

BY EMAIL

01 February 2023

Reference: FOI 444 Freedom of Information Request

Thank you for your email, which we received on 9 January 2023. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You asked us:

How many staff violence or use of force complaints has the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman received in 2021/2022 from prisoners held in Welsh prisons.

Our response:

The case management system at the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) categorises complaints by category and subcategory.

Complaint categorisation is based on the substantive element of the complaint. Categorisation is carried out by the assessment team and may be edited by the investigator through the course of the investigation. This can lead to similar complaints being categorised differently

For 2021/2022 (1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022), the category staff behaviour had the following subcategories:

- Assault
- Assault (not use of force)
- Bullying and harassment
- General
- Staff behaviour
- Use of force (UoF)

During 2021/2022, the PPO received 14 complaints about staff behaviour from Welsh prisons, of which four were assessed as eligible to be investigated. Ten complaints were assessed as ineligible.

A complaint is eligible if it is from a person who has followed the relevant internal complaints process (the two-stage prison process) and the complainant brings it to us within three months of receiving the final stage reply from the service in remit. The

complaint also has to be about something which is within our remit. Further information on our remit can be found on page three of this letter or at our website, www.ppo.gov.uk.

Complaints about staff behaviour received by the PPO in 2021/2022 from Welsh Prisons

| Prison | Assault | Assault (not UoF) | Bullying and harassment | General | Staff behaviour | Use of Force | Total |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| HMP Berwyn | 0 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| HMP Usk/Prescoed | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| HMP/YOI Parc | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Total | 0 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 14 |

Total complaints received by the PPO in 2021/2022 from Welsh Prisons

| Prison | 2021/2022 |
|------------------|------------------|
| HMP Berwyn | 88 |
| HMP Cardiff | 8 |
| HMP Swansea | 6 |
| HMP Usk/Prescoed | 18 |
| HMP/YOI Parc | 62 |
| Total | 182 |

I hope that this is helpful.

You have the right to appeal against our response if you think it is incorrect. Details can be found in the 'How to Appeal' section attached at the end of this letter.

Email: PPOMailFreedomofInformationRequests@ppo.gov.uk

The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) carries out **independent investigations** into complaints and deaths in custody. The detailed role and responsibilities of the PPO are set out in our office's Terms of Reference. The PPO has three main duties:

- to **investigate complaints** made by prisoners, young people in detention (prisons and secure training centres), offenders under probation supervision and individuals detained under immigration powers (detained individuals)
- to **investigate deaths** of prisoners, young people in detention, approved premises' residents and detained individuals due to any cause, including any apparent suicides and natural causes
- to **investigate deaths** of **recently released prisoners** that occur within 14 days of release from prison (except homicide)

The purpose of these investigations is **to understand what happened, to correct injustices** and **to identify learning** for the organisations whose actions we oversee so that the PPO makes a significant contribution to safer, fairer custody and offender supervision.

We may use or share your data only to the necessary extent when conducting our independent investigations in the exercise of our official authority. We will share your data with third parties (e.g. the prison) in order to make sure the information is accurate; to prevent or detect failings; and to identify lessons learnt. We may sometimes need to share your data with third parties if required by law. We only keep your personal data for as long as it is needed, as set out in our data retention policy. If you need any further information about how your data is used, please contact us.

How to Appeal

Internal Review

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to an internal review. The handling of your request will be looked at by someone who was not responsible for the original case, and they will make a decision as to whether we answered your request correctly.

If you would like to request a review, please write or send an email to the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman's office **within two months of the date of this letter**, at the following address:

Prisons and Probation Ombudsman
Third Floor
10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf
London
E14 4PU
E-mail: Mail@ppo.gov.uk

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

If you remain dissatisfied after an internal review decision, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner's Office. The Commissioner is an independent regulator who has the power to direct us to respond to your request differently, if he considers that we have handled it incorrectly.

You can contact the ICO at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Internet address: <https://ico.org.uk/>