

IRISH PRISONS INSPECTORATE

CASTLEREA PRISON

**REVISIT TO CASTLEREA PRISON :
25TH - 26TH OCTOBER 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 RE-VISIT TO CASTLEREA PRISON

COMMENCING THE 25th - 26th OCTOBER 2006

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 From the 25th - 26th October an inspection of Castlerea Prison was carried out by the Inspectorate Team which consisted of:

Mr. Justice Dermot Kinlen

Inspector of Prisons and
Places of Detention

James Woods

Special Adviser to the Inspector

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

Date:

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

1. Introduction

The purpose of the inspection was to follow up the recommendations made in our last full inspection of 2nd - 9th June 2004 and establish what progress had been made against the recommendations made at that time. The inspectorate also examined the current business plans for the prison for the year ending 2006 and viewed new projects and inspected the prison and the building works in progress.

2. Background

The prison was opened in the late 90's it having been a psychiatric hospital previously. It consists of two main areas i.e (A) the main cell blocks and their ancillary services (B) the "Grove" which is separated from the other buildings by a high wire fence and consists of a number of stand alone two- storey houses which are again served by their own workshops, education, kitchen, visiting facility etc.

Castlerea Prison holds sentenced and remand prisoners and is the committal prison for the courts in the West of Ireland, mainly from counties Roscommon, Mayo, Sligo, Donegal, Leitrim, Galway, Cavan, Longford and parts of Monaghan. There is a courthouse immediately outside the main entrance gate to the prison known as Harristown District Court.

The total cell capacity is 136 but several of the cells have been altered to accommodate more by placing bunk beds etc in them. There are 4 cells with 4 prisoners in each; 30 cells with 2 prisoners in each; 101 single person cells plus 1 special protection cell. The two storey houses in the Grove section accommodate 50 prisoners.

The last full inspection of the prison by the Inspector of Prisons and Places of Detention was carried out from 2nd to the 9th June 2004 and there were 19 recommendations made arising from that inspection. The particulars of these recommendations and action (if any) taken relating to them is outlined within this report.

3. Statistical Information

(Prisoners)

Number in custody as of 26/10/06	226	
Number sentenced		184
Number untried (remand or for trial)	42	

(Offences Profile)

Murder	17	
Rape/Sex Offence	21	
Subversive	06	
Manslaughter	11	
Drugs Offences	12	
Robbery	18	
Assault	20	
Others	<u>121</u>	
	Total	226

(Sentence Profile)

0 - under 2 years	84
2 - 5 years	42
6 - 10 years	31
11 - 21 years	10
Life	17

Untried	<u>42</u>
Total	226

(Staffing)

Governor	1
Deputy Governor	1
Assistant Governor	1
Discipline Duties (officers, ACO's, Chief Officer)	129
Clerical (Clerk I and Clerk II)	7
Trades Staff	3
Industrial Workshops	17
Nursing Staff	<u>9</u>
Total	168

(There are 146 male and 22 female staff attached to the prison.)

There were 21 prisoners in custody between the ages of 17 and 21 years, while the balance (205) were over 21 years. There were 4 prisoners on temporary release which included one who is serving a life sentence.

The prisoners are engaged in industrial workshops, cooking, education, trades, cleaning and horticulture but not all of the prisoners have been allocated a work or education assignment. However, with the computer

workshop reopening shortly this should eliminate some of the work assignment problems.

4. Meeting with the Governor

The Governor welcomed the Inspectorate team consisting of the Inspector, Mr. Justice D. Kinlen, and his special adviser, Mr J. Woods.

He outlined that on this date (25/10/06) he had a total of 223 prisoners in custody. (He had 226 on 26/10/06.) The Governor said that he had a bed capacity for 229 prisoners but in order to achieve this number he had to place bunk beds in single cells to facilitate all prisoners with a bed. Otherwise some prisoners would be sleeping on mattresses on the floors, which would be mostly remands. So it is not by any means a good situation but it is the better of two evils, either sleep on the floors or share a single cell with someone with a bunk bed provided. A single cell occupancy is by far the best situation but he had no alternative especially as it's a committal prison and with no pre-warning as to the numbers he may receive from the courts on any given day. The prison was designed to accommodate 20 prisoners on remand but these number have greatly exceeded expectation. There is now a new independent remand unit in the process of being built which will accommodate 50 prisoners, so this should help considerably when completed.

The Inspector enquired if he still had sex offenders, if they are mixing with the general population and if there are any sex offending programmes for them.

The Governor outlined that he had sex offenders who mix freely with the other prisoners. They can participate in the programme in Arbour Hill prison if they so wish to apply for same and if they are deemed suitable for the programme. There are no programmes for them in Castlerea Prison.

The Governor outlined that the special observation unit has been renovated since our last inspection and is now fitted with sanitary facilities within same.

(Apparently the C.P.T. group complained of the toilet facilities within the cells on their recent visit, (so the Governor cannot win!!))

Industrial relations were raised as the previous report outlined some problems in this area to which the Governor responded that they were very good. He outlined the great co-operation he received from the local union in the implementation of the annualised hours. He had a very good working relationship with them; there were the odd differences of opinion but overall they were on good terms.

Regarding the new annualised hours, management said that they were "living within budget" and that services to prisoners had not been affected since its introduction. The staff's sick leave increased during the summer months but has reduced of late. They had a problem at the beginning regarding shortages of staff to fill the required parts but this has now been rectified with additional staff. A central escort corps has been established in the prison but is not staffed sufficiently to cover the entire escort demands at

times, consequently the prison's staff have to perform escort duties on those occasions, which were not allowed for in the annualised hours posts.

The Inspector asked if they had driving instruction for prisoners to which the Governor replied that no such service existed.

The Governor outlined the new locker room for staff as well as a storage facility within it, which was built in the past year.

He spoke of the introduction of the new environmental waste management programme where they recycle at source on the landings. They were the first prison to commence composting and prisoners working on waste management can reach certificate standard. Such certificates are issued from Sligo I.T. if the standards are reached. He spoke of the prisoners working in the kitchen who can achieve accreditation in cooking skills from Athlone I.T.

The Governor was asked if there was a sentence management programme for prisoners and he said that a local sentence management project plan was sent to Prison H.Q. and is awaiting approval. However, he then outlined a new initiative that has commenced concerning prisoners' sentence management. The new programme is called "you're equal" which is a mentoring service in which 2 civilian mentors come into the prison and work with a group of 15 prisoners who are selected randomly. The project offers one-to-one personal mentoring and support before and after release, seeking

to identify and help resolve blocks to and issues surrounding work training, education, housing benefits, re-offending, re-imprisonment, addiction, alcohol problems, improving self-confidence plus reintegration into family and society. The "you're equal" project is funded by the E.U. and its overall aim is the "maximisation of employment opportunities for prisoners and ex-prisoners". It is in partnership with several communities and statutory agencies such as Roscommon, Cork, Galway Partnership, Fas, Probation and Welfare Service, Linkage Project, Irish Prison Service, V.E.C. education units, Dept of Social Community and Family Affairs, Neva, etc. Castlerea and Cork Prisons are the only two prisons participating in the project at present.

Management spoke of a new facility for prisoners' visitors in which a citizens' advice service and a counselling service are provided in the waiting room area. There is also a new visiting area being built which will have a play area for children. A new video conference centre is also being installed.

Regarding drama productions, the Governor outlined that a production took place last December in the prison when a "civilian" wrote and produced the play with prisoners performing all the roles. It was very well received and some people from the "outside" came in to see this production.

The Governor then gave a breakdown of new buildings or renovations that are taking place in the prison since the last inspection. They are as follows:-

- (1) New remand unit for 50 prisoners with in-cell sanitation including showering facilities.

- (2) New 12-cell unit for non-compliant prisoners known as residential treatment centre which will have its own exercise yard, education unit, etc.
- (3) New outdoor recreation area which will include an AstroTurf all-weather football pitch.
- (4) New indoor recreation area consisting of a 2-storey building which will include a recreation area on the top floor and a gymnasium on the ground floor. This will also entail relocating the present outdoor exercise yard.
- (5) New visiting area which includes a crèche, “open family” visiting facilities and “no contact” visiting facilities. There will be 10 “family” rooms plus counselling rooms within the same area.
- (6) Two extra houses being built in the “Grove” area to accommodate 6 prisoners in each house.
- (7) Gate lock (at main gate) being upgraded which will include a new security detection system and a screening facility.
- (8) Upgrading of the control room as well as the C.C.T.V. cameras.
- (9) A new staff locker room with storage facility for security equipment has been completed.

(10) Relocation of general office to new area and the old general office converted to separate offices for Deputy and Assistant Governors.

Plans have been submitted to Prison H.Q. to knock the stand-alone original hospital wing and replace it with a therapeutic unit, approval for which is still awaited.

The Inspector complimented the Governor and management in securing so many new works and renovations to the prison and felt sure it will be of great benefit to the prisoners on its completion. It will of course also improve the working conditions for staff.

This concluded our meeting with the Governor and the Inspectorate then began discussions on the prison's business plans for 2006, the particulars of which are as follows:-

5. Castlerea Prison's Business Plans 2006

Plans

Financial Management

Target 1.1 Manage within the overall budget allocation for 2006.

Steps to achieve target 1.1

1.1.1 Conduct budget meeting with heads of functions.

Result: Done.

1.1.2 Identify need and prioritise costing of agreed requirements.

Result: Done.

1.1.3 Submission for Final Approval.

Result: Done.

1.1.4 Monitor and review expenditure throughout the year.

Result: Done.

1.1.5 Evaluate end-of-year report.

Result: Due at end of 2006.

1.1.6 Establish Finance Management Committee.

Result: Yes.

1. Operational Management

Target 2.1 Ensure emergency planning in place to cover emergency situations, e.g. fire, riot, hostage-taking.

Steps to achieve target 2.1

2.1.1 Conduct review of existing Fire Plan, Riot Plan, Hostage-taking Plan and fire/riot/hostage equipment

Result: Ongoing.

2.1.2 Produce report and recommendations to Governor for approval.

Result: Done.

2.1.3 Implement recommendations as approved by the Governor.

Result: Yes, being done.

2.1.4 Review training needs for staff in relation to fire, riot and hostage-taking.

Result: Partially done.

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

Result: Done.

2.1.6 Implement approved training programme for staff.

Result: Partially done. No Training Liaison Officer until recently.

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

Steps to achieve target 2.2

2.2.1 Train end users in the system.

Result: Doing same.

2.2.2 Implement new system

Result: Done.

2.2.3 Review.

Result: Done monthly.

2.2.4 Conduct initial audit of assaults in 2004.

Result: Not due until 2007.

Target 2.3 Introduce new visiting arrangements in Castlerea Prison.

Steps to achieve target 2.3

2.3.1 Review current practices & establish Project Team.

Result: A new visiting area under construction and will be done then.

2.3.2 Analyse systems in other Institutions.

Result: Yes.

2.3.3 Consultation and communication system to visitors and prisoners.

Result: Yes, in visitors' waiting room.

2.3.4 Furnish report to Governor.

Result: Yes done.

2.3.5 Implement system.

Result: Not until new building is available.

2.3.6 Review new system.

When completed.

**Target 2.5 Introduce an annual review of security at all institutions,
commencing in 2004.**

Steps to achieve target 2.5

2.5.1 Conduct Security Review.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

2.5.2 Provide observations.

Result Yes. Done.

2.5.3 Receive final guidelines.

Result: Ongoing.

2.5.4 Conduct security reviews.

Result: Yes, done monthly.

2. Human Resource Management

3.

Target 3.2 Manage staff resources within overall budget allocated for Annualised Hours.

Steps to achieve target 3.2

3.2.1 Work within allocated budget for 2006.

Result: Yes.

3.2.2 Agree measures to remain within budget.

Result: Yes, within same.

3.2.3 Communicate measures to all staff.

Result: Yes, weekly.

3.2.4 Implement measures.

Result: Yes, done.

3.2.5 Review measures in light of monthly expenditure returns.

Result: Yes, constant review/weekly.

Target 3.4 Manage PMDS for Relevant Prison Service grades.

Steps to achieve target 3.4

3.4.1 Prepare Role Profile Forms for all participants.

Result: Yes, done.

3.4.2 Monitor ongoing individual performances.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

3.4.3 Conduct interim reviews.

Result: Done.

3.4.4 Conduct annual review.

Result: When arrives at end of year.

3.4.5 Evaluate outcome.

Result: Not due until 2007.

Target 3.6 Ensure adequate number of trained staff for emergency situations, e.g. C & R Training, BA Training.

Steps to achieve target 3.6

3.6.1 Review training needs – C & R and BA.

Result: Yes, reviewed.

3.6.2 Review arrangements with Emergency Services.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

3.6.3 Identify number of hours allocated.

Result: Hours allocated but not all used.

3.6.4 Produce recommendations to Governor.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

3.6.5 Implement approved training programme.

Result: Training Liaison Officer not available until recently but have achieved 90% of training in C & R and B.A plus two evacuations exercises.

Regime Development

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

Steps to achieve target 4.1A

4.1A.1 Maintain prisoner numbers in Education as far as possible during ongoing budgetary restrictions.

Result: Yes, ongoing school never closed.

4.1A.2 Continue Curriculum Review Group.

Result: Yes.

4.1A.3 Provide CRG Report.

Result: Yes, done.

4.1.A.4 Conduct needs analysis.

Result: Yes, done with prisoners and teachers.

4.1A.5 Seek approval from Governor to implement recommendations.

Result: Yes, done.

Target 4.1B Workshops Training

Steps to achieve target 4.1B

4.1B.1 Maintain prisoner numbers in vocational training as far as possible during ongoing budgetary restrictions.

Result: Yes, being done and expanded.

4.1B.2 Review evaluation criteria.

Result: Yes, done.

4.1B.3 Conduct needs analysis.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

4.1B.4 Review the current work and training programmes and make appropriate recommendations.

Results: Yes, ongoing.

4.1B.5 Implement approved recommendations.

Result: Yes, done.

4.1B.6 Review changes.

Result: Yes, at end of year.

Target 4.2 Provide for the personal well-being of prisoners, including spiritual care and suicide awareness.

Steps to achieve target 4.2

4.2.1 Provide Religious Services, Sacraments and Spiritual Counselling to all denominations.

Result: Yes, visiting R.C chaplain plus Church of Ireland clergy visiting and a permanent R.C lay chaplain.

4.2.2 Continue to convene quarterly multidisciplinary meetings to review current and new suicide prevention measures and implement as appropriate.

Result: Yes, done.

4.2.3 Implement recommendations as appropriate of the National Steering Group on Deaths in Custody.

Result: Yes, whenever meetings held and recommendations presented.

4.2.4 Convene special meeting of the committee in the event of a death or serious suicide attempt.

Result: Yes, being done.

4.2.5 Implement recommendations when approved by Governor.

Result: Yes, done.

Target 4.3 Provide care and rehabilitation, ensuring equality of access for all prisoners.

Steps to achieve target 4.3

4.3.1 Continue to provide Personal Development classes to meet current and future demand.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

4.3.2 Continue Linkage Programme.

Result: Yes, Probation and Welfare run same.

4.3.3 Library Committee to continue.

Result: Due to industrial dispute with VEC not operating.

4.3.4 Continue to support and refer prisoners to Harristown House. Refer prisoners at pre-release stage to Linkage Programme and Citizens Information Service.

Result: Yes, being done. Also counselling services being provided to visitors.

4.3.5 Enable access by prisoners to A.A. and N.A. meetings.

Result: Yes, A.A. but problems with availability N.A. volunteers.

and 4.3.6 Parole reports and repatriation reports to be completed on time to a high professional standard.

Result: Yes, done.

4.3.7 Long-term focussed work with selected individual high-priority prisoners to address offending behaviour.

Result: Yes, ongoing. Probation and Welfare involved.

4.3.8 Access individuals on committal or later subject to priority status and as referred by prison staff including Governor, nurses and chaplains.

Result: Yes, ongoing with Probation Service.

4.3.9 Provide an "Access to Abstinence" drugs/alcohol course.

Result: Yes, being done in education area.

4.3.10 Provide 10 meetings of “Lifer Support Group” to prisoners serving life sentences.

Result: Yes, ongoing with Probation and Education staff involvement.

4.3.11 Joint provision of pre-release service to prisoners including three structured courses during year.

Result: Yes, carried out.

4.3.12 Provide support for Equal 2 Project.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

4.3.13 Establish Working Group for Integrated Sentence Management.

Result: Proposals submitted to H.Q. and awaiting response.

Tackle the drug problem in prisons

Target 5.1A Establish Drug Free Environment.

Steps to achieve target 5.1A

5.1A.1 Continue urine testing programme.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

5.1A.2 Receive I.P.S Drugs Policy.

Result: Yes received.

5.1A.3 Continue introduction of CCTV equipment in visiting area.

Result: Visiting area being upgraded including cameras.

5.1A.4 Use of Polytechnic Equipment.

Result: Yes, at main gate but not fully operational.

5.1A.5 More frequent post-visit searches.

Result: Yes, ongoing.

5.1A.6 Implementation of new visiting arrangements.

Result: Yes, when visiting area fully refurbished.

Target 5.1B Provide Drug Treatment and Addiction Services for prisoners.

Steps to achieve target 5.1B

5.1B.1 Retain drug and alcohol counsellors.

Result: Yes, retained 1 day per week.

5.1B.2 Continue our association with community-based addiction facilities.

Result; Yes, being done. Probation Service involved.

5.1B.3 Provide medical treatment and care to all substance addicted prisoners.

Result: Yes. Medical officer provides treatment but no methadone treatment.

5.1B.4 Apply I.P.S Drugs Treatment Policy.

Result: Whatever is applicable to Castlerea.

5.1B.5 Implement recommendations.

Result: Yes, as far as applicable to Castlerea.

5.1B.6 Provide Drug Awareness Scheme.

Result: Yes, done.

4. Prisoner Health Care

Target 6.1 Implement agreed Healthcare Standards as appropriate, to ensure medical and psychiatric care for prisoners consistent with standards that apply in the community generally.

Steps to achieve target 6.1

6.1.1 Establish Healthcare Committee.

Result: Yes, in place but problem with availability of membership.

6.1.2 Produce report and recommendations.

Result: Yes, as applicable.

6.1.3 Review recommendations that may be implemented in Castlerea Prison.

Result: Yes, reviewed.

6.1.4 Review and approve appropriate recommendations.

Result: Yes, done.

6.1.5 Implement appropriate recommendations.

Result: Yes, done.

6.1.6 Review arrangements.

Result: Yes, as far as possible and to meet more regularly.

7. Facility Management

Target 7.1 Manage the agreed maintenance budget for the institution.

Steps to achieve target 7.1

7.1.1 Identify budget for 2006.

Result: Yes, done.

7.1.2 Prioritise works for the year.

Result: Yes, done.

7.1.3 Review quarterly.

Result: Yes.

7.1.4 Agree 2007 budget with Estates and Finance.

Result: Not until December 2006.

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

Steps to achieve target 7.4

7.4.1 Review Safety Statement.

Result: Reviewed and altered accordingly.

7.4.2 Identify areas requiring change.

Result: Yes, identified.

7.4.3 Re-draft where necessary.

Yes, done.

7.4.4 Construct updated edition.

Result: Yes, done.

7.4.5 Familiarise staff.

Result: Yes, done.

Target 7.5 Establish arrangements to review and implement, where practicable, recommendations of the Inspector of Prisons and Places of Detention.

Steps to achieve target 7.5

7.5.1 Review recommendations of the Inspector of Prisons.

Result: Yes, done.

7.5.2 Set up Working Group (Heads of Functions).

Result: Yes, done.

7.5.3 Prioritise and agree areas requiring attention.

Result: Yes, ongoing/done.

7.5.4 Implement change.

Result: Yes, where necessary.

7.5.5 Evaluate and review.

Result: Yes, done.

8. Tobacco Control

Target 8.1 Implement new Tobacco Control Regulations as necessary in the Prison Service.

Steps to achieve target 8.1

8.1.1 Introduce new Smoking Policy.

Result: Yes, up and running.

8.1.2 Set up team to evaluate and implement.

Result: Yes, implemented.

8.1.3 Review operation of new policy.

Result: Yes, at end of this year.

9 Environmental and Waste Management

Target 9.1. In line with Irish Prison Service Environmental Policy Statement set up systems to improve environmental and waste management in the prison service.

Steps to achieve target 9.1

9.1.1 Appoint Environmental Coordinator in each prison as per Strategy Report.

Result: Yes. One appointed.

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

Result: Yes. Training took place.

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

Result: Yes, set up.

9.1.4 Implement local Environmental Management System.

Result: Yes. Done.

9.1.5 Carry out annual management review of EMS.

Result: Yes at end of 2006.

The Inspectorate then went through each of the previous inspection recommendations and management's response to same.

6. Recommendations arising from previous inspection of 2nd - 9th June 2004

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 That the damaged worn floor covering in cells in basement/committal remand section be replaced.

Result: Management stated that they had replaced the covering twice since inspection. On inspection the new floor covering was evident.

- 8.2 That the shower area and bathroom on A1 landing be made more tidy and the area repainted.

Result: Management stated that the area had been made tidy and repainted.

There was an acceptable level of tidiness and hygiene within the shower area when viewed.

- 8.3 That seating be provided in the recreation rooms. That the have cover on pool table be repaired and the rooms painted brighter colours.

Result: According to management the chairs are provided, the rooms are painted and the pool table re-covered. On inspection there were only 3 chairs in the recreation room, the painting of the room had taken place as it was bright and cheerful, there were 2 snooker tables only one of them had been recently re-covered. The other one had no covering on it, just bare slate.

- 8.4 That “hoods” be provided over the telephones on A3 lobby area for prisoners use.

Result: Management stated they were installed and that a new telephone system was being installed before Christmas 2006. On inspection, the 3 telephones had “hoods” fixed to them.

- 8.5 That the library be opened for prisoners’ use more regularly and that all possible assistance be provided by Roscommon County Library for help in upgrading same. That the library provide daily newspapers for prisoners’ use without charge.

Result: Informed that there were difficulties with filling the post of librarian arising from dispute with V.E.C and Roscommon County Library services. The post has to be re-advertised. The newspapers are available through the education section. The library was closed during our inspection.

8.6 That the staffing requirements for both the carpentry shop and the computer shop be expedited by local management and headquarters as soon as possible to enable both of these units to become operational for prisoners' use.

If such is unsuccessful, then consideration should be given to employing "outside" personnel for same.

Result: Management stated that both workshops had been operational but that the officer in charge of the computer shop had been promoted and transferred to another prison, consequently the computer workshop is not operational at present. However, that promoted officer is due to return to Castlerea Prison within the next 2 weeks and the computer shop will then re-open. On inspection the computer shop was closed and the carpentry shop was up and running.

8.7 That proper staffing levels of Clerk II's for the prison be implemented and bigger office and stores spaces be provided for the staff working there.

Result: Management outlined all posts filled with new staff promotions.

Inspectorate found fully staffed office and stores in place at time of our visit with the general office in its new location giving greater space for them to work.

8.8 That a better structured counselling service be provided for prisoners.

Result: The Inspectorate were informed that a counsellor attends the prison for one day per week plus there is an adult counselling service for prisoners who themselves have been victims of sexual abuse. There is also a bereavement counsellor available to prisoners who require same. The Inspectorate feel that perhaps the structuring of these counsellors is still lacking.

- 8.9 That the Prison Service Headquarters provide for a proper nursing management structure for the service, and support nursing staff refresher training/updating.

Result: Management state that none has been put in place, however they have been informed by H.Q. that a supervisory nursing officer will be appointed within the next 6 months. So as of this date this recommendation has not been acted on.

- 8.10 That the dentist's surgery be provided with "sterile handpieces" of equipment which is urgently required as well as other essential basic equipment such as an X-ray machine.

Result: The management assured us that all of the equipment required has been put in place and that they have received no complaints or requests from the dentist for any other items. On inspection of the dentistry, two sterilisation units were in place and also provisions for an X-ray machine.

8.11 That discussions take place with local management concerning flexible working hours for the dentist to eliminate the waiting list and also discussions with local prison doctor/dentist regarding prisoners' medical history.

Result: The waiting list has disappeared according to management as the dentist now attends for 2 days per week on occasions if he discovers that there is a backlog. The inspectorate when checking the dentistry were assured by the nurse that there is no longer a waiting list.

8.12 That the Prison Service Headquarters appoint a psychologist to the prison.

Result: A new psychologist was appointed but left again to take up another post within the Health Authority so there is still no psychologist for the prison.

8.13 That discussions take place between the psychiatrist and doctor (G.P.) regarding letters of discharge to outside psychiatrists when prisoners who are on a treatment and medication programme are being released.

Result: Management assured us that such information is now being exchanged between the medical personnel and that case conferences which also involve "outside" medical personnel take place in some situations.

8.14 That another Probation and Welfare Officer be appointed to the prison.

Result: No appointment has been made and the same Probation and Welfare officer is operating as at time of last inspection.

- 8.15 The prices charged for goods in the tuck shop be at least the same as supermarket prices and a price list be displayed for prisoners' information.

Result: Management state that the price list is published and that the prices are compatible with supermarket prices. On inspection the price list was displayed on the wall at the service hatch to the tuck shop. The prices are those recommended by the wholesaler to the retailer.

- 8.16 That the toilets and urinals in the exercise yards be brought up to an acceptable level of hygiene.

Result: Management informed the inspectorate that the yard is no longer in use as it is going to be relocated. Outside contractors are now operating there.

- 8.17 That assembly points be displayed in the event of an evacuation or fire drill exercises.

Result: Yes, management have the assembly points displayed and they were very visible on inspection at various locations.

8.18 That staff training instructors in B.A be recertified.

Result: The management stated that they were recertified and a new training liaison officer has been appointed to the prison. The Inspectorate are satisfied that such recertification has taken place.

8.19 That staff refresher training take place in C & R, B.A, hostage negotiation, and suicide awareness, plus staff training in general.

Result: Informed by management that a limited amount of training has taken place although some staff have received about 90% of their training. The newly appointed training liaison officer will speed up the balance of training outstanding. The Inspectorate feel that “some done, more to do” is an appropriate finding.

A summary of our findings on the recommendations show that 10 of the recommendations were fully implemented, 3 were partly implemented and 6 were not acted on.

The recommendations not acted on have an effect on services to the prisoners such as no Psychologist, no additional Probation and Welfare

Officer, no Librarian and the library appears to be closed most of the time, the computer workshop is closed and there is no streamlining of the counselling services. All of these adds up to poor support and rehabilitation opportunities for the prisoners which should be rectified.

7. Meeting with Prisoners

The Inspectorate met 10 prisoners individually who had requested to meet the Inspector. They raised a considerable number of issues but the main complaints related to:-

- (A) Failure to be granted transfer requests from Castlereagh Prison to other institutions, (some requests for a Dublin based prison to be near their family and for medical reasons, others to open centre for travel and visitors' convenience).
- (B) Poor planning for prisoners serving long sentences (life etc) in that there are no special family visits, no additional phone calls or tv channels, no family days and no forward plans regarding rehabilitation, reintegration into community , no support or assistance on release ("just let off").
- (C) Several complaints regarding their solicitors or their legal representative. They fail to appear in court on day of their hearing, and prisoners cannot get in touch with them. They fail to come to the prison to visit them and if the prisoner wishes to change his solicitor, the first solicitor's reluctant to hand over the legal papers to the newly appointed solicitor. There was

considerable frustration expressed by several of the prisoners on these issues.

- (D) The telephone services for the prisoners was another issue as they state that each landing is assigned a particular day and time to make telephone calls. The person/s they are calling may not be available at those times as they may be working etc. They state that there is no flexibility regarding the day and time allocated to make the call. They stated that this is unlike other prisons, where prisoners are issued “phone cards” and can make the calls whenever suitable for the person/s receiving them.

The Governor informed the Inspectorate that a new telephone system will be installed in the prison before next Christmas and that the complaints outlined may be solved with the new system.

The Inspector was requested to see two prisoners representing five who were members of the provisional IRA. They complained that they qualified under the Good Friday Agreement for release and were awaiting a High Court decision to be freed. They also came under the criteria of the Belfast Agreement and they stated that the final decision was with the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform. They stated that they were imprisoned for the killing of Detective Garda Gerry McCabe in 1996. The Inspector explained that he knew the late Garda and indeed had expressed his sympathy to his widow and her family through the Gardai. He promised to note their concerns.

8. Tour of Inspection

The Inspectorate conducted a tour of inspection of the wings, basement, exercise yards, the Grove area, etc. The inspection was to establish the progress made in relation to the recommendations made in the previous full inspection. The amount of new building work taking place by outside contractors was very noticeable. It was also noted that the staff returned to duty at 2.30 p.m on Thursday as they are allowed a half hour off for banking purposes. The introduction of the annualised hours and the fact that their pay cheques are lodged directly into the banks did not change the old habit! It was approximately 2.45 p.m before the prisoners were fully out of cells on that particular Thursday.

The Inspector was brought to where the new reception area would be and where there was going to be a crèche. However, this is in an area quite a distance from the entrance gate. The Governor assured the Inspector that it would be child-friendly and they would find a vehicle to transport from the gate to this new reception area if and when required.

The Inspector then visited the prison's special care unit which is the new and more appropriate name for the original padded cells. There was one unfortunate man occupying one of these cells. However as he was asleep the Inspector decided not to disturb him. He has made at least three efforts in the fairly recent past to commit suicide. It is clear that prison is not

improving him in any way and may in fact be extremely detrimental to his future. The management are actively reviewing his situation. These specialised cells have internal sanitation and television and a call bell.

The landings, exercise yards, etc were clean and tidy and there appeared to be good rapport between the prisoners and the staff. Quite a lot of the grassed green areas were driven over by heavy machinery involved in the new building programme which left marks, muck, clay, etc exposed and they were not as presentable as when the last inspection was carried out. However, these small issues can be overcome on completion of the work. By and large the grounds are well kept as is the entrance from the roadway outside to the front of the prison. The visitors' waiting room is also bright and cheerful.

9. Conclusions

The prison is well managed. There is an overcrowding problem especially in the remand section but hopefully with the additional unit being built, this problem will be eliminated and the prison return to single cell status. The industrial relations problems raised in my previous report appear to have diminished and there appear to be good relations between local union and management at present. The prison is not entirely "drug free". However they are not experiencing the same illicit drug problems as other prisons and it is a relatively drug-free prison. It is good that all the prisoners mix freely with each other including sex offenders. It is a pity that there are no sex offenders' programmes and that they have to depend on Arbour Hill

prison to get onto such a programme. The Samaritans continue to visit the prison and the listening scheme appears to be working well. The new project "you're equal" is very much welcomed and hopefully will be successful. Great praise is due to all concerned in getting it into the prison. It is disappointing that there is no psychology service, no librarian, no additional Probation and Welfare officer and that the computer workshop is idle at present. Such gaps in the service leave a void for prisoners' regimes or rehabilitation. There was frustration evident from the prisoners we spoke with concerning their legal representatives, their transfer requests and extra facilities for long sentence prisoners. These are issues which management and H.Q. staff should try to resolve. The newly introduced annualised hours appear to be working well and they are operating the prison within the allocated budget. Management assured us that the new system did not affect the services to prisoners in any way (except very occasionally!!). They may have to take officers off posts to perform escort duties. The amount of new building work taking place and future building plans for the prison are extensive and welcomed. The additional facilities will be of great benefit to prisoners and indeed staff also. The staff training has not been fully operational and hopefully with the recently appointed training liaison officer, all staff will receive their required training. A new lay R.C. chaplain has been appointed to the prison and the former chaplain has been made a parish priest and transferred since our last inspection. A priest from the local parish visits the prison and celebrates Mass on Sundays. Other denominations are cared for spiritually by inviting the clergy of that persuasion to visit them in the prison when the need arises.

I wish to thank the Governor and staff for their help and co-operation during our two-day visit of inspection to the prison. They spoke openly and frankly about any issue raised and were most welcoming, which is appreciated.