



HMP WINCHESTER

The Independent Monitoring Board Annual Report 2009/2010

HMP WINCHESTER

IMB ANNUAL REPORT: JUNE 2009 – MAY 2010

1. TABLE OF CONTENTS

Topics shown in **bold** below are areas that must be reported on, according to current guidelines.

	Page No
1. Table of Contents	1
2. Introduction: the Prison and its Function	2
3. Executive Summary	2
3.1 Issues for the Minister and Prison Service HQ	2
3.2 Issues for the Regional Custodial Manager and Governor	2
4. Significant Changes since the last Report	3
5. The Care and Treatment of Prisoners	3
• Reception and Induction	3
• Safer Custody	4
• Prisoner Council	4
• Visits	5
• Healthcare	5
• Kitchens	6
• Canteen	6
• Chaplaincy	6
• Library	7
• Diversity: Foreign Nationals & Race Relations	7
• Former Armed Forces Personnel in Prison	8
• Lifers and Indeterminate Sentence Prisoners	8
• Vulnerable Prisoners	9
• Drug Treatment	9
• Care and Supervision Unit (CSU)	10
6. Offender Management	10
7. The General Regime	10
• Security	11
• Learning and Skills	11
• West Hill and the Hearn Unit	12
• Works	13
• Grounds	14
• Communication	14
• Prison Performance Targets	14
8. Examples of Good Practice	15
9. The Work of the Board	15
10. Conclusions	16
Appendix - Number of Visits, Meetings attended, etc	17

2. INTRODUCTION

In this document the Board's aim has been to describe the workings of the Prison in a logical manner, while still addressing the five areas that must be reported on, according to current guidelines (Safer Custody, Healthcare, Diversity, the Care and Supervision Unit, Learning and Skills). These are identified in bold in the table of contents.

Winchester Prison is of typical Victorian design with radial wings plus a gatehouse. It is a local Category B prison with several additional buildings inside the prison walls, including a Healthcare wing and two further blocks - West Hill and the Hearn Unit - which hold Category C prisoners nearing the end of their sentence. The present total population is 683.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1 Issues for the Minister and Prison Service HQ

- Reports from the Prison Service Ombudsman on deaths in custody are taking more than a year to publish, which could delay the learning of important lessons in some cases (page 4).
- We quote various examples which cast doubt on the ease of use of P-NOMIS (pages 4, 5, 12).
- A more coherent approach will be needed between all Agencies if prisoners are to receive a sustained level of healthcare upon their release (page 5).
- The Board has been very concerned at the inordinate time taken (over a year in some cases) to recruit and security clear new staff in a number of important areas, notably in the kitchens (pages 6), an alcohol worker (page 10) and a carpentry instructor (page 12).
- The Board supports moves to increase the proportion of courses leading to externally recognised qualifications. It is imperative, however, that the value of courses not leading to qualifications is also acknowledged and that such courses are maintained (page 11).
- The Board questions the extent to which management of the Prison Service is target driven. We suggest a review of the costs and of the effectiveness with which the Service's information programme meets the objective to reduce re-offending (page 15).
- Finally, there can be no doubt that further budget cuts will undermine the level of staffing and service provided in a wide range of the prison's activities.

3.2 Issues for the Regional Custodial Manager and Governor

- The Board notes that there have been many changes in individual governors' areas of responsibility during the reporting period. As one example, three different governors have been given charge of the Admissions Group, which is a source of uncertainty among staff and is counter-productive. We now look for a period of greater stability (pages 3 and 10).
- It is important to ensure that all Reception, Induction and CSU staff are fully trained for what are key (and potentially stressful) roles (pages 3 and 10).
- We observe that the Personal Officer scheme, although improved, is still not working. Also the IEP system is still not being used to full effect (page 4).
- The Board has various concerns over the current provisions for visitors (page 5).

- There have been cases during the year of members of the Senior Leadership Team failing to attend meetings (page 8) and of meetings being cancelled at very short notice (page 5).
- It is essential that all prisoners in the CSU are clear why they are being held there and that for all prisoners the same conditions and restrictions are imposed (page 10).
- The Board was pleased to see the establishment of a Staff Consultation Committee by the Governor soon after his arrival. We believe that the Committee is doing important work in seeking ways to improve communication between staff at all levels (page 14).

4. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES SINCE THE LAST REPORT

During the year, the new Governing Governor has introduced a wide range of changes in the conduct of the prison's duties. Inevitably it will take time for some of these to become properly bedded in. The Board appreciates the openness that it has been shown by the Governor and applauds his willingness to listen to our concerns and to take action.

Responsibility for classroom education at Winchester has been transferred from Milton Keynes College to Manchester College. Also, this is the first full reporting period since Portsmouth PCT took over the running of Winchester Prison's Healthcare Centre (in October 2008). Preparations are currently being made for an Integrated Drug Treatment System (IDTS) occupying a large part of C Wing. Nationally, the updated information system P-NOMIS has been brought into service.

5. THE CARE AND TREATMENT OF PRISONERS

RECEPTION AND INDUCTION

Despite many complaints that the Reception area was not fit for purpose and potentially unsafe, no central money was available for a complete refurbishment. However, there has been a determined effort to improve the layout and flow of Reception, and the Board hopes that the new system will bed down and be more acceptable and safe for staff and prisoners alike.

Yet again, a new governor has taken over the responsibility of the Admissions Group, the third in this reporting period; lack of continuity and of an expectation that all will be resolved quickly has further added to the uncertainties in Reception. Some staff are still not fully reconciled to the new arrangements and there would appear to be a lack of communication amongst the senior staff and officers about their exact role, responsibilities and how to carry out their job.

The reorganisation and rostering of staff is still very much a work in progress. The dedicated team is new and it appears that some officers have not yet been fully trained as Reception Staff. This is a cause of some concern to the Board as any mistakes made in Reception could have a significant effect on prisoner well-being.

The closure of West Hill's Reception has meant that all prisoners' property is now stored in the main prison: there was no increase in the number of Reception Staff. The number of complaints and applications about property has significantly increased; in particular there would appear to be difficulties with sorting out property issues identified on the wings. A new protocol has just been introduced, but it is too early to establish whether this will alleviate the problems already acknowledged. There needs to be more structured communication and positive interaction between wing and Reception officers.

The use of combined Orderlies/Insiders is an ongoing success, and the efforts to provide a differentiated Stage 2 Induction for prisoners is also to be welcomed. Stage 2 Induction for Vulnerable Prisoners continues to take place regularly; this should be as detailed and thorough as that for other prisoners. It is essential that all Staff who deliver Induction understand its importance and are trained for the role.

In summary, Reception staff need to be very clear about their role and the need to respond to prisoners' concerns. Management needs to ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities and it is to be hoped that under more settled direction the whole Admissions Group will become a more secure and efficient working area of the prison.

SAFER CUSTODY

This area has also seen short tenure of ownership by successive governors having a detrimental impact on the overall effectiveness of the work. However, the Board is able to report that the governor most recently appointed to oversee Safer Custody has gripped the task firmly and sensibly, and the officer appointed under him is working hard to establish sound organisation. The governor now has responsibility for both Safer Custody and Admissions (which includes Reception and Induction). This is a positive initiative in terms of Safer Custody, as prisoners are frequently vulnerable and at risk during these early stages.

Within Safer Custody, statistics have been more reliable over the past year, but it should be noted that P-NOMIS routinely fails to deliver much of the required data and manual inputting has to be used. Self-harm numbers remain high, although compounded by a small number of prisoners who are "serial self-harmers". These prisoners often have mental health issues (as do many others) and it is to the credit of prison staff that, despite receiving no formal training in mental health, they nevertheless do a good job in looking after such vulnerable prisoners.

The weekly meeting held to discuss individual prisoners on ACCTs is working well. This involves a wide multi-disciplinary team, and the format has been noticeably strengthened with the introduction of simplified documentation that ensures that action points pertaining to individual care plans are properly addressed at meetings. ACCT documentation reviews also confirm a strong commitment by the wing staff, and the standard of documentation has shown steady progress in recent reviews. This positive picture should be further enhanced following a number of decisions made at the Governor's recent meeting with all four branches of the NHS Solent Health Care team.

The monthly Safer Custody meetings have been less effective, not least because of patchy attendance and a regular failure to complete actions agreed at meetings; these are issues which the new governor in charge of Safer Custody is rigorously addressing, and there is discernable improvement already. The Board looks forward to an increasingly proactive stance being adopted, to capitalise on some very good data that is being produced by the Safer Custody team. It would be fair to observe, however, that in spite of robust data it remains difficult to pinpoint the sources of highest risk to prisoners. The only consistent risk highlighted by the data relates to previous episodes of deliberate self-harm or attempted suicide either within the prison or the community.

Sadly two prisoners died in custody during the year, both in hospital and apparently from natural causes. Every death is thoroughly investigated by the Ombudsman, but it remains frustrating that the reports and lessons to be learned continue to take more than a year to be published. It is good to note, however, that a recent report commended staff for the way in which they had acted.

Statistics for assaults on prison officers are recorded within P-NOMIS, but extracting this data presents a challenge. The six-month data to May 2010 records eight serious assaults on officers.

As a more general point we observe that the Personal Officer scheme, although improved, is not working as well as it should be. Also the IEP system is still not being used to full effect.

PRISONER COUNCIL

In the main prison there have been problems with holding regular wing representatives' meetings. However, in January 2010 it was decided to change the format, and a Prisoner Council is now

held at the beginning of each month. Initially those attending were divided into four discussion groups designed to air any problems over a wide range of aspects of the prison. This has now settled into general discussion of a range of topics, and governors have made a real effort to address problems. It is very regrettable that the May meeting was cancelled at ten minutes' notice, but the Governor has now instructed that full weight must be given to future meetings.

The prisoner meetings in West Hill have been held monthly, and prisoners are fully involved in the discussions, which are very productive. A wide range of problems has been discussed including healthcare provision and food standards, with most being solved by the next meeting. There was a period in early 2010 during which no governor attended the meetings, but this has been resolved by the appointment of a resident governor for West Hill.

VISITS

There continue to be serious shortcomings in the provision for visitors. The current "bus shelter" outside the main gates is exposed, chilly and wholly inadequate for families who may have come a long way. Reception arrangements are poor and a proper visitors' centre is needed.

Booking visits takes too long. Visitors have complained that it can take all morning to get through on the telephone; making the booking takes about twenty minutes. Staff are aware of the delays but explain that P-NOMIS is a much slower system requiring several screens to complete a single booking. They are polite but are at the mercy of the computer system.

At West Hill the visits room is noisy and, in summer, unpleasantly hot. Vending machines are, however, restocked and there have been no complaints about them this year.

The play area in the main visits room is often closed due to a lack of volunteers. This is a useful resource enabling couples to talk uninterrupted by small children and it should be open regularly.

Uniformed staff are vigilant in the visits room but the CCTV screens are generally unstaffed due to operational needs so opportunities to intercept contraband are missed. Visits staff carry out procedures as effectively and professionally as they can, and the Security department are well aware of the risks, however, and strive to block this point of entry for illicit items.

HEALTHCARE

It is now 20 months since Portsmouth PCT took over the running of the prison's Healthcare Centre and, although many matters raised by the Board have been resolved, other problems remain.

The Board is pleased that GPs will now hold their Surgeries in the main prison, not in Healthcare, which will resolve the problem of prisoners having to wait for up to three hours in a room totally inadequate to hold up to 20 people at a time, with a lavatory unfit for purpose. Although the waiting rooms will still be needed for prisoners attending some Clinics and also the Dentist, the numbers waiting will be substantially reduced.

We are also pleased that there is now a dedicated team of Discipline Staff in the Healthcare Unit which has much improved the relationship of Officers and Nursing Staff, to the benefit of the prisoners. However, other matters remain unresolved. There is still a severe shortage of Nursing Staff, seven in all, and substantial sums of money are being spent by the PCT to pay for Agency Nurses to maintain staffing levels.

It could be argued (although some members of the Board do not agree) that prisoners receive a higher level of healthcare provision, free of any charge, in comparison with the general public; this is something which is unsustainable on their release. With so many prisoners suffering from mental health problems (of whom only a small percentage can benefit from being sectioned) the Board considers that more attention needs to be given to the treatment of those who on

completion of their sentences, particularly prisoners on medication, will require more care in the Community than seems to have been appreciated - especially those who do not already have a GP and may have difficulty in registering with one.

The Board considers that the dispensing of medication needs to be improved. At the moment medication is handed out to each prisoner up to three times a day. While we appreciate that some prisoners will need to continue with this practice, more could be given medication on a daily basis, saving time for both the Nursing Staff and the Officers particularly in the evenings.

Association in Healthcare has frequently been missed over the year, mainly due to a shortage of staff. This is not in the interests of the prisoners and more effort should be made to accommodate this time where possible. Nevertheless the Board would like to congratulate the Medical team and the Officers in Healthcare for the dedication that they give to the prisoners in their care.

KITCHENS

The situation here is much improved. The menu system is working effectively on a 21-day cycle, and there is greater clarity in identifying Halal, vegan, vegetarian and healthy options; improved signage on menus is aimed at assisting all nationalities to be aware of the choices on offer. The Board believes that a good range of food is available to all prisoners, and the quality witnessed recently has also been good. A monthly Food Forum has been established and is well attended both by wing staff and by prisoners. The Board is very impressed by this in-house initiative.

All wing serveries now have new hot trolleys, although the length of journeys (especially to West Hill and the Hearn) still means that temperatures are not maintained as well as they might be.

We note that the priority given to the Main and West Hill kitchens has resulted in the continued closure of the Staff Mess. The Board has been concerned at the time taken by the system to appoint a new Catering Manager and recruit other core staff, resulting in unnecessary extra expenditure on agency workers.

The introduction of a key skills plan aimed at kitchen staff gaining NVQs has been very successful, with up to 26 prisoners involved at a time. However, there still appears to be scope to streamline the number of modules within the programme.

CANTEEN

The system has now stabilised, with canteen purchases bagged up prior to delivery to the prison; a number of prisoners assist with the weekly distribution of items. A national price list has been adopted, which has seen significant changes in the cost of some items; overall, however, prices are broadly comparable to those to be found in supermarkets. The ready availability of vegan products remains an issue that needs to be resolved.

Argos products can no longer be supplied directly by the establishment. Families are able to order items themselves, but these must then be delivered directly by Argos to the prison. The time taken for incoming items to be checked through Reception has led to a number of complaints by prisoners to the Board.

CHAPLAINCY

The past year has been very successful for the Chaplaincy. Their pastoral care has continued undiminished, and it is clear that they are much appreciated by prisoners. Numbers attending church services have increased and the fellowship evenings which take place twice per week have been fully subscribed. Indeed, if additional prison staff were available, then a further fifteen prisoners would like to join the fellowship groups.

Under the capable and sensitive direction of the Church Army Chaplain, the Restorative Justice programme has continued throughout the past year, and it is viewed by the IMB and others as a valuable rehabilitative tool which merits widespread use across the Prison Service.

Much of the Chaplaincy's success is down to the hard work and excellent leadership of the Co-ordinating Chaplain, the Reverend Terry Lane, who retires in June this year. He earned the respect and admiration of prisoners and prison staff alike and will be a hard act to follow.

LIBRARY

The libraries in the main prison and West Hill continue to be an excellent resource, and are much appreciated by many prisoners. There is also a small stock of books in Healthcare, and an orderly is able to deliver specific titles for prisoners from the Main library. Books and DVDs can also be reserved through the Hampshire County Library Service.

The librarian and her staff maintain excellent professional working relationships with the orderlies, many of whom have specifically commented on how much they enjoy their work.

At the end of the reporting year, it was learned that Hampshire County Council intended to carry out a restructuring exercise for all librarian posts in the county, including that at HMP Winchester. The Board hopes that there will be no reduction in the provision for prisoners in the future.

DIVERSITY: FOREIGN NATIONALS & RACE RELATIONS

The number of Foreign National Prisoners (FNPs) has varied from 50-70 during the year and their nationalities have been diverse: for instance in November, ten were Vietnamese, ten Polish, five Jamaican and four Latvian. The FN clerk ensures that all FNPs are recorded, and any with immigration (particularly deportation) issues are referred to a member of the UK Border Agency, at least one of whom attends the prison weekly. Their regular attendance has made a huge difference to the treatment of these prisoners, and this was reinforced by a visit to the prison in February by the UKBA Area Director. The foreign nationals liaison officer (FNLO) also performs an excellent job, checking receptions and seeing new prisoners to make sure that they know the procedures in the prison, and assessing translation needs.

The potential for self-harm in those who are isolated by language and custom is greatest during their first week in prison, and there is still a problem ensuring that all FNPs are recognised on reception. Some prisoners are not able or prepared to reveal their nationality, but there have been additional failures in classification.

During the reporting period, there have been problems with identifying those prisoners at reception who either admit to being racist, or who have been accused of a racist offence: the default setting for this cell share risk assessment (CSRA) is to assume that any prisoner with a history of racism, however imprecise, is categorised as medium or high risk and is therefore not put into a cell which he has to share with a black or minority ethnic (BME) prisoner. On a few occasions a prisoner has slipped through the net, although fortunately this has not led to any problem so far. (There is also the possibility that prisoners may claim to be racist simply in order to secure a single cell.) All prisoners are reassessed once they have been on a wing for a week or more, by which time officers can make a more measured judgement. The procedures to avoid risks in this area have been tightened up during 2010.

There is usually a monthly meeting (attended by the IMB in its monitoring role) where UKBA staff, the appropriate governor, FN clerk and FNLO can discuss current issues and share concerns over any particular FNP. This is a practical and efficient way of monitoring prisoner welfare, although the regularity of the meetings has not been good over the last year. It has still not been possible to set up regular meetings of FNPs, but it is intended to ensure their proper representation in the new Prisoner Council monthly meeting.

The number of prisoners held solely on an IS91 (sentence-expired prisoners held on immigration authority) has been consistently low (a maximum of five prisoners at a time). It is, of course, unacceptable that any prisoner should be held beyond the end of his sentence, although when it has happened it has usually been associated with asylum claims, MAPPA, appeals against deportation and the issuing of emergency travel documents.

The telephone interpreting service, Big Word, has been very poorly used in recent months. In order to encourage officers to take advantage of this valuable service the Governor has agreed to provide fifteen handsets which will enable simultaneous use by prisoner and officer.

Meetings of the Race Equality Action Team (REAT) have been held every two months, but over the year these have been poorly attended by members of the Senior Leadership Team. On too many occasions it has been minuted that actions are required, but the designated person has failed to attend the subsequent meeting and also failed to submit any report. This has meant a disappointing lack of continuity, and the prisoners who attend feel that little value is placed on the meeting. We understand that the Governor intends to take over chairmanship of REAT meetings.

In the year from April 2009 there were 165 racial incidents reported, up from 105 last year. There was no obvious pattern to the incidents. A "hate crime" register has been set up for staff to access via the prison intranet to assist in identifying prisoners who are, for instance, homophobic.

An Imam finally took up his post in January, and it is anticipated that he will become full-time. He takes weekly services and runs an Islamic Study Group which is well attended.

Particular attention has been paid to disabled prisoners: nationally 47% of them are employed, and in HMP Winchester from March-May 2010 there has been an increase of 5% up to 35% who are employed. At the end of the reporting year 66% of the disabled prisoners had enhanced status on IEP, and it has been found that staff have welcomed the training they have received, helping them to recognise the abilities and needs of the disabled.

FORMER ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL IN PRISON

The Board was pleased to be able to submit evidence (via the Association of Members of Independent Monitoring Boards) to the Inquiry into Former Armed Forces Personnel in Prison. As Hampshire contains many Units of all three Services, it is inevitable that personnel that are discharged from these Units are sent to HMP Winchester to serve their sentences. The Board has noted that the prison is taking the care and welfare of this group of prisoners very seriously. During the reporting period there have been 20-30 former Armed Forces personnel serving sentences of one year or less for alcohol related offences and assault, most of which stem from the problems they faced on leaving the Armed Forces, for example coping with civilian life, breakdown in family relationships, housing, debt and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

There are two Prison Officers (one ex-Royal Navy and one ex-Army) who have been appointed as Veterans in Custody Support Officers. Their work is supervised by the Head of Residence (also ex-Army). Once identified, former Armed Forces prisoners are put in touch with relevant Service Charities such as SSAFA Forces Help, The Royal British Legion, single Service Benevolent Funds and Combat Stress. Arrangements are made for these Charities to visit the prisoners if required. In addition, monthly meetings are held so that all former Armed Forces prisoners can get together and discuss their problems with staff who speak the same "language". The Board commends the staff for their time and efforts in this activity and will continue to monitor its progress.

LIFERS & INDETERMINATE SENTENCE PRISONERS

At the end of May 2010 there were 39 lifers accommodated at the prison, of whom 27 were subject to an Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection (IPP) (CJA2003). It is this group that

have previously caused the IMB the most concern. HMP Winchester is a local community prison and as such does not operate any Offending Behaviour Programmes. The majority of those subject to IPPs are required to undertake a range of rehabilitative programmes before they can be considered for release. The development of facilities nationally for IPPs and significantly at HMP Parkhurst and the efforts of staff in OCA have improved and facilitated the transfer of such prisoners to other more appropriate establishments. Whilst there remain some individual cases where relocation is delayed, particularly where the prisoner is accommodated in CSU, overall the transfer time has steadily improved.

VULNERABLE PRISONERS

D Wing is currently wholly occupied by Vulnerable Prisoners. The Board is pleased to note that VPs are now receiving Induction twice a week, and the Insider prisoner involved with the process reports that the arrangements are working well. The availability of courses for sex offenders has improved during the year, with prisoners now able to obtain places at HMP Bure, Norfolk.

After a prolonged delay, the former computer refurbishment workshop is now in use as two VP classrooms. Courses are run by a committed team of tutors, and many prisoners report a high level of satisfaction with their progress.

The computer refurbishment work continues in the VP (No 5) Workshop to the benefit of schools in Africa. There is some concern that there may be a reduction in the inflow of light assembly work from the two main suppliers, English Chain and Kes. The instructors and the IT course tutor in the VP Workshop continue to provide a high level of professional commitment to the quality of work and the supervision of prisoners.

DRUG TREATMENT

Winchester continues to offer effective programmes to address substance related behaviours. KPTs relating to drug treatment commencement have been exceeded with 1205 Drug Intervention Records (assessments) being completed and 216 prisoners starting drug treatment. Targets relating to completion of treatment have also been surpassed, with 167 prisoners successfully completing drug treatment programmes this year.

In addition to this, a number of positive developments have enhanced provision for prisoners with substance related issues. In line with priorities set by the National Treatment Agency, implementation of an Integrated Drug Treatment System (IDTS) is proceeding satisfactorily, albeit slowly due to the number of different organisations and departments involved. The contract for necessary refurbishment work is out to tender, and the new clinical provider is mobilizing resources. There is confidence that the service will expand from July 2010 with a phased increase in staff complement. The project team is currently developing operational protocols etc and drug treatment staff are joint working, with emphasis on care planning between the clinical detox staff and the CARATS team with regard to men on detox.

The new unit is due to occupy most if not all of the recently rebuilt C Wing. While applauding the initiative, the Board recognizes a number of implications that will need to be borne in mind and monitored:- the strategy for relocation of (unconvicted) remand prisoners elsewhere in the establishment; housing of prisoners going through detox near to men, who for whatever reason, are to be maintained on an assessed safe drug regime; and the potential cost of keeping the latter prisoners on prescribed medication for as long as they remain in prison.

Mandatory Drug Testing is now part of CARATS, which is facilitating communication and targeted interventions to prisoners most in need. A number of psycho-social groups have been run both at West Hill and in the main prison, including increased sessions for Vulnerable Prisoners. Compact agreements continue to be an important element of engagement with prisoners.

It is very regrettable that delays in security checking resulted in the loss of a new alcohol worker, and it is hoped that this lack of important provision will be addressed in the very near future.

CARE AND SUPERVISION UNIT (CSU)

The Care and Supervision Unit is now firmly embedded as part of the wider Admissions Group. There is no longer a dedicated team in the CSU and not all staff who work there are fully trained and conversant with the protocols used. This sometimes causes problems with Adjudications / Reviews when staff are not familiar with the necessary paperwork.

A third governor has been appointed during this reporting period and lack of consistency in approach has made the work of CSU staff even more difficult. There have been fewer long term prisoners held in the CSU during the year: those who have been tend to be difficult to manage. All staff have done their utmost to address these issues; however it is essential that all prisoners are clear why they are being held in the CSU and that for all prisoners the same conditions and restrictions are imposed.

The new rostering and shift patterns in the Admissions Group as a whole and in the CSU in particular have meant that sometimes during the day the CSU is unmanned, not good practice.

Reviews continue to be held on Tuesdays and wherever possible the IMB attends. Staff are unfailingly helpful and are prepared to log and act on our concerns.

The CSU Officers work extremely hard to provide an efficient and dedicated level of care in a stressful environment for those prisoners lodged there, and they should be justly proud of the work that they do. It is essential that all staff should be fully trained and be confident that they are able to carry out their specific role to the best of their ability.

6. OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

As with other functions at Winchester, Offender Management has been subject to a number of unwelcome but unavoidable changes of people at senior level, which has not provided a basis for stability. That said, the person originally appointed as Joint Head of OM (and thence Head), who has a Probation background, has done a very good job despite the upheaval. Besides personnel changes, there has also been a substantial reorganisation which, overall, has been beneficial, not least because most OM functions are now housed in the same location.

In terms of public protection, information gathering is now quite good, although there is an acknowledgment of sometimes failing to act on it. This is probably due in some measure to OM still being a relatively new concept and not yet viewed as the hub, with functions such a security feeding in to it, rather than vice versa as at present.

Nevertheless, much has been done to integrate OM and probation, which is encouraging. However, one of the problems is being under-resourced, for example giving lower priority to certain categories of prisoners, such as those with sentences of twelve months and over and who are classified as low or medium risk. This also applies to the Community Mental Health Team which only assesses prisoners deemed to be "severe and enduring". Further cuts in the prison budget will inevitably have an increasingly detrimental effect on what can be done for prisoners.

On a more encouraging note, the PPU now has administrative staff to support it, plus a sufficient number of computers. Additionally, the interaction between OM, Security and Healthcare is better, although there is still room for improvement. Overall, the changes in OM have resulted in a more effective function which is to the credit of its personnel. It would be regrettable if a budget reduction were to take place in OM with the inevitable adverse consequences for prisoners.

7. THE GENERAL REGIME

SECURITY

Winchester is fortunate in having an experienced and enthusiastic Security team, which helps to ensure the safe, secure and smooth running of the prison regime. Daily intelligence meetings are now held and are proving effective in ensuring prompt proactive action on priority issues. This is especially relevant as staffing is limited by policy. On average 200 Security Intelligence Reports are received monthly. This indicates that all prison staff are aware of the constant need for information and vigilance when carrying out their daily tasks. There is an excellent relationship with the Police Intelligence Officer who is pivotal in the continuous flow of intelligence from the police to the prison and vice-versa.

In July 2009 there was an escape when a prisoner exchanged identities with his twin. As a result, improved procedures are now in place to ensure the correct identification of prisoners discharged from Reception. Cell cards are being updated to include photographs and more stringent checks are being carried out before a prisoner is released or attends court.

The presence (over 100 seizures in the past year) of drugs, SIM cards, mobile telephones, alcohol and weapons, together with tackling bullying and radicalisation (which is becoming an issue in all prisons), and child protection issues around visits, are all constant and continuing problems. Though raised in previous reports, the Visits Room cameras are still not being staffed regularly by a trained observer.

On a positive note, a biometrics system of identification of visitors and prisoners is being introduced, and an X-Ray machine has recently been installed for examination of all suspicious packages and "Rule 39" mail. This introduction of technology will make existing procedures more effective and illustrates the progressive attitude sustained even at a time of budgetary constraints.

Board members have frequently drawn attention to the communications apparently being made between cell windows using torn-up sheets etc. This remains a challenge for wing staff to maintain security, not least in their regular accommodation fabric checks.

LEARNING AND SKILLS

2009/10 has seen responsibility for classroom education being transferred from Milton Keynes to Manchester College, which is contracted to supply 16,624 teaching hours per year. They provide 26 teaching staff at the prison. However, recent contractual negotiations have led to a programme of redundancies with its potential for deleterious effects on staff morale and programme delivery.

At the same time the service has also had to review the mix of educational opportunities on offer to prisoners. Whilst the Board welcomes the drive to increase courses leading to externally recognised qualifications, the value of "softer" courses (Family Man, music, assertiveness, drama) must be recognised. There are two reasons. Firstly, the life-skills that prisoners address and develop through these courses are central to their lives; the prisoners clearly find them relevant and credible. Secondly, for some prisoners, alienated or intimidated in earlier life by formal education, these courses clearly play a role in re-introducing education to them. The Board is concerned that failure to appreciate and allow for this link may lead to continued alienation to and rejection of education for some prisoners.

The prison's continuing link with Winchester University produced another successful theatrical production. This year "The Government Inspector" played to full houses for five performances. Although there is considerable disruption to the routine at West Hill and extra effort required from the staff, the value to the prisoners is very great as well as portraying the prison in a good light to the mainly civilian audiences who attended. The Board is delighted to note that the longstanding

commitment of the University's Senior Lecturer in Drama was acknowledged by the award of an MBE for her work in this field.

The two Family Man courses run during the year have proved to be very popular. The course is to be increased in length but in future will only run once a year instead of twice. The Board recognises this as an extremely valuable course, and we are disappointed that it will now only be available to one group of prisoners a year.

The Education Department encourages distance learning, and the Board is pleased to note that currently 17 prisoners are pursuing Open University and other courses. These are all funded through charitable organisations; staff and prisoners are to be commended for their perseverance in securing funding for these courses. The fact that the Prison Service does not fund any course teaching above NVQ level 2 is surprising.

The Bricklaying course continues to be a great success. The protracted search for an adequate and appropriate work area is now over, and the new yard and shed are fast nearing completion. All the work is carried out by the prisoners, with the collaboration of the Carpentry shop supplying the doors and windows. The teams have shown excellent initiative.

The Board is delighted to see the Carpentry course thriving again, following an inordinate delay in recruiting a new instructor. The group is now supplying items for both internal use (Application boxes, outdoor benches) as well as for external clients such as Charities and Public Houses (bird feed table, picnic benches). The Gardens team is also doing excellent work, including the recent creation of a very peaceful Oriental Corner.

For some time the Workshops were struggling and grossly underutilised. The situation was not helped by difficulties in use of P-NOMIS, which were overcome by creation of a shared stand alone data base. This causes additional work for both the administrator and user groups - and is already showing signs of clogging up. Both 5 and 6 Shops are now operating to their full capacities. However, the unacceptable situation in 4 Shop remains unchanged. With a capacity of 26 (now changed to 20) the average attendance so far is 11 and the most on any day was 17.

Whilst many prisoners clearly have access to and make good use of the education and training on offer, it is extremely difficult to ascertain precisely how many. The Board has tried to obtain these figures but, whereas percentages and numbers of hours are recorded, the experience of the individual prisoner is not reflected in such figures. The "Purposeful Activity" KPT appears to be an incomplete reflection of the amount of time prisoners spend doing worthwhile activity. We believe that better data, if collected, might be valuable in addressing inactivity amongst some prisoners.

The introduction of P-NOMIS, the length of time taken to employ a carpentry instructor, and the transfer of education to Manchester College have all caused significant challenges for staff during the year. The Board commends them all for their continued dedication and professionalism.

WEST HILL AND THE HEARN UNIT

The Principal Officer in charge at West Hill and the Hearn left in October 2009 as a result of the withdrawal of that rank. This was followed shortly by the re-assignment to the main prison of two very experienced Senior Officers. This loss of dedicated leadership only served to highlight the "Wall Syndrome" between the main prison and West Hill and the Hearn. The Board is concerned about the effect that this has had on the attitude of the staff who have felt left out of the communication loop and therefore undervalued. Added to this has been a disruptive element of younger prisoners who on arrival from the main prison have sought to undermine the normally stable regime. Staff shortages and latterly the teething problems of "My Detail" have made the day to day management quite testing and this has been noticed by prisoners. However, the Board is pleased to note that the reinstatement of a dedicated governor for West Hill and the Hearn in April 2010 has gone some way in ameliorating the management but it is too early to report on any

significant improvement. The churn factor in the prison has meant that for the third year running successful ROTL figures are low (50% out of 78 applicants) because of the pressure on West Hill to take prisoners who might otherwise be regarded as unsuitable for the regime there. However, plans are in hand which, if implemented, will restore West Hill and the Hearn to their former role.

Following our comment in last year's report, there has been some improvement in the overall provision of Healthcare but it still tends to be patchy which means that the improvement has not been sustained. Similarly, the upgrading of the recesses was completed during the year but there have been some incidents of vandalism to showers by a small number of prisoners. However, the Works Department is to be commended for keeping this old building in a satisfactory and safe state. The vexed question of the use of the All Weather Sports Pitch continues; it is not being used for anything other than exercise. Financial restraints do not allow for bringing it up to the required health and safety standards and PE staff shortages render it virtually useless. The Finishing Kitchen has been in operation for the last twelve months and consequently the standard of the food has been good with few if any complaints. During this reporting period, the available work activities have been fully subscribed and on any given day the majority of the 129 Prisoners in West Hill and the Hearn have been gainfully employed.

The Board has noted the very valuable work done during the year by the CARATS staff and in particular by the team member responsible for West Hill and the Hearn. She plays an important role in ensuring that the holistic needs of prisoners are being met and that they have a real chance of achieving a reduction in offending behaviour and personal change by conducting one to one sessions covering a multitude of drug related issues. In addition, IDTS groups have been held on a weekly basis covering a wide range of topics including substance specific awareness. The average attendance at these groups has been nine prisoners (as opposed to six in the main prison) which reflects the commitment of West Hill / Hearn prisoners. A very successful "Beyond the Gate" course was run by a West Country charity which addressed problem alcohol use. The Board is disappointed that on three separate occasions, activities run by Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous external volunteers had to be cancelled at the last moment due to West Hill staff being deployed for duty at short notice in the main prison.

WORKS

Sickness and temporary promotion have deprived the department of two members of the workforce for part of the year. In addition, skilled staff have had to be deployed to escort outside contractors to maintain the boilers and complete other work. The department has, nonetheless, performed well. The main achievement this year has been the replacement of the perimeter security lights which involved laying new underground cables.

A number of minor improvements have lifted the overall appearance of the prison. New flooring has been laid on the wings, in the central rotunda and on the West Hill landings. The main rotunda has also been redecorated, Phase 1 of the re-organisation of the Reception area has been completed, and improvements have at last been completed on the recesses at West Hill.

There have been problems with the hot water and the heating systems which are inevitable given the hardness of the water, but nearly one third of the boilers have now been replaced and the main problem with the remaining older ones is that they are not energy efficient.

Uniformed staff can be slow to report breakages or request changes but, once on the Planet FM system, these are dealt with quickly and efficiently. Admin staff and managers have complained, however, that the upgraded computer system is not as efficient as the earlier version. Completed jobs cannot be removed from the system and there have been difficulties with the timesheets.

The Board is aware of concerns by the Health and Safety team that risk assessment and training for some routine tasks (for example, use of the C Wing lift) are not taken seriously enough which has caused some unnecessary and expensive incidents.

GROUNDS

Garden areas are well maintained, particularly in West Hill, and provide welcome areas of colour. With an excellent heated greenhouse facilities and availability of skills and workforce, it is a pity that, despite limited space availability, opportunities are not taken for much more extensive culture of vegetables and decorative plants for use within the prison or even locally.

Areas in the main prison are regularly found where rubbish has not been cleared away, for example in exercise yards, areas under Board Room and Reception stairs, and the roofs of CSU exercise yard and Kitchen. Particularly bad are the alleys and the well between B Wing and A Wing. Grilles over cell windows have been broken and not repaired or replaced; as a result items of food and clothing are thrown from cell windows and accumulate in the alleys. This is not only a costly waste of prison resources but it also creates potential health hazards from birds and rats attracted by the rotting food. This matter has been repeatedly raised by the Board and, although efforts are made to clear the alleys from time to time, the basic problem remains unresolved.

COMMUNICATION

The Board has been monitoring the work of the Staff Consultation Committee which the Governor set up soon after his arrival. The Committee meets every other month and is chaired by a respected member of the Chaplaincy with the Governor or his Deputy present. It is an excellent forum for the prison staff (both uniformed and civilian) to air their concerns, and decisions for future action are made after useful debate. The Committee continues to do valuable work in seeking ways to improve communication between staff at all levels and a new "Communication for 2010/2011" document is in draft. The Board welcomes this approach to solving what has been recognised as a considerable problem during the reporting period.

PRISON PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Generally the prison met its performance targets for the year but there are, nevertheless, some key areas of concern:

Staff Sickness: Compared to a target of 10.5 days per year, the rate of staff sickness averaged 15.8 days per year, peaking at a rate of 17.8 in September 2009. This was of great concern to the Board, since this level of absence had a negative effect on the regime due to staff shortage, for example in cancellation of association and exercise. This issue was raised many times with the Governor and it is noted that effective steps have been taken from the beginning of this year to reduce the level of staff absence which for May 2010 is actually below target.

The levels of Time Off in Lieu owing to officers have increased significantly during the year. Though this is partly due to officer time required for prisoners under constant observation, it also reflects the high staff absence levels.

Time Unlocked: This has exceeded the target of 8.3 hours per prisoner per day, though the target was increased in April to 9.7 hours per prisoner per day. Introduction of the "Golden Hour" where all prisoners are unlocked for 45 minutes early each morning has been very effective in increasing unlock time, although the Board still feels that prisoners spend far too long locked in their cells.

Purposeful Activity: The target of 20.2 hours per week for each prisoner has not been met during the year; the average is 19.5 hours per week. There were particular problems in the extraordinary lengths of time taken by the Prison Service to replace Workshop Instructors who had left and the failure to meet ambitious targets for prisoners to take part in the Computer Learning programme. The Board remains concerned about the inclusion of three hours per week "cell cleaning" as

Purposeful Activity. Our experience is still that the level of this activity is neither consistent throughout the prison nor adequately verified. (See also the comments on page 12.)

Prisoner complaints: Although these are generally handled within the required timescales, the Board is very concerned about the volume of prisoner complaints. Historically the number has averaged around 100 per month. Though the rate of complaints has reduced somewhat compared to last year, it is still around 150 per month. Property (mainly stored property lost or not transferred between establishments) remains the main subject of complaints, followed by issues with correspondence, canteen orders and complaints against staff. The matters raised through prisoner complaints generally reflect those covered by applications made to the Board. Even bearing in mind that some prisoners will put in a very large number of complaints, the increase does tend to indicate real prisoner issues which are not being resolved by wing staff.

Overall, the Board questions the extent to which management of the Prison Service is target driven. There are some 44 Key Performance Targets reported on monthly, which involves a huge amount of manual data gathering, with all that implies in terms of cost and the inevitable errors which occur with manual collection. There also remain issues with unreliable KPT figures due to the P-NOMIS system. It is of concern that targets are essentially process oriented and do not include areas of direct relevance to prisoner rehabilitation and welfare, such as number of prisoner complaints, staff prisoner contact, reoffending rates, incidences of self harm, number of assaults. The Board suggests that the Prison Service should review the costs involved and the effectiveness with which its information programme meets the objective to reduce re-offending.

8. EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

- The regular attendance of UKBA staff has made a huge difference to the treatment of foreign national prisoners. The foreign nationals liaison officer (FNLO) is conscientious in checking that new prisoners know procedures in the prison, and assessing translation needs.
- The Diversity Manager is very effective in initiating work with minority groups.
- The past year has been very successful for the Chaplaincy. Their pastoral care has continued undiminished, and it is clear that they are much appreciated by prisoners. The Restorative Justice programme is viewed by the IMB and others as a valuable rehabilitative tool which merits widespread use across the Prison Service.
- The weekly meeting held to discuss individual prisoners on ACCTs is working well. This involves a wide multi-disciplinary team, and simplified documentation has been introduced which aids the actual implementation of individual care plans.
- The appointment of two Prison Officers (one ex-Royal Navy and one ex-Army) as Veterans in Custody Support Officers is a worthwhile initiative in current circumstances.
- CSU staff work extremely hard to provide an efficient and dedicated level of care for those prisoners lodged there, and they should be justly proud of the work that they do.
- The monthly Food Forum has been well attended both by wing staff and by prisoners. Also successful has been the introduction of a key skills plan aimed at kitchen staff gaining NVQs.

9. THE WORK OF THE BOARD

The Board currently has seventeen members divided into four teams; each team deals with all issues on their duty week, and rota reports are sent to the Governor. Members all have areas of special interest, and these have been reported on as appropriate. Within its monitoring role, the Board is represented on a number of committees. A total of 622 individual visits have been made

to the prison during the year, and members regularly attend reviews and adjudications in the CSU. Seven serious incidents were monitored, as well as two serious incident exercises.

Board members all make use of the excellent training provided by the prison for fire safety, ACCTs, Challenge It Change It (formerly the diversity course), manipulation and conditioning, and personal protection. In addition two members attended the 2009 Annual Conference, one went on the Continued Development course provided by the Secretariat, and another attended the IMB Speakers' course. One member was invited to observe a lifer hearing conducted by the Parole Board. The Annual Team Performance Review formed the basis of a useful Board discussion.

The Board appreciated a valuable insight into his plans from the new Governor shortly after his arrival. Members of prison staff who have made presentations at Board meetings include the head of the Integrated Drug Treatment Strategy unit, the forensic psychiatrist and senior team worker from the Community Mental Health Team, the governor in charge of learning and skills, two members of the POA and the Police Liaison Officer.

The Board made two visits to prisons which send to or receive prisoners from Winchester: HMP Bullingdon in July and Ford Open Prison in November.

10. CONCLUSIONS

In this report we have endeavoured to present a balanced picture of those areas in which the treatment of prisoners is working well and those over which we have significant concerns. The situation is very aptly summed up by the *Punch* cartoon from 1895, in which a young curate famously described his egg to his Bishop thus:

“Oh no, My Lord, I assure you! Parts of it are excellent!”

In successive reports the Board has recorded that Winchester, like many other prisons, has to deal with the effects of overcrowding and the constant churn of prisoners. We see very little evidence of change on this key issue for the Prison Service.

As noted at the outset, there can be no doubt that further budget cuts are going to undermine the level of service provided in a wide range of the prison's activities, and inevitably threaten the Prison Service's ability to meet its fundamental objective to reduce re-offending.

At this critical time, the Board is disturbed by what it perceives to be a degree of detachment by Prison Service Headquarters from the day-to-day problems being encountered “on the ground”.

APPENDIX: NUMBERS OF VISITS, MEETINGS ATTENDED, ETC

	2008/09	2009/10
Full complement of members	16	16
Actual members	17	17
Board meetings held	12	11
Visits to other prisons	-	2
Rota visits	244	311
Total number of visits to the prison	530	622
Serious incidents attended	6	7
<u>Committees attended by members</u> Safer custody, diversity, race equality action team, foreign nationals, prisoner council, security, intelligence, performance recognition, health promotion, PCT, health needs assessment		
<u>Training undertaken by members</u> IMB Annual Conference, Continued Development course, Speakers' course, various internal training courses, IDTS multi-disciplinary conference		