteen, mainly forensic, psychologists who informed the Inspector that there were plenty of trained psychologists looking for jobs. However, she informed me that as we speak they are advertising for more psychologists. She hoped there would be interviews in May and that there would be an increase. It is significant that up to now they took only clinical psychologists but now they will also take forensic psychologists and counselling psychologists. This is a great leap forward and hopefully there will be an adequate supply of psychologists in all the prisons. She would hope to have another full-time psychologist assigned to Wheatfield. The Inspector would certainly support such an idea.

At the moment she has an excellent relationship with the Governor and staff. In particular there is a group of officers who understand her requirements and who bring prisoners to meet her and provide an escort to return them to their cells. However, she is slightly worried by the impact of the new annualised hours. She has not felt it yet, but feels that her team (word of choice of the Inspector and not necessarily of the psychologist) will be diluted and from hour to hour she will not know with what officers she has to deal. She feels it may cause trouble in the future, but she is perfectly happy with the present arrangements. Management strongly deny that the psychologist has ever been left without an officer and there are no plans to do so in the future.

The Inspector then asked her views of the 'Listener' programme. This is where a stressed inmate at any time of the day or night might want to talk in confidence to someone. The 'listeners' are selected prisoners who get some training from the Samaritans who provide this service. The Inspector met two of the 'listeners' who are serving life sentences and was impressed by their quality. She is all in favour of it, but points out she was not consulted in the selection of the 'listeners' and she thought there should be more consultation as she felt that psychologists would have an input into assessing potential 'listeners'. It seemed reasonable. However, the Inspector pointed out there are certain areas which inevitably overlap. The chaplains, the probation and

welfare, the psychologists, all to some extent trespass on each other's territory and it is right that it should be so. However, he agreed that perhaps there should be more communication between these bodies particularly in assisting the Governor in his choice of 'listeners'. The Governor deserves great credit for this system.

She is involved in the induction course. The last inspection highlighted the long waiting list to see the psychologist. The Senior Psychologist agreed there were still long waits, but instead of being a year it is now down to eight to ten months but she agrees this is still too long. She also feels she should have designated rooms suitable for the work of herself and her colleague. At present they have a room in the education area lent by the educational authorities who need the room frequently. She also complained about a lack of communication which the Inspector has already highlighted. She points out that most information she gets comes from the ground and very little from above. For example that there was now a strong rumour that sex-offenders and lifers were likely to be transferred to the Midlands Prison. However, later on the same afternoon I asked the Governor what was the position. He was as usual open and frank. He said that the proposal at the moment was to move all sex-offenders so that they would be contained in either the Midlands or Arbour Hill Prison. Her complaint was that some courses intended for persons serving life-sentences or for sex-offenders were long and required careful planning. She found that the present lack of communication is confusing. She says the present system is not scrutinised to provide adequate courses. However, the Inspector hopes now that the matter is clarified it will be of assistance. The Inspector was very impressed by the psychologist and with her potential. Sex-offenders will be moved. Lifers will remain according to the Governor and a senior headquarters official.

## 7.2 *Meeting with a group of prisoners*

The Inspector accompanied by Mr. Patrick Keane, met a group of prisoners.

The most important persons in a prison are the prisoners. It was appropriate that our first interview was with those prisoners who volunteered to see us

and those who willingly agreed to come on the suggestion by the staff that they should do so. We listened to several complaints, including an unimpressive one where a prisoner who wanted medication for his depression was not receiving it. Having previously been on such medication he appeared to wish to continue it indefinitely. His was the only such complaint. The same prisoner complained of being taunted and assaulted by staff but there does not appear to have been any complaint about it to the Governor, to the Visiting Committee, to the chaplains, or to the welfare staff. The Inspector explained that he was specifically prohibited from taking up the cudgels on behalf of an individual prisoner.

Two prisoners serving life-sentences felt aggrieved by the uncertainty of the remaining duration of their sentences. It would make sense that a prisoner serving a life-sentence should know at any stage how much of the sentence remains to be served, subject to his behaviour. The prisoner stated that when he was being conferred with his diploma from the Open University a very senior departmental official told him that it was twelve years. The chairman of the Parole Board has also publicly stated the policy. I told him that neither source could be regarded as reliable, which means that the only source on which he could rely was policy enunciated by the Minister himself.

It was wonderful to find that there were two drug-free units in Wheatfield. Two prisoners felt there were not enough incentives to entice prisoners to join the drug-free units in the prison. They said that the fact that they had a toaster, unlike other prisoners, was really not enough incentive. Further suggested incentives were extra films and extra television channels although I am told these are now available. These suggestions seemed well founded. Since drugs were such a growing scourge in modern society every reasonable effort should be made to ensure that imprisonment is a time when every incentive should be used to get rid of the habit or at least to strengthen the drug-addict's resolve to kick the habit.

Complaints were made about the prison doctor who had according to one prisoner wrongly assumed that he had a medical complaint merely for the

purposes for seeking a day outside the prison. Another who had his own TENS machine complained that the doctor would not prescribe its use by reason of the fact that it needed an electric charger which could also be used to charge mobile phones (which prisoners are not allowed to use) in spite of the fact that other prisoners have electric chargers. He felt the doctor was too much under the influence of the prison authorities.

Complaints were also made in relation to treatment by the dentist and the delay in getting an appointment to see a psychologist. (Management strongly deny that there is any waiting list for the dentist as the service has been increased from one and half days to two and a half days.) The Inspector explained once again that he had no input and was specifically forbidden to take up the cudgels on behalf of any individual's complaint. He informed them that he understood there would be extra psychologists appointed and that already the waiting list which had been over a year on his previous visit had been reduced to about ten months. The prisoners were very happy with the service provided by the prison chaplains.

Another serious complaint related to a prisoner being kept in a prison van for almost five and a half hours with no toilet facilities. If true, that is totally unacceptable. A prisoner is brought to court and when his case is dealt with he is removed and put into a van and is left waiting there for other customers. He is just left there handcuffed, without food or a drink of water and no toilet facilities available. In the experience of the Inspector they were always held in a holding cell with toilets in the basement of the Four Courts. The escorting of prisoners is service was provided by the Prison Service Escort Corps staff and not Wheatfield staff.

Another complaint related to the unnecessarily restricted hours to the gym. Prison facilities should be available for as long as reasonable having regard to the need for them and the practicalities of supervision and security.

### 7.3 Meeting with 2nd group of prisoners

Mr. Kelly and Mr. Woods met a group of prisoners who told us that they wished to complain about a number of matters of which the following were their main concerns:-

- (a) Daily outdoor exercise is completely cancelled if it rains even slightly immediately before a scheduled exercise period. If it starts raining during the hour of exercise they are removed from the yard.
- (b) The AstroTurf football pitch is virtually never available for use by prisoners. It is used by prison staff every evening and every lunchtime. Management state that it is used fully in the summertime and that visiting teams regularly come in and play against the prisoners. The football pitch is not floodlit and therefore cannot be used during the dark evenings.
- (c) With the introduction of the latest twenty-eight-day menu cycle in October/November 2005 chicken based dishes dominate the menu. They maintain that the main meal is chicken-based up to 75% of the time. (Please see 3rd paragraph on Pg 65 on menu cycle)
- (d) Computer facilities in the prison's open learning centre used to be available during the evening association-time, but this is no longer the case due to shortage of prison officers to supervise same.  
[Management state such facility was never available during evening recreation time.]
- (e) The current allowance of one six-minute call per day is inadequate to allow them effectively to consult their solicitors. The time allowance in which calls can be made without losing the entire six-minute entitlement is only fifteen seconds. This is particularly noticeable since the introduction of the "card system". This is an insufficient period of time in which to establish whether a given solicitor is available to speak to his/her client and by the time it has been established that a solicitor

is not available the customers' call entitlement for the entire day has frequently been lost.

- (f) There is no positive sentencing plan for longer-term prisoners.
- (g) There is no clear prisoner classification/allocation policy within the prison. As a result, short-term prisoners serving sentences of a few months can be accommodated in the same units as long-term or life-sentenced prisoners. This leads to tensions and frictions that could be avoided if the classification/allocation policy were to be in place.
- (h) Bullying is 'rife' in the establishment both between prisoners and by staff against prisoners. They estimated that 70 -75% of prisoners have experienced bullying and that around 15% of officers engage in it. Bullying by officers of foreign prisoners was said to be a particular problem. (This complaint has been strongly denied by management and they state that they have acted on any complaints received including sending out complaints for gardai to investigate. Management state that they never received any complaints of bullying of foreign nationals.)
- (i) Making a complaint to the Visiting Committee was said to be a fruitless exercise. Complaints in relation to the imposition of a disciplinary punishment have no suspensive effect so the punishment will often have been served in its entirety before the matter comes to the attention of the Visiting Committee. They also suggested that on occasions prisoners who had made requests to see the Visiting Committee had as a result been transferred to other establishments. (Management strongly deny this allegation.)
- (j) They complained about the frequency of searches when coming off visits and the harassment involved in same.

- (k) The gym in the segregation unit's exercise yard they stated is seldom open and there are no gym facilities for those segregated prisoners when such happens. Management deny this complaint.
- (l) They stated that there is no paint shop workshop or training in the skill of painting within the prison. Again this has been denied by management.
- (m) The tuck shop stocks too many sweet items and not enough fruit, cold meats, tinned fish, etc as in other prisons.

The prisoners with whom we spoke summed up their feelings about Wheatfield Prison by describing it as a "dumping ground" adding that the difference between this prison and Mountjoy is that "this is a cleaner dumping ground".

It might also be mentioned that one of the prisoners, who has already served ten years of a life-sentence indicated that he is suffering from prostate cancer and a variety of other medical complaints. He is seeking a transfer to a more "comfortable and therapeutic environment" in which to serve the remainder of his sentence. In order to make his case to us he disclosed personal medical details in front of the group, another of whom commented that it would have been better for the person concerned to have been seen on his own. (Management stated that he is well treated in Wheatfield and it is made as comfortable for him as possible.).

In fact, the Inspectorate has no power to consider individual cases. The only reason it was allowed was for therapeutic reasons so it is recited here in the hope that something can be done as a general rule rather than in individual cases.

The Inspectorate found that many of the above mentioned complaints are well founded. Staff confirm that exercise is cancelled if it rains before or

during a scheduled exercise period. The Inspectorate observed that the AstroTurf is used rarely by prisoners and often by staff. However, the Governor pointed out to the Inspector that he has been looking for shelter in the exercise yards so that people can remain in the fresh air and smoke if desired, but he is still waiting for permission to expend this money. However, there are limited shelter facilities within the exercise yards.

There is no positive sentence management planning nor is there a clear allocation/classification policy. Complaints to the Visiting Committee in relation to punishments have no suspensive effect. It is correct that only one six-minute telephone call is allowed per day. It is also correct that the library services are curtailed.

The current 28-day menu cycle confirms that chicken is served 7 times for lunch and 9 times for tea within the 28-day cycle. It also confirms that in week 4 of the cycle, chicken is served 6 times i.e 3 times for lunch and 3 times for tea. Prison management have stated that the menu is currently being reviewed, that they are aware of the complaint regarding the frequency of chicken and that it will be changed in June 2006.

The most serious allegations raised by the prisoners was that the bullying, especially of foreign nationals, "is rife" in the establishment. There is certainly some anecdotal evidence to support this, given the dozen or more prisoners consistently seeking segregation for their own protection. Management deny that bullying is rife and say that if there are any indications of bullying taking place it is stamped out immediately.

On the 16/5/06 the Inspector and his special adviser revisited Wheatfield Prison and there were 13 prisoners on 23-hour lock-up, 3 in segregated section and 10 throughout the different units. The visiting R.C. Chaplain had requested the Inspector to see a particular prisoner who was in segregation. The Inspector saw this prisoner and the special adviser saw the others who were on 23-hour lock-up. The prisoner in segregation was a very sad scot,

who can be very volatile. The cell was very stuffy and comprised a bed, chair, narrow table, shelf, TV, radio and the window admitted fresh air but was very small. He explained several times that he wanted to be rehabilitated but that there was no real effort to do so. He spoke highly of the chaplains and said that he got on well with the prison staff. Apparently no other prison wants him. He had several signs of self-mutilation. The Inspector was very saddened and distressed by this man who is clearly now institutionalised and is probably a security risk and needs deeper involvement in caring and therapy than the prison can provide. The Inspector saw another prisoner who had already been talking to Mr. Woods. He wanted to see the Inspector by himself which he did. However, he outlined that the cell was bugged and pointed to a radio on the wall. (This has been strongly denied by management.) The Inspector suggested that he write a letter but he felt the letter would be spied upon. The Inspector undertook to return to the prison and collect the letter personally when he had written it. The approach of the prisoner seemed to be one of paranoia.

Mr. Woods saw ten of the prisoners on 23-hour lock-up. Some of them had declined the one hour of outdoor exercise which means they really spend their entire time in their cells. Some of them had sought transfers to other prisons and if granted stated that they would mix freely with the other prisoners. Others had just a few weeks of sentence left to serve, so they wished to remain there on the 23-hour lock-up. One of the ten spoke of the “conspired imprisonment”, “political persecutions”, “planned attack upon him” and appeared to be paranoid about prison management, the staff, judiciary, the gardai, and the government. Most of the ten prisoners had themselves requested to be placed on protection as a result of their crime (sex offence), fear of being attacked, enemies within the prison (feud with other prisoners) or previous attacks on the outside (vigilantes) while two were placed there “for their own protection” by prison management. One as a result of a T.V programme which outlined details of his crime and who was threatened after the show. The other prisoner was a coloured man from Nigeria who was attacked twice by white prisoners. He displayed marks and scars that he

claimed he received from the beating. He said that the doctor examined him and he was given medicine and capsules. He stated that racist remarks were passed when he was being attacked. He felt that the 23-hour lock-up was imposed on him and he was not happy about it. The prison management confirmed that he had been attacked and that they had no choice but to place him there for his own protection. This appears to be a case of bullying and racism.

Prisoners are searched going or coming from visits. The records show that between one half and one third of those on visits are searched, mostly returning from the visits. The gym in the exercise yard is closed quite frequently as result of staff shortfall. (Management state that this is inaccurate as they use the big gym Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.)

The paint shop as displayed to the Inspectorate is not operational and the same area was shown to the Inspectorate as the proposed new cleaning workshop. [it is going to be used for double purposes painting and cleaning according to management].

The tuck shop had fruit on display on the day of inspection and it was stated that they do not stock cold meats or blocks of cheese for health and safety reasons (No fridge in prisoners cells.) They did stock tinned fish.

A significant proportion of prisoners are serving lengthy sentences. According to the prison's responses to the Inspectorate's pre-questionnaire 28 March 2006 more than half of the establishment's 347 sentenced prisoners were serving sentences of over four years and 38 were serving life-sentences. International standards require that the regimes that were offered to prisoners serving long sentences should compensate for the de-socialising effects of serving long-term imprisonment in a positive and proactive way.

In particular the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) has consistently indicated that prisoners serving lengthy sentences (including life-sentences) should have access to a wide range of purposeful activities of a varied nature (work preferably with vocational value, education, sport, recreation/association). However, they should be able to exercise a degree of choice over how their time is spent, this fostering a sense of autonomy and personal responsibility. Additional steps should be taken to lend meaning to their period of imprisonment. In particular custody plans and appropriate psycho-social support are important elements in assisting such prisoners to come to terms with their period of incarceration and their period of release. Further the CPT has stressed that the negative effects of institutionalisation upon prisoners serving long sentences will be less pronounced and they will be better equipped on release if they are able effectively to maintain contact with the outside world. Bench marked against this standard the regime offered to prisoners serving lengthy sentences at Wheatfield Prison leaves something to be desired. The Inspector of Prisons and Places of Detention recommends that:-

- (a) Positive sentence planning for longer-term prisoners be introduced in Wheatfield and other establishments in Ireland which accommodate such prisoners.
- (b) The establishment introduce a clear classification policy enabling longer-term prisoners to be accommodated together in a condition which allows them to exercise a greater degree of choice over the manner in which their time is spent. The physical layout of the accommodation units would facilitate the introduction of such a policy.
- (c) The current arrangements for outdoor exercise be reviewed by the Governor with a view to ensuring that exercise is not entirely cancelled if it rains immediately before or during a scheduled exercise period. As already pointed out the Governor has plans and is waiting for the bureaucratic

machine to produce funds to enable him to deal in a realistic way with this problem, although some of the exercise yards have limited shelter available.

- (d) The AstroTurf football pitch be made available to prisoners far more frequently than is the case. However, the Governor informs the Inspector that in fact he is very hopeful that now the summer season is starting outside teams will come in to play and make greater use of this facility. The staff should also play prisoners.
- (e) Consideration be given to increasing the current telephone entitlement of one six-minute call per day especially as regards longer-term prisoners. The alternative of permitting prisoners to make up to three calls per day, of a duration of six minutes might help to alleviate the problems of prisoners losing their entire daily call-entitlement in the event that the person they call is not immediately available to speak with them.
- (f) Prisoners on several occasions complained about bullying. This is a matter which the Visiting Committee might consider investigating. It is a serious matter if bullying and racism are occurring.

#### 7.4 Meeting with the Visiting Committee

The Inspector accompanied by Mr. Kelly met the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Wheatfield Prison Visiting Committee on 19th April 2006. The membership of the entire Visiting Committee was renewed in December 2004. None of the members of the previous Visiting Committee was re-appointed although there was a one month 'handover' period that ended in January 2005.

The Chairman has a background in transportation while the Vice Chairperson's background is in financial services. Neither had any previous prison-related experience and both were directly appointed to the Visiting Committee by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform. All of the committee are from Dublin. Previously a number of members of the

committee came from Kerry or Mayo. One wonders why? One Minister stated that country boys could not relate to the Dubs!!

The current Visiting Committee raised the following main issues:-

- . A number of prisoners applied to see the Visiting Committee. However, there was also a 'huge' number of subsequent declines by prisoners to follow through on their initial request to see the Visiting Committee.
- . Some prisoners have indicated to them that they have considered the Visiting Committee to be 'toothless' having regard to the fact that complaints to them about the imposition of the disciplinary penalties have no suspensive effect. The committee tend to agree.
- . The Visiting Committee has low visibility within the prison.

The Minister could bring out rules under section 19 of the 1997 Criminal Justice Act allowing prisoners who receive disciplinary penalty decisions of the Governor to be determined by appeal to the Visiting Committee. This would require a full visiting committee be appointed so that from time to time a quorum can be assembled to deal with appeals. However, in his boldness the Inspector feels this should be done statutorily. He feels it certainly will not happen in his lifetime.

Other concerns of the Visiting Committee certainly impressed the Inspectorate. There is no sex offender treatment programme even though there are approx 50 sex offenders in the prison

Despite the fact that drugs are 'rife' within the prison there are only two drug-free landings - there could and should - be more such facilities. "There is a lot of apathy within the Irish Prison Service." This point was illustrated by an exchange of correspondence between the Visiting Committee and the Prison Service Headquarters on the subject of the need for enhanced psychological support services in the establishment. Copies of the correspondence concerned were provided to the Inspector of Prisons and Places of Detention.

### *Summary regarding meeting with Visiting Committee*

Visiting Committees can make an important contribution to the quality of life in the prisons, but only if they organise their activities in a manner designed to maximise their effectiveness. The Wheatfield Prison Visiting Committee currently holds monthly meetings at the prison and once a month meets individually with prisoners who have complained in order to inform them of the results of the committee's deliberations. This is inadequate.

Visiting Committee members should not limit their activities to seeing individuals who have expressly requested to meet them, but should take the initiative by regularly visiting the prisoners' accommodation areas, workshops, education facilities and entering into direct contact with prisoners. This will help to increase the visibility of the committee. Further measures should be taken to ensure that all prisoners are aware of the existence of the Committee and of its albeit limited powers. (The management emphasised that prisoners are informed at committal stage and also if there are any changes in the V.C attendances.)

The Visiting Committee should take independent steps to discover the reasons for the 'huge' number of prisoners who declined to meet with them having initially requested a meeting. This should include personal visits by committee to a sample of the prisoners concerned in order to ask them why they have withdrawn their request to meet the Committee.

The Visiting Committee should draw up a short booklet outlining its role and functions which should be distributed to every prisoner on arrival in the establishment. This booklet should be available in a variety of languages.

The prison should provide 'confidential access' to the Visiting Committee by having locked postal boxes in each accommodation area, to which only the Visiting Committee members have keys.

## 7.5 Meeting with the Doctor

Dr. Ledwith of the inspectorate team I saw Dr. Hameed on May 2nd in Wheatfield Prison. He told me that he has been in Wheatfield Prison for 17 months and he works Monday to Friday from 9.30 to 4.30pm. He does one weekend in four. He was unhappy that no one had come to see 15 committals that were admitted to prison over the "holiday" weekend. Of late this has been a regular occurrence, that prisoners who come in at weekends are not seen by a doctor. His regular daily list is made up for him by prison officers and nurses.

He does believe that prisoners are getting drugs in from outside the prison and they also make "hooch" he told me. He has a blood clinic on a Tuesday where he has started a screening programme for all prisoners. He believes he is the first to do so. He would like to see a psychotherapist and dietician in the prison. He has managed to get his prisoners off sleeping tablets but he is constantly been asked by prisoners for them and this takes up a lot of his time "refusing them". Locum doctors do prescribe sleeping tablets and this causes a problem. He believes that prisoners who are taken to an outside hospital outside his visiting hours are 95% inappropriately so taken although in speaking about this later, it may not be as big a problem as first mentioned. Dr. Hameed informed me that he likes working in Wheatfield Prison and he gets on well with the staff. He would like for family reasons to be made permanent. He told me he needs a defibrillator unit. However the nurse I spoke to told me that the nursing staff have been recently trained in its use so that it "might be on the way". (Management state that a defibrillator unit and

an oroscope have been in the unit for the past 18 months.) He also wants a wall-mounted oroscope and a wall-mounted unit for chyrotherapy. Only on two occasions has he had the opportunity to contact a prisoner's own GP prior to their leaving prison. He would like to know when prisoners who are under his care are being released so that he can contact the GP. His records are computerised and he tells me that he is the first do so in the Prison Service. He would like to have secretarial help. Current prisoners' files are in the surgery taking up space. He would like to see them somewhere else. He tells me that he has not as yet met the Governor on a one-to-one basis. (The Governor states he sees him alone regularly and he also attends staff management meetings.)

#### 7.6 Meeting with the Psychiatrist

Dr. Ledwith met three psychiatrists and a CPN. Dr. Scully informed me that he has two clinics a week in the prison. There are about 80 prisoners on methadone and methadone is administered by two nurses on a back-to-back rota. Dr. Scully was of the opinion that there should be a pharmacist attached to the prison and be involved more with the administration of medication. Clients are referred to him by a GP. He has a reasonable relationship with discharged prisoners and will endeavour to ensure that they continue on methadone after they are released from prison.

He has no administrative support and he feels that this is a serious deficiency in this and other prisons. He informed me that a full-time pharmacist was a major necessity for the prison. Dr. Mohan informed me that he and his

colleagues provide three sessions a week and Dr. Dooley has one session per week. The CPN is also involved with clients particularly those who are pre-and post-admission to the CMH. Dr. Mohan attends the multidisciplinary quarterly meetings with the Governor. He informed me that he believes that the psychiatrists are made welcome in the prison. There is a special observation cell in the prison so prisoners who need to be transferred to the C.M.H are admitted as soon as possible when a vacancy arises in the C.M.H.

The surgery is inadequate, I was informed, and it is difficult to get space in it. There are two mental health nurses on the staff. There is no administrative support. Clinical notes are a “minefield”. The priority given to clinical sessions is not sufficient Dr. Mohan told me. The level of inappropriate referrals is too high (I would have felt that this was an issue to be dealt with directly by the psychiatrists themselves in direct communication with the referrer.) The locum GP’s do not know who goes to different services and will refer prisoners inappropriately to psychiatrists. There are 30 to 40 prisoners on psychotropic medication. There is a follow-up after discharge but this could be improved. They feel that the healthcare as an equal area recognition alongside other areas such as kitchen or laundry. There is no addiction counselling if you look for it in the prison.

#### 7.7 Meeting with the Dentist

The dentist attends on a Monday afternoon, Tuesday morning, Thursday all day and Friday morning. Four different dentists come to the prison from the dental hospital. All emergency prison patients are seen right away but the

waiting list for non-emergency cases can be up to three months. The dental drills do not work adequately. The autoclave is on “loan” for over a year and it is “old”. Though they have an inter oral X-ray they do not have an extra oral X-ray and prisoners need to go to Mountjoy for the extra oral X-ray. They told me that it is very widely used in Mountjoy. Otherwise the dental equipment is fine. They were always guaranteed a prison officer to be present at all times but this apparently is not the situation now. (Management state this practice has not changed.)

Health Promotion - in the tuck shops healthy foods are not available. If prisoners are told not to have sugary foods there is nothing else for them to buy.

They would like to have a computer. In the dental hospital “everything is on computer” and “every dentist has one”.

The dentists complained that the floor is not cleaned often enough. However it was significant they enjoyed working in Wheatfield Prison.

## 7.8 Meeting with Nurses

I met one nurse who was on duty and had some input from a medical orderly. There are, I was informed, 12 nurses and two job-sharing and three nursing orderlies. They work an 8.00am to 8.00pm shift with four to five on during the day and one on at night. The numbers can be short of this due to illness on the day and they can be down to three or four, which is not sufficient.

(Management state that an ordinary officer is assigned in such circumstances.) The pharmacy is far too small, especially if there are four nurses working in it at the one time. Medication comes from Uniphar and arrives a few days after ordering it, but medication can be obtained on the day through a local chemist.

Triple therapy for HIV patients comes from St. James Hospital. Methadone is given by the nurses between 9.00am and 11.45 but with just two staff there is no time to talk to those receiving methadone I was informed. I was told that blister packs are to be introduced by the end of the year which will make the administration of medication much easier. The nurse was generally unhappy about the general design of the surgery. She is looking for a nurse manager with experience of prison nursing who can liaise directly with the Governor. She did feel, however, that the nurses were listened to by the authorities. The nurse told me that there was a good atmosphere in the prison and the Governor is very approachable. The nurses, I was informed, are all computer illiterate but the general filing system is not adequate and a secretary to the medical services is urgently required.

#### 7.9 Meeting with the Governor and Chief Prison Officer

The Inspectorate team met them. The Governor spoke about the quarterly multidisciplinary meetings and how he suggested that he concentrates on a small number of issues at each meeting and deals with them, rather than trying to look at a large number which could not be reached. He was very

much in favour of a nurse manager. He would also like a pharmacist, even one shared with Cloverhill. He would like the doctor to be made permanent.

#### 7.10 Meeting with senior Probation and Welfare Officer

Mr. Keane in the company of Mr. Woods met the senior Probation and Welfare officer who outlined that there were four full-time Probation and Welfare Officers, one clerical officer and a linkage (employment officer) attached to the prison. The officer outlined that her services provide the Parole Board with reports as well as doing repatriation reports on those who applied to return to serve their sentences in their own countries.

They do good work with prisoners regarding their offending behaviour as well as having approximately 30 prisoners involved in a life-sentence programme. She outlined that each individual life-sentence case is different and therefore there is no certainty regarding the length of sentence they must serve. However, on average the most probable release date would be after completing at least fourteen years in custody. She said the lifer's programme consisted of an introductory session followed by a six-week programme.

Discussions then focused on positive sentence management, drug-awareness, homelessness, employment for prisoners on release and the contacts/linkages with outside agencies, housing authorities, health boards, etc.

The Probation Service receives many complaints about the bullying of prisoners by other prisoners. Bullying of prisoners by anyone should not be tolerated and effective steps should be taken to eliminate it. The Welfare Officer received no complaints of staff bullying prisoners. (Such complaints according to management was never reported to them.)

It appears that the Connect project is not involved in Wheatfield Prison and it should be. The inadequate reasons for its non-involvement appears to relate to human resource issues which arose in other prisons.

A weakness of the Probation Service is that it responds only to applications to it, rather than taking an interest in the overall prisoner population. Some prisoners, for whatever reasons, do not apply to the service.

#### 7.11 Meeting with the Employment Officer/Linkage Officer

The Employment and Training Officer met with Mr. Keane and Mr. Woods and outlined that she works part-time in Wheatfield and the other part of her work relates to a Welfare Centre in Ballyfermot. She gave an outline of the Safe-Pass course which is given in the prison by a person from FAS. She also gave us an outline of the employers' workshop morning within the prison, which has proven to be very successful for gaining employment for some of the prisoners. She meets all new committals and she has been attached to Wheatfield Prison for the past six years. She was asked about the stigma of imprisonment and if it had an effect on securing employment to which she replied that this was not the case if the person was known beforehand to the employer and in some cases he would have worked with him before being sentenced. She works in liaison with the Probation and Welfare Service and she informed us that all those referred through her office gets something on release, either to a job or admission to a course or whatever. The Employment Officer seems very well motivated and shows considerable initiative in implementing schemes to ensure that those leaving prison gain early employment thus avoiding the vacuum of inactivity which facilitates recidivism.

A weakness of the system is that she gets involved with only those prisoners referred to her by the Probation and Welfare Service, which, in turn, as indicated already, considers only those prisoners who apply to the service. The most inadequate prisoners with the least initiative and in most need of help may receive none.

The Employment Officer should initiate enquiries also in relation to prisoners who have not contacted the Probation Service. However, this may be operating outside of her remit. She does not deal with sex-offenders and

does not deal with their release. The Employment Officer comes across several cases of prisoners being harassed by the Gardaí after they leave prison or are on temporary release to employment. She gave the example of daily stopping to search persons going to work, bringing them to the garda station and keeping them late for work etc. It could lead [and has led in the past] to the loss by the prisoner of a job which was obtained for him after considerable effort by the Employment Officer. The prison management were singing the praises of the work done by the Employment Officer and would be recommending that such officers should be appointed to all prisons.

#### 7.12 Meeting with 'Heads of Service'

The Inspector accompanied by Mr. Woods met with the Assistant Governor, clerks grade 1, Chief Officers, and Chief Trades Officer. The Assistant Governor apologised for the non-attendance of some of the other senior staff and gave a breakdown for the reasons as to why they were unavailable which the Inspector fully accepted.

The Inspector informed the meeting that the doctor who was to form part of the Inspectorate team last week got ill and was now coming on the 2nd and 3rd of May. The Inspector will be accompanying him and he will be having a walk around the prison and hopefully meeting one of the teachers and the librarian.

The Chief Trades Officer gave an account of maintenance work and contract work that is taking place in the prison at present which consists of alterations to the segregation unit, a new fire-alarm system, new fire doors on the corridors, new emergency exits from the units, updating the lighting, new control room, etc. He outlined that he has lost three trades staff since the introduction of annualised hours and now has only six staff. This, he states is not sufficient. He also stated that a lot of the maintenance/repair work will be done by outside contractors in future. He feels the new annualised hours are not well thought out from a trades staff point of view and that the trades staff had no input whatsoever into the negotiations.

The Clerk in charge of the office gave a rundown on his areas of responsibilities, which entails prisoners' files, warrants, court appearances, appointments, cash, gratuities, tuck-shop accounts, etc. He said the staffing levels within the office were brought up to the recognised level with the introduction of the annualised hours, however, there were no allowances made to replace staff on sick or annual leave. He complained of the lack of staff training in office procedure and especially computer training. He said the 'Pris' system was working very well. (Management reject the claim that no training has taken place and one hour per week is given regularly.)

The Chief Officer outlined that he was responsible for the running of the prison and management of prisoners on a daily basis. He had a good working relationship with the local branch POA and there was a relaxed atmosphere with the prisoners. He described daily problems encountered with staff shortage and said eleven staff had failed to report for duty on that day. The effect of staff shortages means posts are cuts and services to prisoners are curtailed. He tries to keep the education and work-training open if at all possible. He said that if they receive complaints from prisoners they check them out and return to the prisoners with an answer. They are not left pondering over the result. The prisoners' twenty-eight-day menu-cycle was raised and he was informed that there was a complaint about the number of times chicken was on the menu. To which he responded that the menu cycle has been reviewed and is due to change in June 2006.

The Assistant Governor in charge of works and training outlined the training available to prisoners working in the kitchen. They can reach standard one level within the prison and then complete the final two-year qualification at an outside Institute of Technology. He spoke of the new laundry, the extension/renovation of the welding, woodwork and construction workshop areas and the qualification standards/FETAC/City and Guilds now taking place therein. He spoke of the award received for the work-training area and of one prisoner going for the President's Gold Medal Award. He outlined the induction course for prisoners and the classroom in the construction unit which he said is a hands-on practical approach.

The other Assistant Governor spoke of his areas of responsibilities which included the detail officer's duties/rosters/overtime/clocking-in system, 'listener' scheme, health and safety co-ordinator, fire prevention, business plans, waste management, PMDS, as well as the other everyday prison management problems. He felt that there was no proper training for health and safety co-ordinators. He also spoke of the difficulties encountered in getting all of the relevant participants to a meeting at the one time, particularly since the introduction of the annualised hours. He felt the annualised hours were working reasonably well. There were teething problems. Some staff are opposed to it while others are in favour of it, but overall in time he thinks it will work.

This concluded the meeting with the heads of services. The Inspectorate thanked them for their attendance and their full and frank discussions.

#### 7.13 Meeting with the Head Teacher

Mr Keane and Mr. Woods got a very positive impression from an interview with the Head Teacher, who appears to be very focused on the good of the prisoners. The entire education section was closed due to an Easter break and the Head Teacher came in when off duty to meet us which was much appreciated. There was no tour of inspection of the classrooms as the teachers were off. About 68% of prisoners sign on for some form of education which includes physical education. Enrolling for one type of course can often lead to enrolling for another. There is an extensive curriculum, and the funding appears to be adequate. FETAC courses are more suitable for education purposes rather than the State exams of Junior and Leaving Certificates, but these examinations are also accommodated in the educational area.

Lack of available prison officers is a serious limitation on the use of the educational facilities. This leads, for example, to lack of access to the assembly hall for drama classes. (Management stated that the assembly hall was never sought for use outside of the Christmas period and also the

officers assigned to the education are not reduced as stated.) Likewise, the number of available officers limits the use of the woodcraft and art rooms. There used to be 7 officers available in the education unit, and sometimes as few as 5 in staff shortfall situations. Many classes have to be cancelled, especially since 26th January 2004, when a new regime of reduced overtime hours for officers came into effect. The cancellation of classes lead to prisoners and teachers becoming dispirited.

Given the great efforts made by teachers in a prison where there is 53.8% severe illiteracy difficulties (according to a survey made three or four years ago), steps must be taken to ensure that no further curtailment of education takes place due to unavailability of officers. Improved communication is necessary between the education unit and other bodies such as local management, the parole board, review boards and others.

#### 7.14 Meeting with Chaplains

The Inspector accompanied by Mr. Kelly had a meeting with the R.C. chaplains (two nuns) to the prison. (The full-time male chaplain was not available.) The famous Jesuit, Fr. P. McVerry, S.J, says the necessary Masses for the Sunday services and he visits some of the prisoners.

They raised the following main concerns:-

- . There is no positive-sentence planning for longer-term life-sentenced prisoners.
- . There is no programme for sex-offenders.
- . Services for those with addiction problems are inadequate. There are only two drug-free units in the prison and this is insufficient (however, the Inspector has been assured by the Governor there will be a third one shortly).
- . Current arrangements for contact with the outside world (one six-minute call per day and one visit per week) does not permit prisoners to maintain satisfactory relationships with their friends and families.

- . Bullying (both between prisoners and by staff on prisoners) is an issue in the prison. (Management state that such bullying has never been reported to them and if it had it would be dealt with very effectively.)
- . On a daily basis the chaplains visit a particular prisoner who is being held in segregation for a very prolonged period because he is deemed to be dangerous. They consider that his regime is inappropriate.
- . The prison's Welfare Service runs a linkage project designed to promote contact between prisoners and the outside world; however, sex-offenders are not allowed to participate in this project.

The chaplains also called attention to the content of the 2005 National Chaplains' annual report to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform. The Inspector has already included the introduction to that report in his annual report. He has emphasised that he accepts entirely what that report says and indeed it has been repeated by the chaplains for many years. The Inspector has stated frequently that prisons do not work in the majority of cases. He may be denounced as a 'do-gooder' which he is not. Prison is supposed to be a last resort as far as judges are concerned. The recently retired British Home Secretary has announced that there are too many people going to prison and wants to see the numbers reduced. The Inspector accepts that the State must be 'tough on crime', in fact Michael Howard who was the British Home Secretary years ago announced that 'prisons work'. That ukase had been accepted by every politician throughout these islands. However, that is a false premise. In the majority of cases prisons do not work. You must of course punish miscreants, but rehabilitation should be the top priority. Also, would any leader like to see a loved one of theirs for some minor infraction of the law such as failing to pay a television licence or a parking offence sent to prison? Why are debtors put in prison? If they do not pay the debt they will come out still owing the debt and can be incarcerated again and again at enormous expense.

The annual report of the Catholic Chaplains concludes by questioning the need for "a vast building expansion in the prison system and calls for renewed consideration of the viability of credible alternatives to prison."

The chaplaincy is overworked and understaffed. The Inspector suggests respectfully to the Archbishop and his authorities that the chaplaincy needs at least one further person to be added. It would be wonderful if it could be a priest but the nuns do excellent work. The burden should be more evenly distributed. I hope the Archbishop will take this point on board and provide another chaplain to continue the extremely important but difficult work of the existing chaplains.

#### 7.15 Meeting with representatives of the Prison Officers Association

Mr. Kelly and Mr. Woods met with two representatives of the local branch of the POA. They raised the following main concerns:-

- . Since the introduction of 'annualised hours' in January 2006 a large number of staff in Wheatfield (seventy-six in total) who did not previously work overtime have been compelled to work 90 hours overtime every three months (i.e., 360 hours per year). A basic grade prison officer is required to have at least six and a half years service before he/she can apply to opt out of this compulsory overtime system. Even then, it will be only possible to opt out if another prison officer elects to increase his/her overtime hours. Given that many basic grade prison officers live outside Dublin and commute considerable distances to work, to be compelled to work overtime places them (and their families) under an unnecessary strain. 10% of staff within their grade had the option of opting out of overtime but if this were overprescribed, then it was decided by seniority.

The introduction of the 'annualised hours' system has also meant that prison officers who are happy to work overtime are now limited to working a maximum of the 360 hours per year. This means that they can earn "only around €65,000 per year" which for certain officers who worked many overtime hours amounts "to a pay cut of some €40,000 per year". Given that the staff concerned have taken on financial commitments (e.g., mortgages) on the basis of their overtime earnings, this is perceived as being unfair.

The new system of annualised hours only works in practice because with the agreement of management at Wheatfield, prison officers are able to 'exchange duties' with each other. This does not affect the total number of hours that must be worked by any one officer but it enables prison staff to retain a degree of flexibility as regards the particular day on which those hours are worked. They stated that if this flexibility was not forthcoming then the new annualised hours system would collapse at this prison.

Notwithstanding the possibility to 'exchange duties' it has become more difficult for prison officers to obtain annual leave on the particular dates that they desire; it has also become more complicated for them to take a single day of leave without giving a long period of advance notice. The other leave entitlements such as parental leave, job sharing, etc is almost impossible to be granted same.

Since the introduction of the first round of rationalisation of staffing in early 2004, assaults by prisoners on prison staff at Wheatfield increased [from 17 in 2003 to 63 in 2004]. The two representatives conceded that in 2005 this figure had been lower but maintained that it remained higher than in 2003. [although they were not in a position to specify the exact figure].

'Class officers' who have principal responsibility for each accommodation unit ('landing') are often left on their own to perform this task. This level of under-staffing potentially constitutes a risk to both staff and prisoners.

Staff are 'demotivated' and prisoners are "not getting the same level of service" for three main reasons: (a) there are fewer staff to look after prisoners; (b) many staff have the impression that the Irish Prison Service does not care about them and that being the case, they ask themselves why should they care about doing their jobs properly; (c) those who have previously worked many hours of overtime are now earning a great deal less.

Training opportunities for staff at Wheatfield Prison are limited. There is no Assistant Chief Officer with responsibility for training and even if there were, there would be insufficient authorised working hours in the current quarter to allow time for adequate staff training.

They were asked as to why staff sick leave has increased since the introduction of the annualised hours as sick leave was supposed to decrease with the new arrangements to which they replied that it was as a result of injury on duty which was not recognised by management.

*Comment*

The new system of annualised hours commenced in January 2006 and plainly requires additional time to become fully 'bedded down' within the system and accepted by staff. However, if it can be shown convincingly [and I think it can] that the introduction of this system has led to the reduction of quality of service provided to prisoners, (e.g. reduced out-of-cell activities, shorter workshop hours, etc.) then this is a serious issue.

**8. Health and Safety (especially the fire aspect of Health the Safety)**

- 8.1 The Inspectorate met the Assistant Governor and the Chief Trades Officer, Class I who are responsible for the Health and Safety matters in the prison. They produced fire plans as well as all the records relating to the services carried out by outside contractors and by the local trades staff.
  
- 8.2 There is a fire plan for the prison but it needs updating as there are major building operations taking place in the prison at present. So, the updated fire plan will have to reflect the changes in the use of some of the buildings. The prisoners do not have access to the fire-plans because of security reasons, however they are given instructions beforehand when a fire-evacuation practice is to take place. There are no written instructions placed inside of the cell or on the back of the cell door in the event of a fire. However, there are warnings that fire can cause death. There are pocket-sized booklets issued to all of the discipline staff with the fire plans therein and these

booklets will have to be updated in the very near future as the contract work is due to finish at the end of June 2006. The fire plans include a map/drawing of the prison and they also include the location of the various fire hydrants, the fire hoses, the stand pump connections, etc. They also outline the location of the fire hoses, the location of the hand held fire extinguishers, the location of the fire alarms, the break-glass units and the emergency exits. All are clearly marked out in the booklet and the fire plans. The plans also outline where the assembly points for staff, prisoners and visitors are in the event of an evacuation. However the areas designated as the assembly points do not have an actual sign at the particular spot. The fire plans include the location of the cut-off points of gas and electricity but do not include the location of any hazardous materials that are stored within the prison or prison stores. There is a secure storage facility for paint. However, most of the paint now used in the prison is water-based so the same hazard is not as prevalent. There is also a fire committee formed within the prison that looks at all aspects of fire and fire hazards.

There is a ring water main supply surrounding the prison and there is also a domestic supply with both systems operating independently of each other. The mains water is from the city's supply and there are twenty hydrants fitted to the mains supply. The hydrant locations are clearly marked both on the map and in the drawings. The covering lids of the hydrant are painted yellow and there are 'H' signs displayed at each individual hydrants. There are no wet or dry risers fitted within the building but there are 'first-aid' water-hose reels fitted within the landings and these hose reels reach the further point of requirement within each unit. There are water storage tanks fitted within the prison for fire-fighting emergency purposes which has a capacity of 432,000 litres. There are 'jockey-pumps' fitted to the system at the water-storage area. The pumps are battery and electrically operated. The water pressure on the prison's fire hoses is 7 bar which is compatible with the local fire brigades fire engines. The fire brigade personnel carry out checks regarding water pressure and connect their fire engines into the prison's system. The last time such an exercise took place in Wheatfield was in May 2005. There are water-sprinkler valves installed in all of the cellular accommodation.

- 8.3 There are approximately 260 hand held fire extinguishers located throughout the buildings in all areas that are occupied. They are clearly marked and are easily identified. There are fire blankets located within the areas of the prison where needed such as the cooking areas and there is no inbuilt fire-extinguishing capacity within the canopies over the kitchen's cookers deep fryers etc.
- 8.4 There are air-sampling smoke-detectors being installed at present in all of the cellular areas. There are also smoke and heat-detectors being installed in all of the other areas that are occupied, such as the offices, stores, corridors etc. The smoke-detectors are linked to control panels which indicate the location of the smoke and these panels are located in the Trades Officer's offices, the hubs of the units, the main control-room and the Chief Officer's Office. The smoke if detected in the detection system activates a local alarm. There are several alarms (break-glass units) installed throughout the prison which are dual purpose. They can be used in the event of a fire and can also be used for security reasons. There is a general fire alarm/siren installed in the prison. In the event of a serious fire the fire alarm/siren is also sounded and there are written instructions in the fire plan booklet as to the procedures to follow in such an event. If the fire alarm is activated the staff are given instructions as to where to direct the prisoners to the various safe locations/assembly points. The prisoners are not given any written notice. It is given verbally on the directions of the officers whose responsibility it is to ensure they are removed to a safe area.
- 8.5 There is a fan/air smoke-extraction system installed within the prison. The smoke-extraction system has three settings within it and when smoke is detected it is at the third stage that the full activation takes place. Stage one is the pre-warning stage, stage two is the inspection, stage three is the full activation. The smoke-extractors are linked electronically to the smoke-detectors but they can also be activated manually. They can be activated from different locations and they also have control of the roof vents. There are also fire doors being installed on the corridors at the present time.

These fire doors will operate electronically and linked to the smoke-detector system when fully installed. There are fire doors also being installed in the stairwells and they will operate manually as well as electronically.

- 8.6 The prison at the present time is in the process of installing emergency exits from all of the cellular accommodation units. Directly over the new exit-doors are new smoke-extraction systems also being installed. There are emergency exits from all of the workshop areas, the offices, stores, education areas. The emergency-exit signs are not illuminated at present within the prison. They are illuminated in the administration corridor and the assembly hall only. There is emergency lighting installed throughout the prison. The fittings, where the prisoners have access, are protected by a grid. The prison has its own power generator and a battery operated system.
- 8.7 The prison has service contracts with outside companies to carry out the servicing of the fire and emergency equipment. The following are the records in relation to services carried out by the terms of the contact, i.e monthly, yearly, half-yearly, etc. the particulars of which are as follows: Fire extinguishers one per year, last serviced on 5th October 2005, SCBA (Self-contained Breathing Apparatus) once per year, last serviced on 15 November 2005, also the BA compression chamber was last serviced on 15 February 2006. The smoke-detectors are serviced every three months, as are the control panels for smoke-detectors and the last service was 6th March 2006. The smoke-extraction system is serviced once per year, the last such service being in February 2005. The break-glass units, emergency-exit doors and the emergency lighting are done two-monthly. The service was done on the 6 March 2006. The jockey-pumps are serviced twice per year. The last one was done on 27th September 2005. The alarm systems and the control panels are also checked two-monthly and they were done at the same time as the break-glass units on 6 March 2006. The emergency cut-off points regarding the supply of gas to the various appliances are serviced twice yearly and the last one was done 11/12 January 2006. The hose-reels and

fittings are serviced once per year and the last one being on 5th October 2005, as well as the other cell-call systems they are checked bi-monthly, (six per year). The last one was done on 13 March 2006.

- 8.8 Servicing and checks are carried out by local trade staff re fire and emergency equipment and the records show that the majority of these are checked on a weekly basis. Extinguishers weekly and daily if required, BA equipment and cylinders the same, hose-reels and fittings are checked weekly, as are the emergency exit-doors checked weekly, but some of them are also checked daily. The emergency lighting is undergoing maintenance and there is daily checks on it. The break-glass units are checked weekly and daily if one of the break-glass units is broken. The fire alarms are checked weekly and the smoke-detectors are checked two-monthly. The water-pumps and jockey-pumps, are also checked weekly.
- 8.9 There is an up-to-date register maintained for daily, weekly, monthly checks of fire escapes, emergency exits, fire doors, emergency lighting, and fire-detection systems. There are records maintained of the servicing of all of the fire-emergency equipment and the date the work was completed. 180 staff received part-refresher training in BA, that is donning and doffing only, in the past year. All of the discipline staff received refresher training in C&R, phase one, while 60 staff received refresher training in phase two of C&R. No staff received refresher training in phrase three of C&R.
- 8.10 The records show that a number of fire-drill evacuation exercises took place during the year and the number of staff, prisoners, etc. involved in same are recorded as outlined herewith. On 21 April 2005 units 3, 4 and 5G were evacuated. Fifty-three prisoners and seven staff plus three observers were involved. The evacuation commenced at 14:00 and was completed by 14:04 hours. On the 24th November 2005 units 1G and 1F, with thirty-six prisoners, four staff, two observers involved, commenced at 13:56 and finished at 14:00 hours. On 21st December 2005 units 2G, 2F, 3G and 3F, there were sixty-eight prisoners involved along with four staff plus two observers. The

exercise commenced at 13:55 and was completed at 14:02 hours. On 24th November 2005 fire-drill exercise was carried out with outside contractors in which there were eight contractors involved, plus one foreman and one engineer. On 27 January 2006 units 4G, 4F and 5F, 5G in which there were sixty-five prisoners involved, three staff, a chief officer and two observers. This exercise commenced at 13:54 and was completed by 14:01 hours. On 6 April 2006 unit 1G and 1F were evacuated with 32 prisoners involved, four staff and three observers. This exercise commenced at 14:20 and finished 14:23 hours. On the 3rd April 2006 7F and 7G were evacuated with a total of thirty-six prisoners involved, five staff plus two observers. It commenced at 13:59 and was completed at 14:04 hours. The reason for the extra time involved in this exercise was that one prisoner refused to move and had to be forcibly removed.

- 8.11 Sixty staff received refresher training (familiarisation) in the use of fire hose, standpipe connections, fire extinguishers, protection clothing, etc. in the past year. It is disciplinary staff only who are issued with fire prevention booklets at present. An undertaking was given that teachers, Chaplains, Probation and Welfare Officers, Doctors, etc. who work within the prison will also be issued with booklets and in the event of a fire in their area they will know the procedures to follow. There are some instructions given to prisoners regarding fire dangers and fire hazards at the induction course, but there are no written instructions placed inside the prison cells. However, there are signs stating that fire can sometimes cause death. The cell doors are not fitted with an inundation facility for fire-hose-reel heads, however, there are sprinklers in all of the cells which removes the need for such a facility. The cell doors can also be removed from the outside even when in a locked position. The local fire-brigade personnel are familiar with the prison buildings and they have brought their fire brigades into the prison on “dummy-runs”. There are plans in place regarding the fire brigade being called to the prison in the event of an emergency as regards giving them a map and drawing of the prison, handling of keys, etc. The fire brigade generally visit the prison on a familiarisation tour about once a year and the

last time such an exercise took place was on 3rd May 2005, when fire brigade personnel from Tallaght and Dolphin's Barn fire-brigades came into the prison.

There are designated areas within the prison where prisoners and staff are not allowed to smoke, for instance, the canteens, surgeries, officers' mess, workshops, etc. However, the prisoners are allowed to smoke in their cells and in their exercise yards. There is a committee at present reviewing the amount of combustible items allowed in cells. Prisoners are allowed to have the following articles within their cells: cigarette-lighter, television, radio, electric kettle. They are not allowed to have a video, computer or a laptop but are allowed to have a Playstation 1 but not 2 or 3. They are not allowed to have an electric razor or a DVD player. The stores section have a purchasing policy that all cell furnishings, including the bedding/duvet, conforms to inflammable standards. The special blankets used in the special cell are washed after each use. The duvets in the prisoners' cells are washed once per six weeks, while the duvet covers are washed once per week. They do not carry out any checks regarding fire retardancy after a specified number of washes. Fire-risk assessments are prepared for each area within the prison and notes are taken of the hazards involved but they are not in an official ledger.

#### 8.12 Staff's Health and Safety Representative

The staff's representative outlined that he had a good working relationship with prison management on health and safety issues. However, he did have a number of points to raise which related to BA equipment, which he states need to be upgraded as there is better equipment now on the market. He stated that not all staff were receiving training. A certain amount of training was happening but was not sufficient to cover the entire number of staff attached to the prison. He was not supplied with an office although management state that he was offered his own office and declined same. He is using a room in the school at present. He happens to be the school-officer and as such has the use of an office there, which is also used for the recording of prisoners attending the education centres. He feels that he

should be supplied with an office and that there has been no training for health and safety reps in the past five years. This should be carried out as there are constant changes taking place in the Health and Safety Acts and that they are not being kept abreast. He said that in the past, he received the Health and Safety Officer's magazine on a regular basis but that has ceased and he wishes to know why? (Management when asked stated that they were unaware that it had ceased.) He outlined that he was pleased with the new fire-exit doors that are being installed as well as updating the smoke-extraction system, illuminating the exit signs, and the various other works that are being carried out. It is all to the benefit of both the staff and prisoners. He is quite satisfied that the work is being done. He also said that he receives full co-operation from local management regarding requests put to them and generally they try to respond favourably towards such requests. He has a good working relationship with local management.

## **9. Recommendations**

1. That the staffing levels in the index unit, library, censor office, education unit be examined to ensure such services are not curtailed as a result of staff shortages. (6.6 pg 38, 6.17 pg 43, 6.25 pg 48, 7.13 pg 82)
2. That management and Prison Service Headquarters look at the service provided within the staff canteen and examine the possibility of staff's meals being provided from the prison's kitchen (costs of such services etc.). (6.27 pg 49)
3. That the new all-weather football pitch be used more often by the prisoners. (6.32 pg 52, 7.3 pg 69).

4. That the Visiting Committee monitor the use of P.19's (prisoners misconduct report forms) their frequency of use and punishments imposed in relation to the gravity of the offences. (6.33 pg 54)
5. That the written notice in the Visitor's waiting room regarding nominated visitors be amended to read 8 visitors as opposed to 6 visitors and that a short booklet should be available for all visitors explaining the prison's visiting system, articles that a prisoner can receive and those that are prohibited. (6.34 pg 55 + 56)
6. That the waiting room for visitors be made a more child-friendly environment and that consideration be given to bringing into service the unused Portakabin located next to the waiting room area. (6.33 pg 56)
7. That the "heads" of the various services working in the prison attend the management meetings at least once per month to share information in the running of the prison. (e.g psychologist, teacher, senior probation and welfare officer, chaplain, doctor, etc) (7.1 pg 59, 7.13 pg 82, 10.16 pg 102)
8. That the Visiting Committee investigate the alleged bullying and racism within the prison. (7.3 (f) pg 69)
9. That positive sentence management for long and life sentence prisoners be introduced in Wheatfield and other establishments. (7.3 (a) pg 68)
10. That a classification policy be introduced to enable long sentence prisoners to be accommodated together in a condition which allows them to exercise a greater degree of choice over the manner in which their time is spent. (7.3 (b) pg 68).

11. That local management review the current outdoor exercise facility with a view that such exercise is not cancelled due to inclement weather or if it rains. (7.3 (c) pg 68)
12. That local management and H.Q review very regularly all those on 23-hour lock-up throughout the prison system (protection and segregated prisoners) to establish if they could be held in areas whereby their regime would be less restrictive. (7.3 pg 66 10.11 pg 100)
13. That the prison provide “confidential access” to the Visiting Committee by having locked boxes in each unit, to which only Visiting Committee members have keys (7.4 pg 71)
14. That the doctor’s surgery be provided with a defibulator unit, wall-mounted auroscope and a wall mounted unit for chyrotherapy. (7.5 pg 72)
15. That local management and Healthcare Director examine the storage facilities for medical files, the locum doctors prescribing of sleeping tablets and the usage of outside hospitals after the prison doctor’s hours of attendance. (7.5 pg 72)
16. That management and the Healthcare Director examine the feasibility of clerical/administration support for the medical staff attached to the prison and for a pharmacist. (7.6 pg 73)
17. That management have the dental chair, the dental drills, and the autoclave examined with a view to having them replaced if necessary. That the floor of the dentistry be cleaned more frequently (7.7 pg 73)
18. That the dentistry be supplied with a computer. (7.7 pg 75)

19. That the Healthcare Director examine the role of the nurses in the prison with a view of establishing a “nurse manager” in the main establishment. (7.8 pg 76)
20. That an additional R.C. Chaplain be appointed to the prison. (7.14 pg 84)

## **10. Conclusions**

- 10.1 The prison is very modern and opened in 1989 with in-cell sanitary facilities provided (without showering facilities within the cells). Its design with basement under the accommodation areas allows for most of the repairs/maintenance work to be carried out without having to have the cells empty. There are very good workshop, work training and educational facilities provided and some of the workshops have been enlarged and modernised since our last inspection. The prison also has 3 outdoor exercise yards, a large sports hall and a new all - weather football pitch.
- 10.2 An enormous amount of additional building has taken place since our last inspection which consisted of a new laundry, new secure car parking areas for staff, new staff locker rooms, new administration offices, new all-weather football pitch, new emergency exits from all of the accommodation units, new smoke-extraction system, new fire doors on corridors, upgrading of some of the electrical work, upgrading of some of the workshops and of the segregation unit, upgrading of the sports hall, new control room, etc. There are suggestions that another cell block is going to be built within the grounds of Wheatfield to accommodate remand prisoners from the overcrowded adjacent Cloverhill Prison, but this was not confirmed. The amount of money

spent on the new buildings and the upgrading of existing facilities appears enormous for a prison that was built in the 1980's.

10.3 The introduction in January 2006 of the new annualised working hours for prison staff appears to have "teething" problems. It appears some staff are in favour of it while others are opposed to it, but the Inspectorate got an overall negative impression of its implementation. There were several examples where services to prisoners (workshops, education, censor office, library, etc) were definitely curtailed as a result of the annualised hours, some were even given examples of curtailment since 2004 when the first reduction in staff overtime working hours was introduced.

10.4 A reasonable amount of staff training has taken place in the past year. 180 staff received refresher training in B.A. (breathing apparatus, donning and offing of equipment only). 223 received refresher training in C & R phase I and 59 staff in phase II, no refresher training in phase III of C & R. All of the workshop staff (instructors and industrial trainers) received the necessary refresher training or new training in their areas of responsibilities. Staff also participated in training courses in hygiene, computers, hostage and suicide awareness, physical education, interviewing skills, I.M.I senior management, health and safety, environmental management, management of food/hygiene, etc. There were 7 fire drill evacuations carried out during the year which involved 290 prisoners, 28 staff and 10 "outside" building work men. It was noted that not all of the units were involved in the evacuation drills and 5 of the units were previously evacuated. There is a provision of

allocated hours for training in the new annualised hours schedule, hopefully this will see an improvement.

10.5 The kitchen continues to achieve its outstanding awards and all of the food sampled throughout the inspection was very well presented and tasteful.

Both the kitchens in the main prison were spotless as were their food storage facilities, fridges, cold rooms, servery areas, etc.

10.6 The new laundry is a great addition to the prison and allows for the prisoners to have at least one change of freshly laundered clothing per week. It has also stopped the prisoners' personal clothing being sent out for laundering thus blocking off one avenue of illegal drugs getting into the prison. While the laundry operates a longer working day than the other workshops, it is a pity that it cannot do the entire laundry requirements of both Wheatfield and Cloverhill prisons. (Cloverhill send only a portion of their laundry.) One would think that a laundry which is described as the most modern and up-to-date in Europe should be able to do the laundry needs of the entire Dublin-based prisons.

10.7 The work training workshops have, or some very soon will have, the necessary standards to allow the prisoners to participate in the various certification courses (City & Guilds, Fetac, etc) which are so useful to those who may be seeking employment after release. The prison will not be mentioned on the certificate if they achieve same. It is good that the prison workshops have been raised to these standards. The numbers engaged in

the workshops did not match the numbers described in the pre-inspection questionnaire. There were fewer. So the Inspector is not sure if all of the prisoners are usefully employed or engaged while out of their cell. The education section was closed during our inspection as the teachers were on their Easter break, so the prisoners that normally attend school were either around the units or surplus in the workshops which may have given the impression that there was not full employment for all.

10.8 The prison is kept very well and is very clean. Good credit to all concerned for keeping it in such a high standard of hygiene. The flower beds between the units and the flower pots around the walkway with the grass neatly cut adds very much to its presentation.

10.9 There is a high standard of hygiene maintained among the prisoners, and their clothing, bedding, etc is washed weekly. The prisoners have T.V's, radio, kettle, etc within their cells and have telephone facilities (phone cards). They can write and receive letters, although the posting and receiving of the letters may be delayed due to staffing (censor) problems. (Staffing censoring problems have been strongly disputed by management.) They can get a weekly visit and a lot of them receive an extra visit per week with the Governor's permission. A new listeners scheme has been introduced which is managed by the Samaritans. A listening suite has been provided and a group of prisoners have been trained as "listeners". Two of the prisoners are on the prisons committee. The prison is to be commended for this new service.

10.10 The relationship between staff and prisoners appears reasonable. There were 348 prisoners on disciplinary report (P.19's) in the past six months of which 76 lost remission and 11 had a deduction made from their gratuity for damage to property. 151 forfeited evening recreation for 3 weeks or longer while 125 forfeited visits. 11 prisoners were on report for assault on staff and 50 on report for assault on a fellow prisoner. 61 were reported for smuggling or attempting to smuggle illegal substances into the prison. The Inspectorate did a cursory check on the disciplinary reports and thought that a considerable number of prisoners were placed on report, that the officers appeared to apply the P.19's method quickly and that the punishment imposed in some cases appeared severe for the offences reported. It was not an in-depth study but it is a cause for concern which may be returned to on another inspection.

10.11 The prisoners who are kept in long-term segregation without any or very little stimulation or regime is soul-destroying. Such prisoners within the prison system should be accommodated in an area with structured programmes and proper regimes. The fact that there are between 8 - 20 prisoners per day on 23-hour-lock-up for "their protection" or for "medical" reasons is not good management for such a group of prisoners. Daily reviews of such prisoners by local management and H.Q should take place in order to reduce the numbers of such prisoners held in this position. Transfers to other prisons where they may be able to mix freely may be one solution. A structured regime for those unable to mix should be considered.

- 10.12 Long and life-sentenced prisoners should be accommodated together as far as possible and extra facilities/structured programmes should be introduced for them. The long and short-sentenced prisoners are all mixed together at present.
- 10.13 The new induction programme for new committal prisoners was introduced in January 2006 and this is a very welcome development.
- 10.14 The medical needs of the prisoner are quite well catered for with a doctor (G.P.) in daily attendance, psychiatrists 3 days per week, dentistry available three and a half days per week, psychologist full time, and other services, optician, dietician, outside public hospitals etc, when required. There are between 70 - 80 prisoners daily on a methadone treatment programme while 3 - 4 per day are on a detoxification course.
- 10.15 Staff morale is quite good although the introduction of the annualised hours is having an effect. There are 134 staff seeking a transfer at present, mostly, the Governor states, to get nearer their homes. Staff turnover for the past year was 56, which consisted of 24 new staff, 9 retired, 22 transferred and 1 dismissed. There was one disciplinary hearing conducted by the Governor in the past twelve months. One prisoner escaped during the year who was under escort of prison officers and taken at gunpoint. Another prisoner absconded while on temporary release accompanied by a chaplain.

10.16 The various agents working in the prison (e.g. chaplains, teachers, psychologist, probation and welfare, medical etc) expressed concern at the lack of information flow between local management and themselves. The Inspector suggests that the head of each such agency should attend at least once a month at the local management meeting.

10.17 The Inspector wishes to thank the Governor and staff most sincerely for the hospitality shown to the Inspectorate team throughout the inspection. He also wishes to thank them for providing the facilities and for their co-operation and help. It is very much appreciated.