

H M PRISON SWALESIDE



ANNUAL REPORT

**From: 1st May 2009
To: 30th April 2010**

INDEX

	Page number
STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB	3
INTRODUCTION	4
FOREWORD	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
1. Matters for the Secretary of State for Justice and NOMS	8
2. Matters for the Prison Service	8
3. Matters for the Secretariat	8
4. Matters for the Primary Care Trust	8
5. The Cluster	9
6. Tactical Management	9
7. Residential	9
7.1 Wings	9
7.2 Gardens/Grounds	11
8. Gymnasium	11
9. Reception	12
10. Induction	12
11. Visits	12
12. Kitchen	13
13. Canteen	13
14. Offender Finance	14
15. Security	14
16. Segregation	14
17. Adjudications	15
18. Offender Management Unit	16

	Page number
19. Healthcare	16
20. Care Team	17
21. Chaplaincy	18
22. Safer Custody	18
22.1 Safer Custody Participants	18
22.2 Death in Custody and Family Liaison Officer	19
22.3 Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention	19
22.4 Anti-bullying/Violence Reduction	19
23. Diversity	20
24. Request and Complaints	21
25. Drug Strategy	21
25.1 Drug Testing	21
25.2 Carats & Rapt	21
26. Resettlement	22
26.1 Psychology	22
26.2 Probation	23
26.3 Library	23
26.4 Education	23
26.5 Workshops	25
26.6 Attitudes, Thinking and Behaviour (formerly Regimes)	26
26.7 IPPs	27
27. The Work of the Board	27
27.1 Board Meetings	28
27.2 Applications	28
27.3 Confidential Access	29
27.4 Membership	29
27.5 Recruitment	29
27.6 Visits to the Prison	29
27.7 Training	30
28. CONCLUSION	30



STATUTORY ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD (IMB)

The Prisons Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an Independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

- 1). Satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.
- 2). Inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has.
- 3). Report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.



INTRODUCTION

This report covers the period from 1st May 2009 to 30th April 2010.

FOREWORD

The Prison was opened in August 1988 and now forms part of a cluster with HMPs Stanford Hill and Elmley.

The establishment is primarily a Category B Lifer Main Centre training prison which accepts first and second stage lifers, section two automatics and IPP (Indeterminate Public Protection) prisoners (see IPP section). However, it houses a number of category C and D prisoners following the decant of prisoners from HMP Lewes.

The normal criterion for acceptance of determinate prisoners is that they are serving more than four years with a minimum of eighteen months to their parole eligibility date. This has had to be greatly relaxed because of the increasing rise in the prison population and the Lewes decant.

The certified normal accommodation is 1112.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Swaleside is clustered with Elmley and Standford Hill which form the Sheppey Prisons Cluster. Each prison retains a dedicated Governor and its own identity but is run by a single Chief Executive. The Central Strand was created with responsibility for reducing re-offending.

ISSUES REQUIRING A RESPONSE

The senior management of the Reducing Re-offending function is difficult to contact and does not respond to correspondence (Section 5, Page 9).

Refurbishment of the roofs in older parts of the establishment has been put on hold and could be storing up problems and additional expense in the future (Section 7.1, Page 9).

The transfer of prisoners from Lewes was poorly managed and led to a number of entirely unsuitable prisoners being transferred. The worst case was of a poor copper, who was regularly in the Lewes Vulnerable Prisoner Unit (Section 7.1, Page 9).

The Visits Centre is has inadequate space at busy times (Section 11, Page 12).

The catalogue ordering has still not moved to become part of the Canteen function (Section 14, page 14).

OMU has performed well but, faced with a serious shortfall in staff, a large number of parole reports and OASYS reports are uncompleted (Section 18, Page 16).

There is still a lack of resources for prisoners with mental health issues (Section 19, Page 16).

Dentist availability needs to be increased. Waiting lists of 3 months for emergency treatment are unacceptable (Section 19, page 16).

The optician waiting list is lengthy and prisoners have to wait a long time for an appointment and then another long wait for their glasses, etc (Section 19, Page 16).

There has been a significant increase in violence and anti bullying investigations reflecting the less safe atmosphere within the prison (Section 22.4, Page 19).

Psychology Department is understaffed, lacking both qualified staff and clerical support, while facing an increased workload as a result of new wings within the cluster and providing services to HMP Maidstone (Section 26.1, Page 22).

The prison still has no offender management policy that makes an explicit link between educational need/attainment and offender progression (Section 26.4, Page 23).

The staff to support Open University and other distance learning course students will no longer be provided by the education provider. Nearly 10% of Swaleside's prisoners are engaged on these courses and it is vital that these mentors are available to them and to prospective new students The Board believes that funding must be found (Section 26.4, Page 23).

The proposed reintroduction of the Labour Board has been abandoned despite there being regular vacancies in the workshops (Section 26.5, page 25).

The prioritising of Offending behaviour courses needs to be addressed to ensure that determinate sentence prisoners are not disadvantaged because of preference being given to IPP prisoners (Section 26.7, Page 27).

ISSUES NOT REQUIRING A RESPONSE

There has been a significant improvement by OCA (Observations, Classifications and Allocations) Unit (Section 6, page 9).

The Board is pleased to note that G Wing is now Category B (Section 7.1, Page 9).

The rodent infestation is now under control (Section 7.2, Page 11).

Reception staff have handled the extra admissions as a result of the opening of G and H wings well despite refurbishment work going on at the same time (Section 9, Page 12).

The Rolls Inn walk-in staff mess has proved a great success with high quality food and a beneficial effect on morale (Section 12, Page13).

The Canteen operation is working well and there are significantly less complaints than under the Aramark regime (Section 13, Page 13).

There have been several assaults on staff including a particularly vicious one on a member of the Segregation Unit staff. The Board is pleased to note that, although the assailant is a Life sentence prisoner, he is to face serious charges (Section 16, Page 14).

The Board is pleased to note that a tough line is being taken at Adjudications in respect of mobile phones and drugs (Section 17, Page 15).

A local GP practice has been commissioned to provide GP services (Section 19, Page 16).

There have been three deaths in custody, two due to natural causes and the third a suspected suicide (Section 22.2, page 19).

The new library continues to be well used by the prisoners (Section 26.3, page 23).

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

Swaleside is a well run prison and the Governor and Senior Management team need to be praised for this. Staff and prisoner relationships are good and the personal officer scheme is effective.

There is a significant drug problem in the prison despite the best efforts of the Security Department and staff surveillance to eradicate it.

Despite ongoing problems with clustering and outside services, i.e. Education, Canteen, etc, the fact that the Governor does not have ultimate control of overall

prison performance and the general feeling that the prison is less safe than in the last few years, Swaleside remains a prison to be proud of.

Some departments are still difficult to monitor because of their locations in the Cluster and it is still not easy tracking people down.

1. **MATTERS FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR JUSTICE AND THE NATIONAL OFFENDER MANAGEMENT SERVICE (NOMS)**

- Executive Summary
- Section 5, The Cluster
- Section 7.1, Residential
- Section 13, Canteen
- Section 25, Drug Strategy
- Section 26, Resettlement (particularly 26.4 Education)
- Section 27, Work of the Board
- Section 28, Conclusion

2. **MATTERS FOR THE PRISON SERVICE**

- Executive Summary
- Section 5, The Cluster
- Section 7.1, Residential
- Section 11, Visits
- Section 12, Kitchen
- Section 13, Canteen
- Section 14, Offender Finance
- Section 16, Segregation
- Section 18, Offender Management Unit
- Section 19, Healthcare
- Section 25, Drug Strategy
- Section 26, Resettlement (particularly 26.4 Education)
- Section 27, Work of the Board
- Section 28, Conclusion

3. **MATTERS FOR THE SECRETARIAT**

- Executive Summary
- Section 5, The Cluster
- Section 27, Work of the Board
- Section 28, Conclusion

4. **MATTERS FOR THE PRIMARY CARE TRUST**

- Executive Summary
- Section 19, Healthcare
- Section 24, Drug Strategy

5. THE CLUSTER

The Cluster was formed in 2006 with the intention of merging administrative services to improve efficiency and reduce costs. Whilst, in some areas, it has worked, one of the main areas which continues to affect prisoners adversely is Offender Finance (see Section 14).

The decision not to merge the three prisons is welcomed by the Board.

Whilst there are quarterly meetings of the three IMB chairs with the Chief Executive, there continues to be difficulty in contacting the senior management of the Reducing Re-offending function.

6. TACTICAL MANAGEMENT

Dealing with transfers for the Cluster, the OCA (Observations, Classifications and Allocations Department), the unit is based at Elmley. This area, which was criticised last year, has improved significantly, although there continues to be a problem of moving prisoners on due to capacity issues.

7. RESIDENTIAL

7.1 Wings

There are eight Wings with H Wing being opened during the year. A further 180 places were created.

The wings are:

A Wing	Mixed Determinate and Lifer
B Wing	Mixed Determinate and Lifer/Kainos
C Wing	Main Lifer Centre
D Wing	Main Lifer Centre
E Wing	Mixed Determinate and Lifer
F Wing	Mixed Determinate and Lifer
G Wing	Prisoner Induction
H Wing	Drug treatment

Following the opening of G Wing, the four oldest wings were rewired, sanitary and plumbing services were upgraded and “anti-throw” windows were installed in the cells. The works required each of the wings to be vacated in turn. This potentially disruptive process was well managed and was, in the main, materially assisted by the cooperation of inmates. The

repopulation of the wings was, inevitably, attended by some teething troubles but these were generally dealt with effectively.

Other planned works of maintenance have been affected by the need to effect savings. Major items, such as the refurbishment of the roofs to the older parts of the establishment, have been put on hold. The Board is concerned that such delays are merely storing up problems and additional expense, at a time when budgets will be under even greater pressure for the future.

The prison is in reasonable decorative order and is in a fair state of repair. wings are generally clean, including cells. Each wing has a self-cook kitchen and the improvement in cleanliness, referred to last year, has been maintained.

All cells in the prison are single cells except for a few on E Wing. These are to revert to single cells shortly.

B Wing houses Kainos, which is a faith based course on which prisoners are encouraged to associate and live together as a community. Two courses are held each year and for several years has been a successful project which has altered prisoners' attitudes and behaviour.

The major works obviously led to some individual and collective disruption. Generally, the situation on the wings during the report period is best described as relative calm punctuated by some unwelcome instances of disorder, often due to the actions of individuals or the activities of small groups. A particular cause of the unrest was the presence of short sentence prisoners among a mainly long term sentence community.

On completion of the refurbishing works, the prison took a large number of prisoners from HMP Lewes. Despite staff being sent to Lewes to vet the suitability of the transferring prisoners, many who arrived were unsuitable. They included prisoners with very short sentences (several under 12 months), prisoners with minimal time left to do on their sentences (literally days in some cases) and one prisoner who had spent significant time in the Lewes Vulnerable Prisoner Unit as a poor copier. Given that Swaleside has no such facility, he should never have been sent to or accepted by Swaleside and it is an indictment of both prisons that it occurred. After considerable badgering by the Board, he has been transferred to HMP Shrewsbury where there is a VP unit but even that is not ideal, as he is serving a short sentence and comes from the Lewes area.

E Wing has been an Induction Wing for most of this year. Induction was moved to G Wing at the end of April and it has now reverted to a static wing.

F Wing has gone through major changes. Rapt had been on F Wing for some time but this moved to H wing when it was opened recently. The problems stemming from the Lewes decant were exacerbated by the loss of

experienced older staff and their replacement with young staff. However, these younger staff, together with the senior staff, have worked hard to get the Wing into a more settled state.

G Wing was opened as a category 'C' Wing for IPP prisoners. Prisoners, with some justification, did not feel that they were in a proper category 'C' prison. Whilst efforts were made to ensure an appropriate category 'C' environment, the build is to category 'B' standards and the staff were almost entirely experienced only in category 'B' prisons. The Board is pleased to note that the wing has now become Category B.

7.2 Gardens/Grounds

It has again proved very difficult to maintain the grounds within the prison in an attractive state because of the extensive building works and the need for contractor access and activity in much of the internal open space.

Last year, the Board expressed its concern at the apparent lack of a concerted approach to dealing with the rat infestation within the establishment. It is pleasing to report, therefore, that steps taken to reduce harbourage and food sources, together with more effective treatment, appear to have brought the infestation under control. However, it has not been eradicated completely and it is essential that complacency does not allow last year's unacceptable situation to re-emerge.

8. GYMNASIUM

The gymnasium has had another successful year and has seen a widening of the courses available to prisoners. Staffing has been stable and morale is good. Swaleside continues as a centre for Focus Gym Instructors courses, Sports Leader Awards, Higher Sports Leader Awards and NVQ levels 1 and 2 and has added Royal Society for the Promotion of Health courses, as well as running normal fitness sessions. The gym has continued to work with RAPt and PASRO (prisoners addressing substance related offending) in "Tackling Drugs through PE" and has worked with Education Department to embrace more basic educational skills. In all, approximately 75% of prisoners use the gym facilities. The gym conducts health fitness tests, which involve measuring the quality of health of staff and prisoners and recommending remedial action.

In all, 22 prisoners have qualifications enabling them to work in the gym in support of the staff. The gym has made a significant contribution to Dad Pack days (see Visits, Section 11, Page 12), running a circuit of competitions for fathers and children. The competitions are run by prisoners who have qualified as peer tutors or gym assistants.

9. RECEPTION

Refurbishment of the Reception area started in December in order to deal with the great increase in the prison's population. This was supposed to have been completed in early February but completion is long overdue, due to problems with contractors. Eventually the area will be a lot larger and should accommodate considerable prisoner movement. With the transfer of prisoners from Lewes and Parkhurst, as well as normal movements, staff are having to cope with far more movements than they are profiled for. This puts undue pressure on the staff. This was pointed out in last year's report but nothing has been done about it.

10. INDUCTION

The induction process is excellent and very well administered by staff.

All prisoners including life sentenced prisoners normally go the induction wing and move to their residential wing when induction is completed.

The induction involves input from numerous staff from different departments in the prison, i.e. chaplaincy, healthcare, etc. An induction pack together with the IMB leaflet is issued to each prisoner who is individually seen by induction staff. Progress through induction is closely monitored and recorded and other trained experienced prisoners help new arrivals.

The number of inductions (447) has been higher than normal due to the mass transfer of prisoners from Lewes and now from Parkhurst. The number of inductions was also increased by the opening of G and H wings.

Any requests to speak to the Board are treated as a priority, and the Wing is regularly monitored to ensure that prisoners know how to contact the Board.

11. VISITS

Dad Pack and family days continue to be popular with both the prisoners and a majority of staff. On Dad Pack days children visit their fathers, have lunch with them, and they play games in the gym. This can only help to improve relationships between prisoners and their families.

The new Visitors Centre, which opened during 2008-9 and which was a considerable improvement on its predecessor, works well. Fears raised last year that it would rapidly become too small for the increasing prison population have been realised. There is insufficient space for staff and visitors alike and conditions become almost intolerable at busy times of the day. The opening of G and H wings has put considerable strain on not only the Visits Centre but also on the screening procedures, the Visits Hall

inside the prison and on the systems used by prisoners and their visitors to apply for and book visits.

12. KITCHEN

During the year the management system changed. The Manager of Catering at Elmley retired and the PO from Swaleside became the Manger of Catering for the three establishments of the Cluster. All appears to have gone smoothly. It always seems extraordinary that such varied and good meals can be provided for £1.95 a day per prisoner. The menu during the year is varied – salads are introduced in the summer, vegetarian options get more adventurous and the prisoners appear happy with the standard of food. The Board gets few complaints about food. Sometimes when prisoners have to have a special diet, there have been a few problems but the kitchen deal with them quickly. The staff of the kitchen continues to improve the ways food during religious festivals is delivered.

The one problem for the kitchen this year is that their toilet has been out of action since November during work improvements.

The Manager of Catering hopes that once the managers have settled in their situations across the Cluster, the same menu will be in all establishments – which is not the case at the moment.

The Rolls Inn, a walk in mess for the staff, was introduced this year which has proved to be a great success. Not only is the quality of the food very high, but its opening has also improved the morale of the staff significantly.

13. CANTEEN

DHL/Booker, as the Canteen service provider, now caters for 9 prisons in Kent. This will increase to 10 once the new prison at Belmarsh opens. Now that canteen orders are packed internally, our previous concerns about security have been allayed. The DHL workshop employs between 48 and 60 Swaleside prisoners, a number that will almost certainly increase in the future. Plans for the company to take over the catalogue ordering have been put on hold for the time being.

One area of improvement in respect of the canteen is the level of applications complaining about DHL compared with the previous canteen supplier. Delays in making refunds is still a problem and regardless of whether this is a DHL or Offender Finance issue, it needs to be sorted out as it leaves lower paid prisoners with reduced funds to roll over to the following week.

14. OFFENDER FINANCE

In our last THREE reports the Board commented that the Finance Department needed more staff. The answer to that was to remove an Executive Officer post and re-allocate the work. This put them under even more pressure.

There have not been as many problems in this reporting period with catalogue orders as previously. Part time staff deal with the large workload that comes with the catalogues to the best of their ability but they should not be doing the job in the first place. When Aramark were the canteen provider they were supposed to take over the catalogues but it never happened. Two years ago in the Minister's reply to our last Annual Report he stated that DHL would be responsible for the catalogues from February 2009. The Board has been told on several occasions that the Residential Governor and Finance were arranging for DHL to take over. This is still not happening and no reasons have been given for the delay.

Once more the Finance Department has moved, wasting more time and money. The catalogue ordering staff have now moved sites three times in as many years.

There is now a list of problems with pay following the introduction of P-Nomis. Hopefully, these are teething problems and will be sorted out in time.

15. SECURITY

The security department is well managed and continues to do excellent work. They have put in place good searching techniques especially at the gate, in visits, and the kitchen. Intelligence-led tips have been followed up speedily and with great success. A number of visitors have been prevented from passing unauthorised articles to prisoners and a number of arrests have been made. Improved fencing in the grounds has made it more difficult for prisoners to recover packages that are thrown over the wall. Even so, the presence of drugs and mobile phones within the prison continues to be a major concern. A Body Orifice Searching chair has been installed.

There is a full time police intelligence officer in the prison, a part-time police liaison officer working across the cluster and two prison drug dogs working effectively with the department.

16. SEGREGATION

During the year, refurbishment of the Segregation Unit cells has been completed. It is fortunate that they are now operational as, frequently, there are

more than 20 occupied. This reflects the increasing indiscipline of inmates within the prison.

Special accommodation is still used relatively rarely but its use has increased since last year. The Board is always notified of these procedures and our role is always respected and adhered to by staff.

There has been an improvement in the holding of SMARG (Segregation, Monitoring and Review Group) meetings.

Segregation reviews take place twice weekly. An initial review takes place within the first 72 hours a prisoner is held in segregation. They are usually attended by a Board member.

Although a member of OCA staff attends some Segregation Reviews, there has been difficulty in moving prisoners on who are in the unit, partly due to the general prison population but also because segregated prisoners are an unattractive proposition. However some progress is being made.

The unit has no prisoners being held long term. This is due in no small degree to the tireless work that staff put in trying to reintegrate prisoners back to normal location.

Their work is difficult as they have to deal on a regular basis with prisoners who are violent and/or have a mental illness, and/or who will not co-operate with the prison authorities. We are very impressed by the hard work, compassion and commitment of the Segregation Unit staff. Their professionalism is to be admired, as well as their good humour in the face of difficult situations.

There have been a number of assaults on staff in the prison at large but one of the worst was a vicious assault by a segregated prisoner which led to three staff being injured, one seriously. It is pleasing to know that despite being a life sentence prisoner, he is facing serious charges in the near future. Whilst two have fully recovered, the third is still under treatment many months after the incident. The incident was filmed on newly installed CCTV.

17.ADJUDICATIONS

Members of the Board continue to monitor adjudications on a regular basis. The Board remains concerned that there are regularly awards of 50% of earnings for prisoners only earning £2.50 a week rather than leaving their pay in tact and increasing other sanctions. The Board still has serious concerns about the volume of mobile phones, especially camera phones in the prison. It is pleasing to note that, for determinate sentenced prisoners, these cases are now referred to the Independent Adjudicator who regularly gives awards of added days. For life sentence prisoners, Cellular Confinement is awarded by Adjudicating Governors.

18. OFFENDER MANAGEMENT UNIT (OMU)

Although figures and applications from prisoners would appear to show otherwise, OMU has performed well in what has been an extremely difficult 12 months. With a shortfall of 50% uniformed staff and 25% in AO grades, it is not surprising that there is a large number of parole reports and over 150 OASYS reports uncompleted.

One outcome of the delays in the preparation of parole reports has been an increase in correspondence from solicitors, all of which has to be replied to, resulting in more work for the staff.

OMU has also been adversely affected by the large number of prisoners transferred recently from Lewes and other prisons.

19. HEALTHCARE

The staff have had to meet the needs of very complex and challenging patients. Many agency staff have been used (recruitment is a big issue). Not only is it difficult to recruit nursing staff in prisons generally but the position of Sheppey prisons makes for long journeys for their employees. A GP service has been commissioned to provide GP services in the Cluster. This service, based at Sheppey Hospital, ensures equivalence with the outside world and began at Swaleside at the beginning of April 2010. We look forward to seeing the effect it may have in the prison.

Patient and public engagement continues effectively with the Patient/ Wing Representative Meetings that are held once a month. These are lively discussions and a member of the IMB attends. All aspects of Healthcare on the wings are discussed and problems arising.

The Wing Representatives have a sign on their door stating their position and prisoners are confident to go to the Representatives to bring any queries to the meetings. The representatives are also able to phone PALS if they need to find out information for a prisoner. There are special Healthcare post boxes on each wing and applications to attend Healthcare and complaints are collected each day by healthcare staff.

There is still a lack of resources for prisoners with mental health issues. There is talk of a day centre being introduced. Mental Health In-Reach provision was tendered out and a new provider, Oxleas NHS Trust commenced in April 2010.

With the increasing age of the prison population it was hoped that an NVQ in Social Care could be introduced. This was abandoned due to risk factors. However, after discussion with the Managers, it is to be hoped that the chance of doing an NVQ in Social Care may be resurrected. Some

prisoners naturally take care for the older community and disabled on their wing and it would be good if they could get an official qualification for their services. Many prisoners are keen to do this course.

Interesting work was done this year in offering the Over 40 population an over 40's health check. All people between 40 and 74 were offered this facility. 329 were within this age range and 204 were completed. This follows on from the work undertaken by the gym and the health trainers. Telemedicine is now close -the hardware is in place but the software has to be installed and the training to the staff has to be given. This service will mean "remote" consultations with NHS specialists for initial consultation thereby protecting confidentiality, patients' dignity and missed appointments.

A new clinical information system will "go live" in May. "System One" is one integrated solution for Primary Care, Secondary Care, Mental Health and Social Services and is the national system for Prison Healthcare. This is part of national roll out and will allow electronic transfer of records. However, these sorts of systems have gone wrong in the past. The Board hopes this system will have not too many "hiccups". Progress on the Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Service (ICATS) project has been slowed down due to recruitment problems.

IDTS has been introduced into the prison -there have been as many as 50 prisoners on maintenance programmes and this is too many for a cat B Training prison. The real worry is that prisoners on maintenance programmes such as Methadone have had positive opiate drug tests. There is a real chance of an overdosing happening. Healthcare at Ministry level must look at this very seriously or deaths in custody may increase.

Dentistry is a real problem. The Waiting List for Swaleside at the end of April was 3 months - and that is for emergency treatment. The PCT do not take into account the generally bad level of dental hygiene in prisons due to drug, alcohol and smoking abuse. Not only that, but 2 new wings have opened at Swaleside bringing in 360 extra prisoners. We need more UDA's (Units of Dental Activity) to improve the basic standard of dental hygiene. The PCT needs to address this problem.

The Opticians Waiting List at the end of April was 93. Not only do prisoners have to wait a long time for an appointment but it then takes a very long time for the appropriate glasses, lenses etc to be delivered. The resident nursing staff continues to care for their patients and they are to be congratulated on the professionalism that they display in difficult circumstances.

20. CARE TEAM

The Care Team provides support to staff with problems and has many outside contacts who can give valuable help and advice and everything is

treated as confidential. Staff are able to contact the team 24 hours a day and it has paid great dividends in keeping the establishments' sick levels low.

The team's work often goes unnoticed because of the confidentiality but its members are extremely dedicated and the Board recognises the contribution that they make to the wellbeing of the staff.

21. CHAPLAINCY

The chaplaincy team continues to provide an excellent service to both prisoners and staff and is committed to ensuring that most faiths are ministered to by either full-time Anglican, Roman Catholic and Muslim staff or by visiting representatives of various faiths including other Christian denominations, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Mormon, Greek and Russian Orthodox and Sikh.

The new multi-faith room continues to be fully used and the new Mosque is fully functional. There was a delay in the appointment of the assistant Imam mentioned in our last report but one has now been appointed and will be starting shortly. With over 250 Muslim prisoners his arrival will be warmly welcomed.

The Chaplaincy team make a valuable contribution with bereavement counselling for prisoners who have lost loved ones and also their support to families when there is a death in custody, especially the arranging of remembrance services which prisoners can attend with the family of the deceased.

There was an event in November promoting diverse faith systems run by the Prison Chaplaincy – with visiting Ministers and Imams coming to the establishment to explain how their religion celebrated.

22. SAFER CUSTODY

22.1 Safer Custody Participants

A number of groups contribute to the Safer Custody Function

- a. Listeners – volunteer prisoners, trained by the Samaritans, who are available 24 hours a day to prisoners who wish to have a confidential talk with someone other than a member of staff.
- b. Insiders – volunteer prisoners who help newcomers to the induction wing to settle in and who are available to prisoners who may want advice on matters relating to their new prison.
- c. The Safer Custody Committee - The Committee meets monthly with Anti-bullying and Safer Custody staff, and prisoners' representatives from each

Wing and representatives from Healthcare, Psychology, Chaplaincy, Operations, Regimes and Probation departments. The Samaritans and the IMB are also represented. Meetings are chaired by a Governor and information obtained at these meetings helps in assessing the volatility of the prison.

22.2 Death in Custody and Family Liaison Officer (FLO)

There have been three deaths in custody in this reporting period. Two were from natural causes and the other a suspected suicide. The coroner's inquests are awaited. Memorial services were held in the prison and their families were able to visit the prison to meet staff and prisoners on the wings where their relatives were held.

Deaths in Custody are always very stressful times and we would like to comment that the staff concerned always acted professionally, compassionately and with sensitivity.

The prison has two trained FLOs, A very comprehensive pamphlet was produced in 2008, called "Information and Advice for Bereaved Families". It was eventually rejected by Head Office which was disappointing, given that it put all the salient points in one place and was likely to be of more use to families than the PSO.

As we have written in each of the last two years, the Board is concerned at the length of time it takes to deal with Coroner's Inquests, often two to three years. The delays are very stressful, both for the families and for prison staff who have to give evidence.

22.3 Suicide and Self Harm Prevention

Assessment, Care and Custody, Treatment (ACCTs) are used throughout the prison if there is concern that a prisoner has self-harmed or is likely to do so. The use and completion of ACCTs is regularly reviewed to ensure that best practice is followed. 73 ACCTs, a reduction of 11 were opened in the course of the year. 37 were for actual self harm 25 for threats of self harm and 11 due to staff concerns. Prisoners who self-harm are monitored by staff and fellow prisoners. This inclusive approach is valuable and may help the prisoner to cope better with his problem.

All staff (and the IMB) have been trained in the use of the "big fish", which is a tool used to cut down people attempting suicide by means of a ligature.

22.4 Anti-bullying/Violence Reduction

Debt continues to be a major problem mainly due to the drug culture and mobile phones, both of which are rife within the prison. A consequence of

debt recovery is violence and Segregation Unit has regularly had several prisoners there for their own protection. 482 Investigations were completed in the reporting year of which 89 were proven. This represents a large increase over last year when there were 308 investigations even after taking into account the increased prison population.

23. DIVERSITY

Swaleside is committed to embracing Diversity – it has a full time Manager and meetings are held monthly which involve all areas of the prison and representatives from each wing. During the year April 2009 and 2010 the Diversity structure took on a whole new impetus-changing from being a mainly racial structure to that of a seven stranded structure which now covers, Race, Age, Sexual Orientation, Gender, Religion, Foreign Nationals and Disability.

During 2009 the Auditors came to the Cluster. A positive feedback was given to the Governor and CEO, however, a red amber marking was given in the report, so there are obviously improvements to be made.

There were 46 racial complaints – 21 staff on prisoner, 10 prisoner on prisoner, 1 staff on staff, 11 prisoner on staff and 3 others. Of the 46 complaints, there were 3 formal investigations – one leading to dismissal of a member of staff for racially abusing another member of staff. The other two investigations are still ongoing.

In October, a Forum was held for the over 55's. This was a very informative meeting and the Diversity Manager was able to find out what special needs were required by this section of the community. Bi-monthly meetings are now held to deal with the problems of the increasing numbers of older people in prison, which includes representatives from wings.

The numbers of Foreign Nationals is also increasing – the prison now has about 180 – which put extra pressure on landing staff. During the year the Diversity Manager has made contact with the Immigration Criminal Case Division whose representative now attends on a monthly basis. They have done some excellent work with questions from the Foreign National Community.

There is a mix of religions (see Chaplaincy).

There was an interesting World Cup cricket event held in the Gym – a day of fun with different national teams playing each other.

The prison currently has two wheelchair bound offenders at Swaleside who are accommodated in Disabled cells on G Wing. We also have two more disabled cells on H Wing and offenders who have been residents in the hospital have moved there. The Diversity Manager of the Cluster has been

working with an expert in Talking Loops for the hard of hearing and these will be fitted in the near future.

A lift has been put in Education so that all offenders have the opportunity to get to all parts of the prison.

We continue to have applications from offenders which have a racial discrimination angle to them – however, we have found them to be unfounded. Problems are usually caused by a lack of communication and misunderstanding.

The Diversity Team has conducted their department well.

24. REQUEST AND COMPLAINTS (RCF)

The clerk changed at the end of March and the new clerk appears to have settled into her job well. The clerk who has moved to Elmley, was very efficient and had a high level of success in obtaining answers on time. The most difficult complaints to obtain an answer are those sent to other establishments about missing property. They are regularly overdue. It is so important for RCF's to be answered on time as it leads to a lot of frustration to prisoners and unnecessary bad feeling.

25. DRUG STRATEGY

25.1 Drug Testing

The drug testing programme continues to struggle in unsatisfactory temporary facilities. The new accommodation, planned for late summer 2009, remains incomplete. There have been numerous changes to the structure and design of the proposed new facility during its planning and building stages, dictated largely by increasing financial constraints. The unit is nearing completion (May 2010). There is some concern that it will be difficult to work in and that equipment will be inadequate.

25.2 CARAT and RAPT and IDTS

The integrated drug treatment system (IDTS) was introduced at Swaleside in October 2008. This program of detoxification through prescription of maintenance or substitute drugs has run alongside the abstinence-based RAPT and PASRO courses for the period covered by this report. In last year's report we identified the concerns of staff that the CARATS team would struggle to obtain sufficient referrals to the RAPT programme as a result of the existence of the alternative, much less demanding IDTS option for prisoners. However, changes made to the implementation of the IDTS programme and the allocation of much of the space on the new H Wing to the RAPT programme has meant that many of those fears have not been realised. The opening of H Wing in May 2009 brought with it the

opportunity to create drug-free living accommodation for prisoners on the program and to recruit a new treatment team and a new team of officers to work on the wing. This has created a safe drug-free environment for not only while they are on the RAPT course but also for some considerable time after graduating from the programme.

RAPT staff now sit on the IDTS Review Panel, which meets weekly, and can be proactive in recruiting prisoners who are on prescription drug maintenance to embark on the RAPT programme. Although the results for the unit fell just below the target for 2009-10, the situation has improved to such an extent that there is now considerable optimism that the unit is achieving its purpose and that results are now on track. There is currently a waiting list for participation on the abstinence- based courses.

The IDTS team is committed to reducing the level of prescription drugs on which individual prisoners are maintained but those IDTS prisoners who refuse or are unsuitable for the RAPT programme remain a significant problem for the prison. A substantial number of prisoners continue to use illicit drugs in addition to their prescribed medication and are therefore at considerable risk of overdose. It may be that the philosophy and practice of IDTS programmes are less appropriate for a Category B prison with a large long sentence population than for prisons where individuals are approaching release and their treatment with maintenance drugs can reasonably be considered to have a finite time limit.

26. RESETTLEMENT

26.1 Psychology

The Psychology Department covers the Cluster and provides forensic psychology services to HMP Maidstone and is involved in sex offender courses there.

In 2005, increased resource levels were proposed increasing the number of psychologists completing evidence based risk assessments for high risk/impact prisoners in a timely manner. Since then, the effect of the increased population as a result of the new builds in the cluster and servicing Maidstone has been to significantly increase the workload.

Far from achieving the staffing levels proposed, the department faces a critical shortfall of 4-6 qualified psychologists, despite an ongoing recruitment campaign. There is also a lack of clerical support. The running of the department has been left to small and dedicated and hard working team, most of whom are trainee forensic psychologists.

26.2 Probation

The Probation department has been fortunate in maintaining a full staffing level during the reporting period although the work load will have increased with the opening of H Wing. Additional funding has allowed the important addition to the department with the appointment of a Public Protection Officer who will ensure that prisoners will understand the reasoning behind any public protection restrictions.

26.3 Library

The new library is fully operational and although there have been some delays and teething problems with the new computer ordering system, it is now working. Books can be ordered promptly from the main library where previously there was a delay of up to six weeks under the old paper based system. The dedicated and knowledgeable team of prisoner library assistants ensures a smooth run operation. On average there are 120-150 visits to the library daily with a record 600 visits being achieved in one week. It is possible that there will be a further increase although funding issue with distance learning courses (see 26.4) may see a reduction in the call for educational books.

26.4 Education

The statistics continue to show the need for a broad spectrum of provision. Success rates across all courses, 85% compare very favourably with other similar establishments. On the basis of accepted OFSTED benchmarking on provider achievement, the Department is well placed in the 'Good' category.

The number of individual offenders accessing education each week has remained between 250 and 300.

As reported over a number of years, there has been concern with the overall levels of literacy and numeracy of so many offenders. Over 98% of new arrivals underwent educational assessment and interview (up from 94% the previous year), once again showing the same unsatisfactory levels of basic literacy and numeracy attainment. Assessments continue to highlight the high percentage of offenders who suffer from complex and often undiagnosed learning difficulties. Thus education, as noted in the HMCIP report, should be considered as a key proponent in the overall strategic management of reducing re-offending.

Last year's report welcomed the decision to re-introduce an Activity Allocation Board. However, nothing subsequently transpired. Some attempts have been made for greater overall coherence of educational provision and offender progression but, in practice, too much still remains on an ad hoc basis. Currently, the Prison does not have an employment or

an offender management policy that makes an explicit link between educational need/attainment and offender progression.

The Board supports the Education Manager's contention that so much more could be done to develop a coherent programme of provision for each offender.

Last year's report ended on an optimistic note. Unfortunately, the grounds for that optimism have not been realised. Responsibility for educational provision devolved from A4e to The Manchester College (TMC) on August 1st, 2009. It might be assumed that the contract was won on the basis of even better provision being offered than currently by A4e. However, upon being awarded the contract, TMC declared that it was not financially viable and instituted a comprehensive reorganisation of its offender learning services with results that can only be described as unsatisfactory at best.

A freeze on recruitment has led to low morale among staff and has prevented the implementation of a 50-60% uplift in teaching hours as previously agreed by the Learning and Skills Council (LSS) in response to the increase in Offender population.

TMC will no longer provide the staff to support Open University (OU) and other distance learning courses. These staff were funded by the Learning and Skills Council but will not be in future by its successor, the Skills Funding Agency as the new OLASS 3 contract (Offender and Learning Skills Service 3), requires educational providers to allow offenders only to achieve core qualifications that are linked to 'employability'. Vocational training is to be targeted at offenders in the last two years of a sentence and could not cater for OU and similar courses.

The effect on the nearly 10% of the prison population doing these courses is potentially disastrous. The new approach means that the 2 members of staff who have supported and mentored the students will no longer be available to them. The Board has seen letters from prisoners who have benefited from the mentoring and from outside organisations, unanimously praising the support provided. Indeed, one former OU tutor wrote that the regional office of the OU considered Swaleside "the Gold Standard".

Students in prison suffer considerable disadvantages to those outside, not least from the attitude of other prisoners who consider studying to be a weakness. The students, who are serving substantial sentences, are at least making a serious effort to achieve something in their lives which should stand them in good stead on their release. They should be encouraged and the funding necessary to maintain the existing support should be found. Potential students in the future will be discouraged by the lack of advice on how to get started. The proposed transfer of responsibility to the Prison Service is viewed as inadequate as the staff required are unlikely to have the educational qualifications and experience necessary

and certainly will not command the respect enjoyed by the existing staff who have performed this work for several years.

Basic studies will continue along with personal and social development but there will be very little scope to deliver non-accredited learning or qualifications regarded as 'Non-core' because these do not attract funding from the SFA.

The Department, through its own initiatives, has developed positive and close working relations with other departments. However, such success should not disguise the failure of the Cluster to provide an overall strategic management policy.

The Board views with great concern the way education in Swaleside is heading and the apparent lack of concern by the senior management responsible within the cluster.

26.5 Workshops

Swaleside is performing below target on purposeful activity hours and this situation needs to be improved. HMCIP looks at this as one of their four tests of a healthy prison. Due to the current economic climate attempts to bring new contracts into the prison have proved difficult.

The idea of a Labour Board to get all prisoners back to work was abandoned. This is not understandable as there are always vacancies in the workshops which need filling. As Swaleside is a training prison offenders are required to work and must be addressing their educational, training and offending behaviour needs. Too many prisoners are unemployed.

As mentioned in last years report, security risk assessments often hold up applications and involvement in activities. The speed of security clearance still needs to be addressed.

The waiting list for the canteen workshop (DHL) is always lengthy as many prisoners want to work there as opposed to the rag cutting workshop (LMB) which always has vacancies. It was suggested that a cap should be put on the DHL waiting list and maybe prisoners could work in LMB first and, if doing well, could graduate to DHL, but this has not been put into operation.

Prisoners can obtain NVQ's in LMB but they are not keen due to the dusty atmosphere, which can affect their breathing.

A Woodwork/wood machining workshop was opened in June. Eventually, prisoners should be able to gain joinery and wood machining NVQ qualifications. The initial outlay to construct the shop was substantial but it was not finished properly. The sterile area outside the shop was not

complete thus preventing prisoners working there. The outside wood store was not fitted properly with the result that large amounts of wood were being stored in the workshop causing a fire and trip hazard. The skip for sawdust was inadequate. These and other problems restrict the number of prisoners able to be employed. Also, a lot of furniture constructed at Christmas was left in a storeroom for ages when it should have been delivered. The Board believes that management should have handled these matters better but we understand that they are now being resolved.

The standards of teaching in engineering, industrial cleaning, painting and decorating and PICTA (Prisoner ICT Academy) are very good. City and Guilds qualifications are gained in the painting and decorating workshop. As the industrial cleaning department has been employed in cleaning the refurbished wings, prisoners have been unable to gain as many BICS (British Institute of Cleaning Science) qualifications as in a normal year. BICS qualifications are structured and modular and have to be done in the classroom.

NVQ's are being done in Engineering thanks to a company called NERGY who are funding them. The Prison Service seems not to be interested which is strange given that some of the products from the workshop are for use by other prisons. There have been major problems obtaining materials via I-Procurement. It has taken months for delivery of some orders of steel, masks for grinding, etc., which is not satisfactory.

26.6 Attitudes, Thinking and Behaviour (formerly Regimes)

The name of the Department was changed during the reporting year and serves to highlight the fundamental nature and focus of the work being done with prisoners within the Cluster.

The Enhanced Thinking Skills programme was replaced from April by the Thinking Skills programme (TSP), which is more individual/offence focused.

Another new programme the 'Sycamore Tree', which is delivered through the Prison Fellowship Trust, started in February and has proved to be very successful. Although it is not individual/offence focused, it links in with the Thinking Skills Programme in that a 'Victim of Crime', representative talks with a group of prisoners' on the effects of crime in general and more specifically the effects on victims.

Additional funding has been secured for continuation of the 'Sycamore Tree' programmes during 2010, especially important when Victim Awareness courses remain IPP focused.

The following numbers of courses were delivered during the reporting year:-

Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS) – 28

Controlling Anger & Learning to Manage it (CALM) – 10
Cognitive Skills Booster (CSB) – 7
Victim Awareness (VA) -10

21 TSP courses are planned for the Cluster in 2010. The number of CALM courses will be increased to 15: CSB remains at 6 courses and VA at 10 courses.

There are indications that the issues, raised in previous reports and by HMCIP in 2008, as to how deliver the most effective integrated provision for prisoners' are, at last, beginning to be addressed.

For too long, some excellent provision has been dissipated through a lack of overall strategic management.

As always the Board will look to see if fine words and 'mission statements' are translated into effective co-ordinated action. However, a start has been made in that the recently appointed Head of Reducing Re-Offending is having strategy meetings with senior personnel in a number of departments. This more co-ordinated approach should enable effective sequencing of provision, particularly with the need to ensure that prisoners' undertake, where necessary, the educational courses in literacy to enable them to make best use of the support programmes in ATB and in other areas as set out in their OASys.

26.7 IPPs (Indeterminate Public Protection)

IPP prisoners continue to form a sizeable proportion of the prison's population. They are generally younger and less tolerant and therefore more problematic. A substantial number are over tariff and/or are Category C prisoners and they are a drain on resources as they reasonably complain about the delays in doing their offending behaviour courses. The priority given to IPP prisoners leads to equally justifiable complaints from prisoners with determinate sentences whose parole/re-categorisation is being jeopardised by their inability to do the courses as a result of IPP priority. Determinate prisoners are in an invidious position as incoming IPP prisoners jump ahead of them in the queues for courses.

27. THE WORK OF THE BOARD

The Board has its own office with a computer, printer and telephone and to date everything agreed in our Service Level Agreement with the prison has been honoured.

The Chair attends meetings with the Area Manager quarterly. These meetings are chaired by our National Council Representative who keeps the Board well informed. All her hard work on our behalf is most appreciated. Meetings with the Chief Executive Officer have been re-

instated and are also attended by the Chairs of Elmley and Standford Hill IMBs and the three Vice Chairs.

27.1 Board Meetings

The Board held 11 meetings during the period from 1st May 2009 to 30th April 2010. All members attended unless they had a valid reason not to, i.e. holidays, illness, etc. There was no meeting in January due to the adverse weather conditions.

27.2 Applications

The Board received 816 applications during the reporting period compared to 757 last year. The difference in the 2 years reflects the increased population of Swaleside and confirms our view that there is an on-going good interaction between staff and prisoners. The breakdown, with last years figures in brackets, is as follows:-

Cell quality	07	(09)
Wing/cell allocation	09	(05)
Adjudications – internal	37	(25)
Adjudications – external	01	(01)
Rule 45/49 Segregation	19	(01)
Racial issues referred to prison staff	08	(08)
Racial issues not referred to staff	03	(01)
Other Diversity issues, e.g. disability	03	(04)
Education/employment	46	(32)
IEP (Incentives and earned privileges)	28	(24)
Visits	29	(12)
Resettlement issues	12	(24)
Mail/Pin phones	30	(18)
Food/Kitchen issues	19	(06)
Health issues	76	(70)
Property related to previous prison	56	(45)
Property related to current prison	69	(98)
Canteen/Argos/Facilities list	35	(64)
Basic sentence	15	(05)
HDC	03	(00)
Immigration deportation	03	(12)
Categorisation	69	(47)
ROTL	01	(01)
Parole Board	30	(36)
Apps about staff	27	(04)
Apps about prisoners	01	(00)
Apps from staff	00	(00)
Transfers	60	(46)
Miscellaneous	120	(159)
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TOTAL	816	(757)

Of the 120 miscellaneous applications approximately 58% (66%, last year) were about late or non-answers to Request & Complaints Forms submitted. 281 of the applications were taken 'on the hoof', the remainder being written applications. Details of all applications are fully recorded by the Board.

27.3 Confidential Access

We received a large increase in confidential access applications (22 compared with 8 last year). Most of these were not worthy of the Confidential Access procedure and several appeared to be an attempt to bypass the normal system. These applications were returned to the sender with an appropriate message. All others were investigated, the most serious one already being subject to investigation by the Governor.

27.4 Membership

The Board comprises 9 members, two in training; but we should be 19.

We consider that there is excellent communication between the Board and the Governor and his staff which makes life easier considering our small membership. However, communication with the clustered re-offending management is often difficult. We comprise 4 women and 5 men and include one JP. Only one of us lives on the Isle of Sheppey. Our nearest member lives 10 miles away, and the furthest 46 miles.

27.5 Recruitment

The Board is running under strength but, thanks to the Kent Recruitment Cluster, recruitment has been somewhat easier, albeit that most recruits do not live on the isle of Sheppey. Adverts have been placed in local newspapers and other publications on behalf of all the prisons and attracted a satisfactory level of interest. A further advert will be going out in the summer.

All members of the Board are white and it is almost impossible to recruit members of ethnic minorities.

27.6 Visits to the Prison

Members of the Board made 378 visits to the prison in the reporting year. Apart from Board meetings, one member was usually in the prison on weekdays. Compromises have had to be made in which areas of the prison are monitored, though Members attempted to visit at least their areas of special interest as well as the Segregation Unit, Healthcare and the Kitchen.

27.7 Training

The Board had two members in training during the year. Both have progressed well.

Two Members as usual, attended the IMB Conference.

The new Prison Service computer system was introduced during the year but it has proved impossible to get training in its use. As this is the main record of prisoners, the inability to access it is proving a considerable handicap to the Board.

28. CONCLUSION

Swaleside has a population of very serious offenders. Despite the dedication and professionalism of staff, following a number of serious incidents, the prison feels less settled and consequently less safe than in the previous year. Prisoner indiscipline has increased.

Swaleside is described as a "Training" prison but unfortunately the training responsibility is not under the control of the prison's Senior Management Team. One of the disadvantages of clustering has been the lack of accountability of the Reducing Re-offending Team to the Governor for delivery of its function.

Peter Judges
IMB Chair