

ANNUAL REPORT

2013



Independent Monitoring Board

COLNBROOK

IMMIGRATION REMOVAL CENTRE

1. STATUTORY ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

The Board is specifically charged to:

(1) satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in immigration removal centres.

(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 far the immigration removal centre has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those held in the Centre.

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

This report has been produced to fulfil our obligation under (3) above. It should be seen as a sequel to our reports for 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Independent Monitoring Board at Colnbrook IRC

Annual Report 2013

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3. DESCRIPTION OF COLNBROOK IMMIGRATION REMOVAL CENTRE

Colnbrook Immigration Removal Centre (CIRC) is situated about two miles away from Heathrow airport, and adjacent to the Harmondsworth IRC, lying back just a couple of hundred metres north of the Colnbrook-bypass section of the main A4 dual carriageway. CIRC is operated by SERCO with healthcare provided by SERCO Healthcare.

The Centre was built so that difficult male detainees from the whole detention estate could be managed with close supervision and care, and at first sight the three storey accommodation unit, with its four separate blocks, is reminiscent of a category B prison.

The building contains a separate section which was originally designed as a Short Term Holding Facility (STHF) which contains 50 double rooms. These rooms were de-designated as a STHF in 2012 although the original design of the Centre means that they continue to be physically separate from the main IRC units.

The secure unit has twelve single rooms and there are a further four single rooms on the 2nd floor which have evolved into an Assessment & Integration Unit (AIU), which houses vulnerable detainees who are being assessed before integration into CIRC.

The CIRC building complex now provides accommodation for 381 male detainees and 27 female detainees in a STHF. Accommodation in the main part is arranged in twin rooms, eleven on each of the three floors of each of four units. All rooms have toilets and washbasins and each block has adequate shower and laundry facilities. Each room is provided with a television set with a large number of channels to choose from. Most detainees have use of their own mobile phones and all have access to payphones. Except at night and during roll call times the detainees are at liberty to move around in their blocks, and at prescribed times of the day detainees have free flow access to the facilities on the 1st and 2nd floor, which include IT facilities, and share office and lobby facilities with the adjoining block. There is a Female Unit called Sahara Unit (SU) with (27 beds), which is situated on the top floor of the separate Reception and Visitors block, and has a more relaxed regime than the main units including direct access to IT facilities. There are 50 double rooms in the former STHF block, these have bunk beds, toilets and showers in each room, and TV sets. The ground floor is designated as a First Night / Last Night Unit (FN/LN), and the upper two floors are designated as an Induction Unit (IND). These rooms are much smaller and cramped than the rooms in the main blocks. Access to the main activities corridors in the Centre for SU and IND is only available under escort, although once on the activity corridors detainees have free access to all the facilities.

While the total capacity of the Centre in the reporting period was 408, the turnover has remained high and number of detainees passing through is averaging just under 2000 per month.

4. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This is the ninth report from the Independent Monitoring Board of Colnbrook IRC, covering the year 2013 and on the whole, it is a positive one. The IMB remains satisfied that the ethos of respect and care for detainees that we commented on in our previous reports is still maintained. The quality, motivation and training of staff at all levels undoubtedly contribute to this. The effectiveness of the IMB has been greatly enhanced by the strong working relationship established with the management of both Serco and Immigration at CIRC, and we continue to be impressed by the quality and dedication of most of the staff at CIRC. During the year there has been a further reduction in the proportion of ex-Foreign National Offenders at CIRC to around 15% which has had a positive impact on the Centre.

4.1. Progress of Recommendations made in the 2012 Annual Report

The Board found it encouraging that there was a formal response to our 2012 report from the Minister. An action plan was put in place by Immigration to address our recommendations and the Board were encouraged that this was undertaken promptly.

There has been good progress on 70% of the recommendations raised in our previous report which are now considered either resolved (50%) or improving (20%). However, the Board have been disappointed in the lack of progress on our recommendations relating to escorting and transport which continue to have a negative effect on population management at CIRC; see Appendix 1 for further explanation. Recommendations are repeated in this report where the Board feels that the issues continue to represent a significant concern.

4.2. Recommendations in this report

The recommendations set out below follow the sequence in sections 5 & 6. The order in sections 4.2.1, and 4.2.2 does not indicate any order of importance. The Board views all these recommendations as being significant.

4.2.1. Recommendations to the Minister of a Policy Nature

1. The Board are concerned at the continuing delays in moving the responsibility for the commissioning of Health Services at CIRC from Immigration to the NHS. **The Board recommend that the Minister establishes from the Department of Health what is causing the delays in the NHS taking on the responsibility for commissioning of Health Services within the IDE. (Section 5.3)**

2. The Board raised concern in our 2012 Annual Report about the long periods that some detainees are held in detention. Whilst welcoming that the number of detainees being held for more than 12 months in detention has fallen by over a half in the last 12 months at CIRC, around a dozen continue to be held in detention in excess of one year and the Board feels the arrangements for review of detention could be strengthened further. **The Board would recommend that the National Detention Review Panel is made independent of Immigration and issues an annual report to publish its findings on the recommendations made.** (Section 6.1)

3. The Board are concerned that there are unnecessary movements of detainees during the night and more could be done to minimise such movements on the grounds of decency. **The Board recommend that transfers between IRCs are not undertaken during the Night State, except in exceptional circumstances.** (Section 6.2);

4. The letting of the contract for the management of CIRC has been delayed by circa 6 months on the original timetable and this has utilised around half of the period originally assigned for handover. **The Board recommend that the Minister imposes a deadline for a decision to be made on the award of future new contracts that will allow sufficient time for an effective handover to be achieved.** (Section 6.6);

4.2.2. Recommendations for Immigration

5. The facilities at CIRC for physically disabled detainees are inadequate. **The Board recommend that Immigration either install suitable facilities for disabled detainees at CIRC or alternatively, ensure that disabled detainees are not held at CIRC.** (Section 5.1);

6. The Board raised this issue in our 2012 Annual Report, and remain concerned that the time taken to house detainees, whilst improving, still remains excessive. **The Board recommend that there should be an agreed service level to house detainees within their accommodation within 90 minutes of arrival at CIRC.** (Section 6.3);

7. The Board raised this concern in our 2012 Annual Report, and understand that decisions have been taken within Immigration to not invest in additional IT systems for DEPMU, which results in the management of movements being ineffectively controlled. **The Board recommend that DEPMU should be equipped with the appropriate IT systems to effectively manage the logistics of population movements in the IDE.** (Section 6.3);

8. The Board raised this issue in our 2012 Annual Report, and remain concerned that detainees are being housed for extended periods in accommodation that is not suitable for anything other than short term stays. **The Board recommend that cumulative stays in FN/LN and Induction units at CIRC should not exceed 7 days.** (Section 6.5);

4.2.3. Recommendations for Immigration and Serco

9. The Board are concerned that detainees are missing appointments with the Doctor through no fault of their own. **The Board recommend that all detainees are advised face to face of the time of their Doctor's Appointment, and provided with a written appointment confirmation from Healthcare, and that they need to be in their rooms 10 – 15 minutes before that time so they can be escorted to their appointment in good time.** (Section 5.3);

10. This concern was raised in our 2012 Annual Report, the Board do acknowledge that there has been improvement during 2013 with fewer instances of missed hospital appointments. The Board welcome that progress and would encourage further attention to this matter to hopefully resolve the issue during 2014. **The Board recommend that Hospital Appointments are given a higher priority when scheduling operational activities, to ensure that the missed appointments are eliminated.** (Section 5.3);

5. AREAS OF GENERAL INTEREST

5.1. Equality and Inclusion

The detainee population at CIRC is multi-national and has a wide variety of different needs in relation to food, religion and culture. CIRC has dedicated staff focussing on Race Relations, Welfare and Religious issues who are based within the areas of the Centre accessible to detainees for advice and support, and are very much valued by the detainees.

CIRC provides worship facilities for Muslim, Christian, Hindu and Sikh faiths, a Buddhist prayer area, and there is a Multi-Faith Centre provided where detainees can seek guidance and help with any spiritual matters, which is supported by a team of Ministers from various faith backgrounds. The worship facilities are well utilised and are maintained to a good standard. During the year the IMB produced a specific report on the provision of religious facilities in CIRC, this confirmed that the facilities provided were of a high standard, and the small number of recommendations made were quickly addressed by the Management in the centre.

CIRC employs a diverse workforce who can communicate in a wide range of languages with the detainees and the induction training is thorough and extensive including, for DCOs, an explanation of the role of the IMB. Staff, detainees or Board members can also request use of the language line facility if there are no staff available who can communicate effectively in their native tongue.

CIRC operated a Cultural Kitchen until October 2013 . This facility enabled detainees to cook their own meal and then share this with their friends amongst the detainee population. The facility was very popular with detainees and it was a disappointment when this had to be closed as the Cultural Chef was successful in obtaining a promotion to a new role. The Centre is in the process of appointing a new Cultural Chef and the IMB would welcome the reinstatement of this facility.

CIRC continues to operate a “Buddy” scheme, where a team of detainees are trained to help other detainees, particularly those new to the Centre, to get the most out of the facilities available at CIRC.

Detainees with Physical Disabilities are given an individual Care Plan which sets out how they will be able to access facilities in the Centre. This usually requires assigning a DCO to escort them safely to facilities, and this has caused difficulties on occasion where physically disabled detainees have had to wait for the allocated DCO to be available.

However, during 2013 the lack of facilities for physically disabled detainees has become more of an issue. There is only one designated room for use by physically disabled detainees, situated on the ground floor of Charlie Unit. However, this room does not contain facilities specifically designed for disabled users, and it has proved inadequate for a physically disabled detainee housed in that accommodation during 2013. In addition the Rose Unit has been used on occasions during the year to house individuals with physical disabilities, but again the toilet and washing facilities have proved problematic for use by the disabled detainees.

Finally, there was one instance of a female wheelchair user being housed in the Sahara Unit located on the second floor and the evacuation of a wheelchair user in an emergency from this unit would be logistically problematic, and the washing facilities are impractical for use

by a wheelchair user. The IMB accepts that in an emergency that CIRC has procedures in place for evacuating wheelchair users, and this would entail the use of an evacuation chair. However, the nearest one available is based in Healthcare which is on the first floor of a separate building. In the event of a fire alarm being sounded, the response team would have to bring the evacuation chair to the Sahara Unit before the evacuation could begin, and in the meantime the wheelchair user would have to be moved to a place of safety in a suitable stairwell. This procedure would inevitably take time to implement. The female wheelchair user was transferred to a more suitable centre within 24 hours.

If Immigration intend to detain individuals with physical disabilities at CIRC, it is imperative that appropriate facilities are provided that enable the detainees full access to the regime and to be treated with respect and dignity during their detention.

The Board recommend that Immigration either install suitable facilities for disabled detainees at CIRC or alternatively, ensure that disabled detainees are not held at CIRC.

Overall there is a good focus on equality and inclusion within CIRC, although the proportion of issues raised with the IMB during the year has increased from 2.1% in 2012 to 5.4% in 2013, largely driven by the issues relating to Physically Disabled detainees.

5.2. Education, Learning and Skills

The facilities provided at CIRC are predominantly geared towards providing a variety of activities for detainees, including some opportunities to learn and develop certain skills if they so wish.

CIRC provides regular ESOL classes, which attract a steady stream of detainees. Courses are also run on IT, particularly on the use of spreadsheets and word processing, which are greatly appreciated by detainees. There are excellent Arts & Crafts facilities at CIRC and these include a media and photography facility which has proved very popular with the detainees. There is also a well equipped Music Room which is well utilised by detainees.

There is a small garden area within the Centre which detainees help to maintain, and particularly in good weather offer them a pleasant opportunity to work in the fresh air.

CIRC provides Internet access for detainees, although the use of Social Media, such as Facebook, is not allowed. These facilities are provided in a dedicated room on the activities corridor and well used by detainees both to access information that is relevant to their situation and also to keep in touch with family and friends via e-mail. Rotas are operated so that all units have access to the Internet each day. The Induction Unit has a small number of dedicated PCs available on similar time frames to those on the main 1st Floor activities corridor and the Sahara Unit and Rose Unit have dedicated facilities, which are available for longer periods.

These facilities are generally well run. The IMB have experienced only a few issues relating to Education and Activities (2% in 2013) and these are easily resolved.

5.3. Healthcare and Mental Health

Healthcare is provided on site by SERCO Healthcare. All detainees are seen by a doctor within 24 hours of arrival at CIRC unless they refuse to do so and sign a disclaimer. There are good facilities for confidential consultations with detainees by healthcare staff in the Reception areas and the Healthcare Centre.

CIRC has a small in-patient facility, with six beds, to care for more serious medical conditions. Obtaining bed spaces externally in NHS hospitals for more complex cases than the Centre is equipped to deal with works reasonably well for general medical conditions, although it can be problematic in obtaining bed spaces for more serious mental health conditions.

During 2013, CIRC has experienced a higher than usual level of food refusals, some of which have continued for extended periods of time, and this has put added strain on both the in-patient facility and the wider Healthcare services within CIRC. The situation with regards to food refusals has improved towards the end of the year due to the pro-active management of these cases by both Immigration and Serco Healthcare.

After the initial assessments by Healthcare, if detainees need to consult a doctor, they have to request an appointment with Healthcare by making a written application. Whilst the process is reasonably straight forward, the IMB regularly come across cases where detainees experience difficulty in accessing the Healthcare service. All applications to Healthcare are screened by Nurses to assess whether or not the detainee needs to see a Doctor. Whilst a Doctor attends CIRC every day, the availability of appointments is 8 per day, so Healthcare will prioritise on the basis of clinical need and do recognise that for less urgent clinical needs it can take up to two weeks to see a Doctor. This can also lead to detainees being offered an appointment with a Nurse rather than a Doctor, and sometimes detainees feel this is not appropriate and therefore refuse to attend the appointment.

In the middle of the year, at the height of the food refusals, the issue of access to a Doctor became particularly acute, as the Doctor's time was being increasingly taken up by the pressing needs of those on long term food refusals whose medical conditions were deteriorating as a result of their food refusal. This further restricted the number of appointments available to other detainees.

The IMB also have concerns regarding the approach taken to "Did Not Show" (DNS) cases. Any detainee who fails to attend an appointment is recorded as a DNS by Healthcare, and their policy is not to automatically re-book the appointment and not to offer a subsequent appointment for a DNS for at least a week. Whilst the aim of this is to discourage non-attendance the IMB is concerned that many of the DNSs result from failure on the part of CIRC to bring the detainee to Healthcare on time for their appointment. All detainees have to be escorted to Healthcare to gain access, if the DCO cannot find the detainee at the appointed time, then they will simply not go and Healthcare will record a DNS. However, the IMB have found situations where the detainee was either not advised that they had been allocated an appointment, or the way in which they were advised was by a DCO pushing a note under their door, which they had not noticed until it was too late (i.e. the appointment time had already passed). Consequently, when the DCO came to take them to their appointment they were not in their rooms. A DNS effectively closes the particular healthcare request, although the detainee has received no healthcare assistance, and the detainee has to start the process all over again, which is frustrating at the very least, but also potentially dangerous if they have a serious medical complaint.

The Board recommend that all detainees are advised face to face of the time of their Doctor's Appointment, and provided with a written appointment confirmation from Healthcare, and that they need to be in their rooms 10 – 15 minutes before that time so they can be escorted to their appointment in good time.

The Board reported last year that it was concerned about the number of missed hospital appointments, where detainees are either not taken to their appointments, or are transported late and miss their appointment time. Whilst efforts are always made to re-schedule the missed appointments, it is distressing for detainees who have health concerns to have to wait longer than is necessary for their hospital appointments. The usual cause for these failures are operational priorities, as a number of DCOs will be required to escort the detainee to the relevant hospital. There have been fewer instances noted in 2013 than 2012; nevertheless, these situations continue to recur.

The Board recommend that Hospital Appointments are given a higher priority when scheduling operational activities, to ensure that the missed appointments are eliminated.

The Board are delighted to note that the Dental service provided within the current contract has now been enhanced to include annual dental check-ups for those who have been in detention for more than twelve months. This has resolved a long standing concern of the Board.

A Psychiatrist visits CIRC once a week, and there is always a strong demand for their services.

The Board is concerned that the proposed changes to the commissioning of Healthcare services, which would see these responsibilities moving from Immigration to the NHS during 2013, has not happened. The Board would like to see these changes implemented as a matter of urgency, as it strongly believes that the NHS would be better placed to commission Healthcare services that are appropriate to the needs of the detainee population held at CIRC.

The Board recommend that the Minister establishes from the Department of Health what is causing the delays in the NHS taking on the responsibility for commissioning of Health Services within the IDE.

There continues to be a high level of concerns raised with the IMB by detainees in relation to healthcare matters: around 19% (23% in 2012), the second highest category of concern raised with the IMB.

5.4. Purposeful Activity

There are currently 91 opportunities for paid work in CIRC, which caters for just under 25% of the overall population at CIRC and given the high turnover of detainees is considered adequate for the centre and this is supported by the relatively short wait times experienced by detainees requesting work. The paid work includes serving food at meal times to other detainees, some food preparation work in the Kitchen, cleaning duties on the units, laundry attendant duties on the units, and decorating duties around the Centre.

All of these duties are primarily aimed at giving detainees something to do rather than developing their skill sets, and only basic instruction is provided. Nevertheless, the detainees do value these opportunities to work and earn a small sum of money.

The “Buddy” scheme is another example of engaging a group of detainees in a useful activity, training is provided to the buddies and there is a great sense of satisfaction in being able to help their fellow detainees.

The range of activities provided in CIRC does enable all detainees to pursue activities that they find interesting, including, Arts & Crafts, Music, Media and Photography, IT, and physical activities in the well equipped Gym and Sports Hall. There is always a good atmosphere on the activities corridors in the Centre, and this is greatly assisted by housing the Unit Offices on the first floor landings between two units, where detainees have access to DCOs and fax machines.

5.5. Safer Custody

The Assessment, Care in Detention, and Teamwork (ACDT) procedures have applied to CIRC throughout the year. There are regular “Staying Safe” meetings, which review the statistics for the previous month on ACDTs and considers any changes to policy and procedures to ensure Safe Custody. Annually there is a major review undertaken of the overall process. The Board are impressed with both the process and documentation applied in CIRC.

The numbers of ACDTs raised and closed during the month are reported to each IMB Board meeting and the trends have remained relatively stable throughout the year, with between 21 – 39 opened each month, most for relatively short periods.

5.6. Segregation, Care and Separation, Close Supervision

CIRC maintains six Rule 42 rooms and six Rule 40 rooms to accommodate detainees who need to be removed from association.

During 2012 the IMB has continued to operate a weekly “On Call” Rota that is notified in advance to CIRC. The IMB receives a daily report in paper form to our office at CIRC, and the duty Operations Manager telephones the rota member to inform them of any movements into R42/R40. In addition the IMB receives copies of all incident reports relating to R42/R40 movements and use of force within 24 hours

The IMB member “On Call” endeavours to visit all detainees confined to R42 for over 24 hours on the same day, and will visit a sample of detainees taken into R40.

The average stay in R42 is around one day and this regime is used sparingly with an average of less than 3 uses per month. The average stay in R40 is around two days, this regime being used more extensively with the monthly range of usage varying between 13 and 26.

The Board are pleased that there has been a further reduction in the use of these facilities in 2013, and the usage is now relatively stable averaging 20 cases per month during the final quarter of 2013.

The Board is satisfied that the small number of cases exceeding 14 days are being appropriately escalated by the local Immigration team for permission to exceed the DC Rules.

5.7. Residential Services

Generally the Accommodation at CIRC is of a good quality, and is well maintained. Nevertheless, the facilities are now reaching an age where periodic breakdowns and failures are inevitable.

There have been a number of significant improvements implemented in 2013 including: -

- the complete refurbishment of the Enhanced Unit for use as a female only unit and now renamed the Sahara Unit. This has provided a relaxed and pleasant unit which is completely self-contained and provides a much improved and safer environment for females being held at CIRC. This unit is staffed solely by female DCOs;
- The redecoration of the rooms in the FN/LN Unit and fitting of door threshold strips in the entrance to the shower to prevent the regular flooding of rooms; and
- The redecoration of the Healthcare Inpatients Unit.

All these improvements have been undertaken to a good standard and all have contributed to improving the environment in CIRC. The Board have been particularly impressed with the new Sahara Unit, which has addressed one of our main concerns from previous years regarding the safety of females in a largely male detention environment. The new unit is located on the top floor of the Reception and Visits Block and is completely self-contained. It comprises 9 triple bed rooms, separate toilet and shower block, a laundry facility, a kitchen unit, a small IT suite, a large screen television with sofas set out like a sitting room, table tennis and pool tables, and a separate dining area. The environment is very relaxed and we have had many positive comments from detainees housed on this unit.

Throughout the year, the Board have noted regular instances of flooding of rooms in the FN/LN and Induction units. This was caused by use of the showers in these rooms, which would not be contained within the shower area and appears to be a design fault. The Board were pleased to see towards the end of the year the installation of rubber threshold strips at the entrance to the shower area on the rooms in FN/LN unit, which appears to be containing the water within the shower areas. It is expected that these rubber strips will also be fitted to the rooms in Induction unit during 2014.

The design of CIRC creates a number of issues for detainees, particularly the lack of fresh air as there are no opening windows throughout the centre. The heating and air flow is provided via a ducting system into all rooms, so it is not possible to regulate the temperature at an individual room level. The mesh vents can become clogged and need to be cleaned regularly, and detainees do sometimes block vents into their rooms, which interferes with the flow of air/heat in CIRC. These issues are magnified when there are extremes of weather, in particularly cold or hot spells, although at other times the situation is acceptable. The Board acknowledge that during cold spells that CIRC do issue additional bedding to detainees on request and use portable heaters in the most badly affected areas of the building.

The Laundry rooms are another area of frequent complaint as there are regular failures in laundry equipment. Each of the four residential units is equipped with 2 washing machines and 2 dryers, which aim to provide laundry facilities for 66 detainees on each unit. The laundry units are manned by a Laundry Attendant, a detainee who is paid to supervise the laundry rooms and ensure that the machines are used properly. This generally works well as the laundry attendant can identify any issues with the equipment and report these promptly to the unit managers. The machines installed are essentially household appliances and are not really designed for the constant use they are subjected to in CIRC, and it is therefore inevitable that they will fail on a regular basis.

On a small number of occasions in 2013, the Board have identified a lack of towels and bed linen available in CIRC. This reflects the increasing turnover of residents at CIRC and the fact that all cleaning of towels and bed linen is undertaken off site. These situations are resolved quickly by Management; they do however cause significant concern for detainees when they arise.

Accommodation issues have significantly improved during the year falling from the third highest category of issue raised with the IMB during 2012 to the seventh highest category this year at 6.5% (12.4% in 2012).

The Board receive a steady but stable number of complaints in relation to the food provided at CIRC. In our regular tasting of the food available at CIRC we generally find it to be of a good quality. The issues raised by detainees largely revolve around the different individual tastes of certain ethnic groups; that the menus are repetitive and choices somewhat limited; and particular dietary needs that they feel are not being met.

There are regular complaints about the rice at CIRC, the Board have found occasions where the rice is under cooked, although most of the complaints received revolve around the personal taste of how detainees prefer their rice to be cooked.

CIRC has operated a pre-select menu throughout 2013, which enables detainees to select their meals for the week ahead. The menus provide up to 4 choices per meal at lunch and dinner, including vegetarian options. Special meals are provided to detainees who have a specific medical need, but these have to be prescribed by the Doctor. The weekly menus do rotate on a monthly cycle.

In November there was an independent external inspection of the Catering Facilities at CIRC by NOMS, which provided additional assurance that the catering arrangements at CIRC are of a good standard, and the only recommendation made in this report was that recording by Management that they had tasted the quality of food needed improvement.

Overall the Board are satisfied with the catering facilities available at CIRC and the quality of food provided, whilst acknowledging some difficulties that have arisen during the year.

The food issues raised with the IMB during 2013 at 7.4% (2012 8.1%) is stable when compared to previous years.

6. AREAS OF SPECIFIC CONCERN FOR THE BOARD

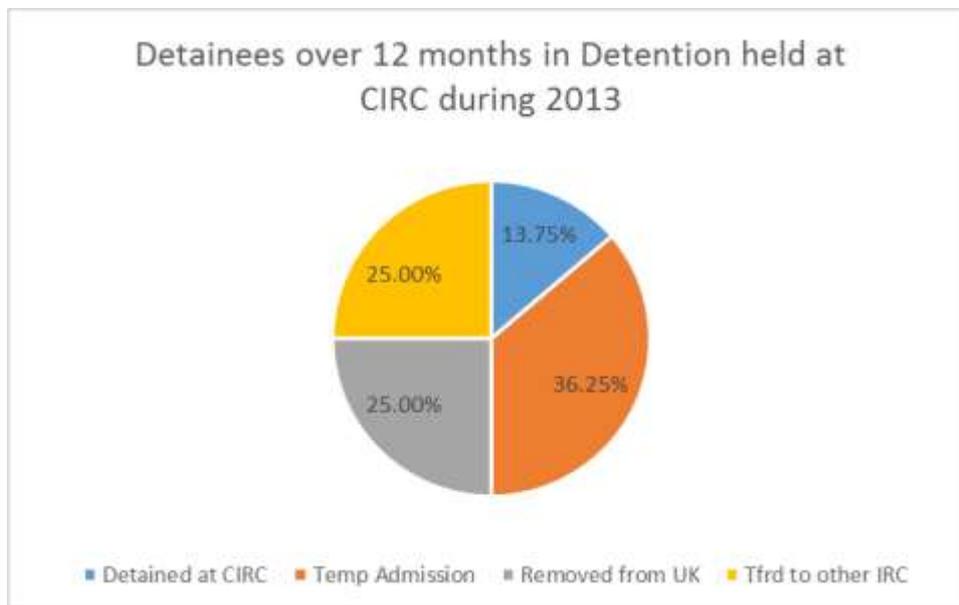
The following areas have been recurring themes noted from the Board's activities during 2013.

6.1. Length of Detention

The Board have raised this issue in our previous five Annual Reports and made recommendations which have been acknowledged as relevant in principle. The Board is pleased that in the last twelve months there has been some positive progress made, and has noted that there has been some reduction in the number of detainees held at CIRC who have been in detention in excess of 12 months. Nevertheless, the Board feels that the issue has not been fully resolved and that further action is still required.

The Board are pleased to acknowledge that Immigration have provided a list of detainees resident at CIRC who have been in detention in excess of 6 months at the end of each month throughout 2013. These reports also confirm the total cumulative time they have been held in detention. The Board welcome the provision of this information which enables the identification of potentially vulnerable individuals.

The Board has undertaken an analysis of the 80 individuals reported in these monthly reports, who had been held in detention in excess of 1 year. It has reviewed the Custody Management System (CMS) at CIRC operated by SERCO and updated by SERCO staff to identify the reason for discharge from CIRC. The Board acknowledges that this information has not been verified by the Home Office. The following chart shows the breakdown: -



The chart demonstrates that 13.75% remain in detention at CIRC, a further 25% have been transferred to other detention centres, and for these individuals we have no information as to whether they remain in detention or not. The largest category comprising 36.25% have been provided with Temporary Admission to the country, after being held in detention for over 12 months, which continues to raise the question as to why it took so long for Immigration case workers to conclude that detention was not necessary. The final 25% of the sample were successfully removed from the UK.

The Board are pleased to note that the numbers of detainees held at CIRC who have been in cumulative detention for over twelve months has reduced by over half from the beginning of the year, although the vast majority of this reduction was achieved in the period January to June, since when the numbers have plateaued once more. This perhaps suggests that the provision of this information led to a review of the caseload with longer durations of detention in the first half of the year and resulted in different decisions being taken on the need to maintain detention on a significant proportion of these cases, and the caseload remaining is now perhaps more entrenched and difficult to resolve.

The Board remain concerned that there is a minority of detainees within the Immigration Detention Estate who are being held for excessive indeterminate periods, and this may have a detrimental effect on their mental health. This situation is most certainly not in the best interests of those being detained. Moreover, there is clearly a considerable cost incurred to keep individuals in detention and the current approaches may not be delivering the best value for money for the taxpayer.

In our 2012 Annual Report the Board welcomed the HM Inspectorate of Prisons and the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration joint review of “The Effectiveness and Impact of Immigration Detention Casework” the conclusions of which were published in December 2012. The Board supported the recommendation in that report that “an Independent Panel should be established to examine cases of detainees held for lengthy periods (the exact period to be defined by the panel after consultation) to establish if prolonged detention is justified for exceptional and clearly evidenced circumstances only. It should publish its findings annually. UKBA should expeditiously review all cases in which the panel recommends release and publish its response.”

Immigration responded that they have already established a National Detention Review Panel to review all enforcement cases detained over a specified time period on a four weekly basis. According to Immigration this will act as an expert and impartial panel to unblock problems and make the decisions around the maintenance of detention. Immigration see this panel as the stepping stone to the establishment of the National Removals Centre and will ultimately provide an added layer of assurance to the efficient, effective and legal use of detention.

Whilst the Board welcome this response, and acknowledge from the experience in CIRC that the number of detainees being held for more than 12 months in detention has fallen by over a half in the last 12 months, **the Board would still recommend that the National Detention Review Panel is made independent of Immigration and issues an annual report to publish its findings on the recommendations made.**

6.2. Night Time Movements

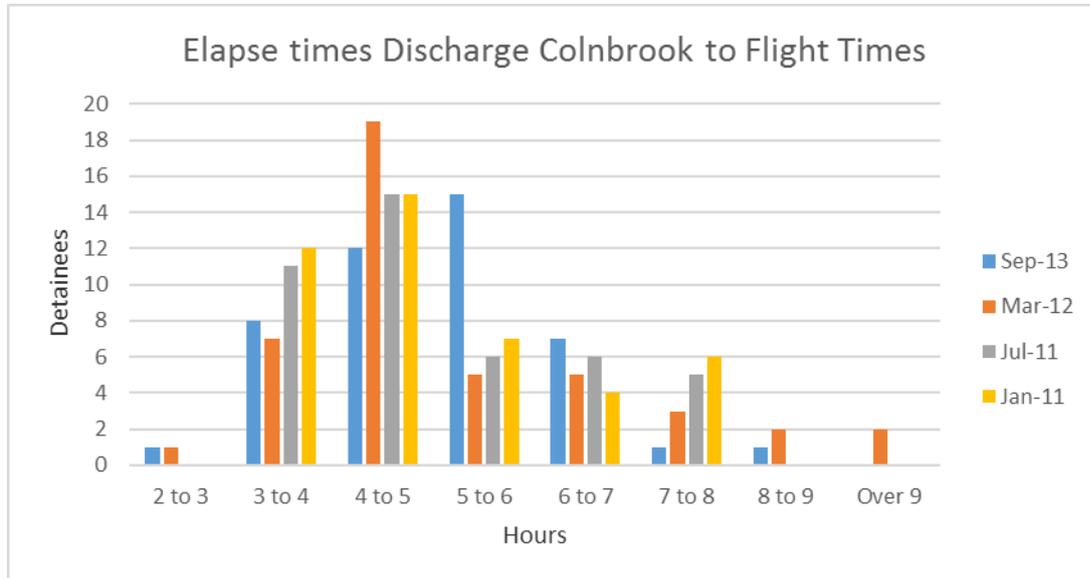
In our previous three annual reports we identified a number of concerns with the night time movements to Heathrow Airport. In this Annual Report we have taken a wider view of Night Time Movements, whilst accepting that the largest category of night time movement continues to be removals through Heathrow Airport. During the month of September 2013, the IMB analysed all the departures and arrivals at CIRC to ascertain the extent of Night Time Movements. For the purposes of this report, the Board has used the time of lockdown within CIRC between 10pm and 8am the following morning as the night time state. The Board understand that DEPMU use a more constrained timeframe of 11pm to 6am, for their own measurement purposes of Night Time movements. The reality for detainees is that movements between 10pm and 8am will entail them being disturbed during what they would consider to be the night time state.

The following table summarise the departures from CIRC by reason of the discharge as recorded in the Custody Management System (CMS) at CIRC operated by SERCO, (the Board acknowledge that the Home Office have not verified the information contained in this system): -

Summary Discharges - September 2013		10pm to 8 am			
		All Discharges	Category by % of All	Night Discharges	Category by % of Night
Bail/Court Hearing	38	3.13%	12	3.35%	31.58%
Transfer to Prison	62	5.11%	6	1.68%	9.68%
Hospital Visit	29	2.39%	5	1.40%	17.24%
Interview Offsite	107	8.82%	14	3.91%	13.08%
Charter Flights	27	2.23%	10	2.79%	37.04%
Removal Directions	552	45.51%	247	68.99%	44.75%
Temporary Admission	88	7.25%	0	0.00%	0.00%
Transfer to IRC	310	25.56%	64	17.88%	20.65%
Total	1213	100.00%	358	100.00%	29.51%

Night time moves account for almost 30% of all discharges from CIRC, and this level of discharges is consistent with previous analyses. The removal directions category is the largest reason for night time moves by some distance, and the vast majority of these are through Heathrow Airport which is located close to CIRC. The only other significant reason for night time moves is transfers to other centres, and these two categories are now considered in more detail.

Of the night time moves, 69% of these moves related to Removals from the UK, and the timing will be largely dictated by the times of flights from Heathrow Airport. In order to test this hypothesis a sample of discharges to Heathrow airport were investigated with the assistance of Immigration Staff to ascertain the flight times that were related to these discharges, and the results of this sample of 45 flights from September 2013, were compared with previous samples taken over the last few years. The following chart outlines the results of this sample.



The SLA that Tascor are working to with Immigration, is that detainees will only be brought to the airport a maximum of 5 hours before their flights. As the measurement used here is the time of departure from Colnbrook, compared to the flight time, it is likely that those falling in the 5 to 6 hours category would probably meet the SLA as the van drivers would be in a position to determine when they arrive at the airport. Nevertheless, from a decency point of view the detainee will have been disturbed some 30 minutes prior to these departure times in order to go through the discharge process. From the above analysis, it would appear that there has been some marginal deterioration in the length of elapse times since the March 2012 sample, although the number of exceptional outliers has been significantly reduced with only 2 of the sample exceeding 7 hours elapse time, compared to 7 in March 2012.

The conclusion from this sample is that these night time moves are unavoidable if the removals are to be effectively executed. There would be some potential to reduce night time moves if the maximum of 5 hours before a flight was reduced, but Immigration maintain that this would increase the risk of failed removals due to flights being missed.

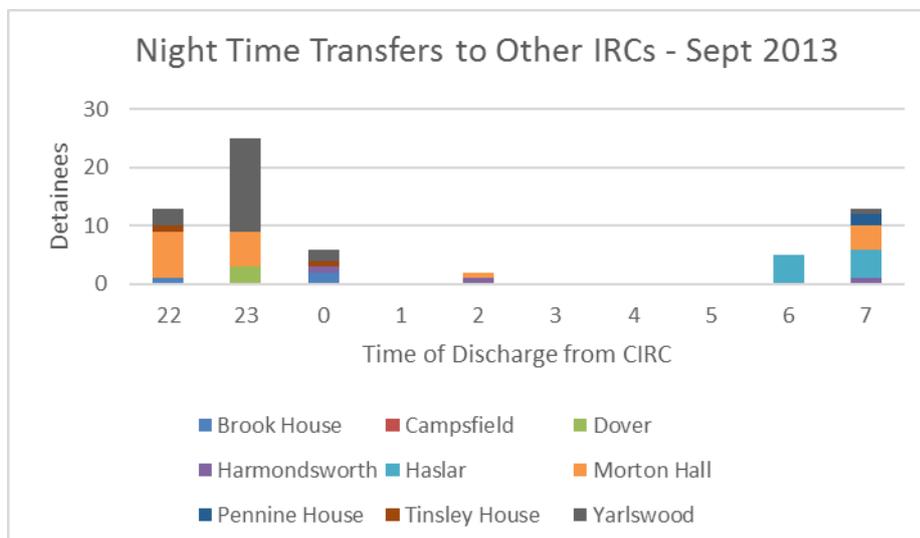
The next most significant discharge category in the table above, accounting for nearly 18% of night time moves (64 movements), were transfers to other IRCs which were initiated during the night time. Further analysis of the transfers to other centres has been undertaken and is set out in the table on the following page.

Summary of Transfers to Other Centres - Sept 2013

	All Moves	Night Moves	All Moves	Night Moves	Night %
Brook House	11	3	3.55%	4.69%	27.27%
Campsfield	2	0	0.65%	0.00%	0.00%
Dover	32	3	10.32%	4.69%	9.38%
Harmondsworth	38	3	12.26%	4.69%	7.89%
Haslar	70	10	22.58%	15.63%	14.29%
Morton Hall	53	19	17.10%	29.69%	35.85%
Pennine House	5	2	1.61%	3.13%	40.00%
Tinsley House	8	2	2.58%	3.13%	25.00%
Yarlswood	91	22	29.35%	34.38%	24.18%
Total	310	64	100.00%	100.00%	20.65%

From this analysis, Night time moves to Morton Hall and Yarlswood form a greater proportion of those moves than they do for all moves. The timings of the night moves to Yarlswood and Morton Hall are predominantly between 10pm and Midnight, so these journeys will be arriving at the receiving centre in the early hours of the morning, and for Yarlswood the detainees will be female. There are also a significant proportion of moves to Haslar, which is surprising as this centre does not receive detainees during the night. On further analysis, these moves are all in the last couple of hours of the night time state, presumably so that they will arrive at Haslar soon after they open for arrivals. The moves to Pennine House will typically be going to Dungavel, but given the distances the journey will be broken at Manchester. There are minimal transfers undertaken between 1am and 5.59am.

The following chart shows the distribution of transfers from CIRC across the night time state



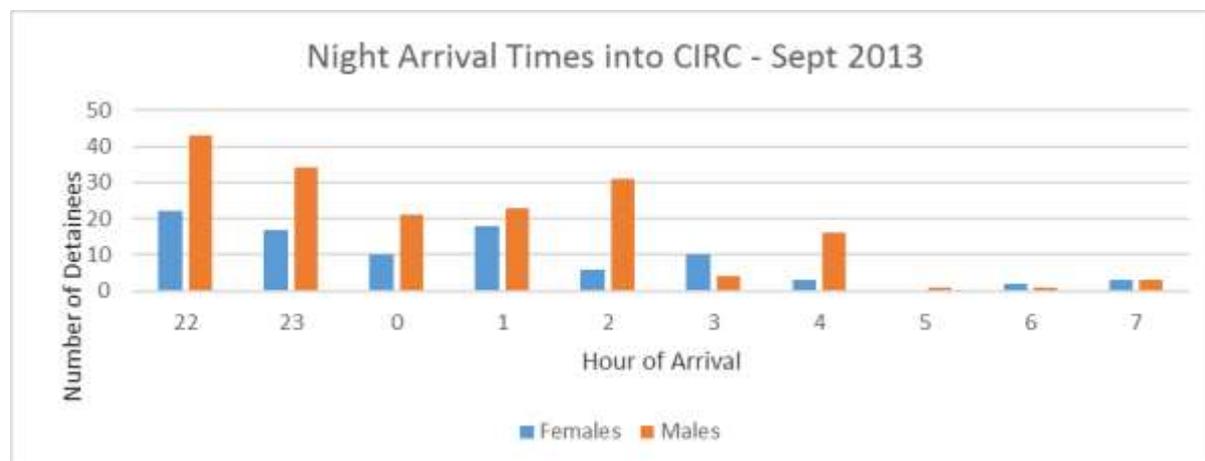
All of these movements are completely within the control of Immigration, and it is hard to see what the justification is for moving individual detainees during the night state.

There is not the same information recorded in CMS on where detainees arriving at the CIRC have come from. This analysis is therefore restricted to an analysis of arrival times, to establish those arrivals that have occurred during the night state. The analysis has been broken down between Males and Females to ascertain if there is any different pattern between the genders.

Gender	All Arrivals	Night Time Arrivals	Night Time %
Male	757	177	23.38%
Female	210	91	43.33%
Total	967	268	27.71%

It is perhaps not surprising that there is a significantly greater proportion of the female arrivals that occur during the night state, recognising that there are only a limited number of IRCs that can accommodate female detainees. If these are movements from Heathrow, then this is probably acceptable as the alternative would be to remain in the holding facilities at the airport which do not provide the same range of facilities that are available in the Sahara Unit at CIRC. However, if these moves are transfers from Yarlswood IRC, similar to the departures noted above, then these should be challenged on the grounds of decency.

The following chart shows the distribution of arrival times during the night state: -



For both the male and female populations, there is a much more even distribution throughout the night compared to the discharges which tend to be either before 1am or after 6 am. If the discharge pattern at CIRC is typical for all IRCs operating 24/7, then the arrivals will reflect the average journey times from the despatching establishments. The arrivals prior to midnight will therefore probably have left their previous establishment during the day time state.

The Board recommend that transfers between IRCs are not undertaken during the Night State, except in exceptional circumstances.

6.3. Reception Processing Time

The Board reported in the previous two annual reports that we had identified instances of male detainees taking over 5 hours in the reception area before they are allocated a room, which we view as being excessive and unacceptable.

A further review was carried out in September 2013 to see if the situation had changed. An extract of all arrivals into the Centre was obtained for the Month of September, and for the period 1st to 7th September inclusive, the CMS was interrogated to ascertain the times that the detainees were allocated to accommodation within CIRC.

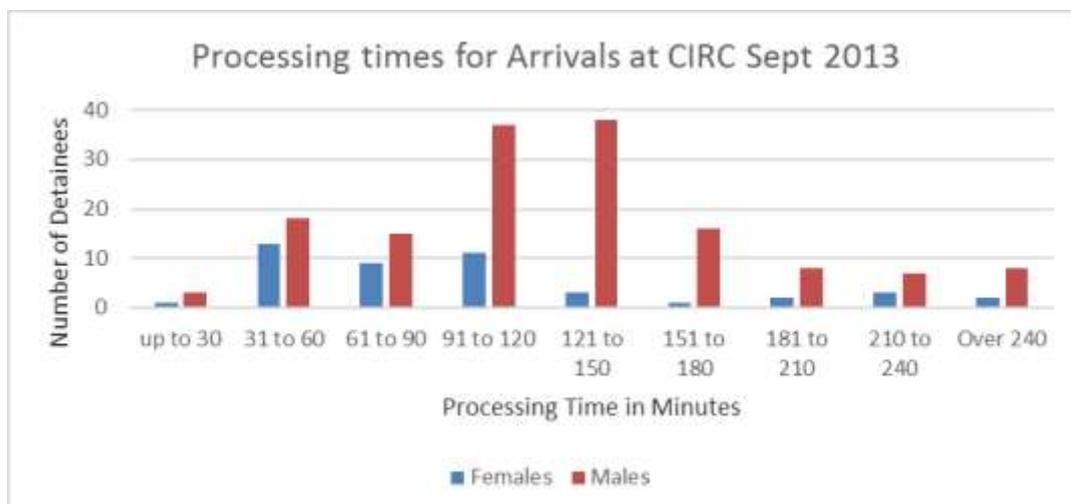
The results of this analysis are set out below.

	Number	Lowest	Highest	Mean	Median
Females	45	30 minutes	10 hours 25 minutes	1 hour 49 minutes	1 hour 23 minutes
Males	150	7 minutes	5 hours 56 minutes	2 hours 7 minutes	2 hours 2 minutes
Total	195				

These results are encouraging, in that the average times for the Male population have reduced by around 1 hour since our previous sample in March 2012, although the average times for Female detainees have actually increased by around 20 minutes. Nevertheless, the Female detainees on average continue to be processed into CIRC around 20 minutes faster than the male detainees and are on this measure getting closer to the 90 minute target that was previously recommended by the IMB. Whilst the situation has improved for the male population, at over 2 hours on average, the IMB still feel that there is further room for improvement.

Notwithstanding the improving trend, there continue to be examples of detainees who are spending unacceptable times in the reception process, with 8 male detainees and 2 female detainees taking in excess of 4 hours to be processed into the centre, so circa 5% of the total sample took longer than 4 hours to house.

The chart below shows the range of processing times for the 7 day period of the recent September sample.



The following tables set out the daily performance for the male and female cohorts over the period of the sample.

Summary of Male Admissions					
	Number	Longest	Shortest	Mean	Median
01-Sep	20	151	45	107	101.5
02-Sep	18	277	36	123	126.5
03-Sep	21	216	51	115	104
04-Sep	29	356	7	148	121
05-Sep	16	299	46	172	158.5
06-Sep	25	207	13	124	125
07-Sep	21	177	7	104	115
Total	150	356	7	127	121.5

Summary of Female Admissions					
	Number	Longest	Shortest	Mean	Median
01-Sep	4	98	57	74	71
02-Sep	6	177	34	88	76.5
03-Sep	10	97	30	69	72.5
04-Sep	15	215	38	113	96
05-Sep	3	625	56	288	184
06-Sep	3	277	33	129	78
07-Sep	4	143	56	112	125
Total	45	625	30	109	83

What both these tables demonstrate is that there are wide fluctuations on a daily basis, although interestingly the day with the lowest volume of arrivals, Thursday 5 September, had the worst performance in terms of average admission times.

The Board welcome the progress that has been made to improve processing times into the Centre, but continue to believe that the length of time to process detainees into the Centre should be reduced further against the current experience, and feel that a target of 90 minutes ought to be the aim.

It continues to be apparent that one of the major factors impacting on these processing times is not the absolute volume being processed, but rather a bunching of arrivals into the Centre. This aspect is outside the control of CIRC and is a function of the escorting contract between DEPMU and Tascor. The Board understand that DEPMU do not have IT systems that enable them to manage this situation, so once a movement order has been placed with Tascor the timing of fulfilment of the movement within the day is left entirely within their discretion.

The Board are also aware that CIRC could improve their own statistics by not admitting Tascor vans to the centre until they are able to process the detainees through detention, but Management take the view that it is better for the detainees to be allowed into the reception area at CIRC rather than remaining on a van, whilst they wait to be processed into the centre. The Board concur with this judgement.

The Board recommend that DEPMU should be equipped with the appropriate IT systems to effectively manage the logistics of population movements in the IDE.

The Board recommend that there should be an agreed service level to house detainees within their accommodation within 90 minutes of arrival at CIRC.

6.4. Property

Concerns related to their property have remained stable during 2013 at 9.9% (2012: 9.2%) and continues to be the fourth highest category of issues raised with the IMB.

Generally CIRC deals well with detainee's property whilst they are resident in the centre; there is a central store area where most of their property is stored and they can arrange access to their property within reasonable timescales via the Customer Service Applications Process.

CIRC operates a cashless environment, all detainees have an account set up for their cash on arrival and can use their account to make purchases at the shop. This approach has significantly reduced issues and disputes regarding cash going missing in the centre.

The major issue relating to property is in respect of property that has been lost either in transit or at a previous IRC, Prison or Police Cells. Detainees do experience difficulties in tracking down their property and arranging for them to be reunited with their property. Assistance is provided by the Welfare Officer at CIRC but it can often become a protracted process.

The Board are pleased to see that the Immigration Complaints Process is making greater provision to deal with the resolution of these types of complaint.

6.5. Induction and First Night/Last Night Units

As extensively covered in our 2012 Annual Report, the Induction Unit (60 beds) and First Night / Last Night Unit (40 beds), were created in 2012 out of the former STHF, and are now considered part of the IRC and as such covered by IRC rules rather than STHF rules.

The accommodation in these units is considerably more cramped than the rooms on the main units in the IRC, being formed of 2 bunk beds, a screened off shower / toilet area, a small wash basin and a TV mounted on a high level shelf. There is very limited open floor space in these rooms.

The accommodation on the ground floor is designated as a First Night/Last Night Unit (FN/LN) which operates on the basis that detainees are locked in rooms until they have been properly risk assessed. These 20 rooms continue to have no access to the activities in the Centre and detainees have to be escorted to the small exercise yard.

The 1st and 2nd floors are designated as the Induction (IND) unit, rooms remain unlocked allowing the detainees freedom to associate with each other, and a number of former meeting rooms have been converted into a lounge area, a games area, an education area, and a room with IT facilities. Detainees on this unit are also escorted twice a day to the main activities corridors in CIRC which provide access to a wider set of activities, and the ability to associate with detainees housed on the main units in CIRC. Due to the physical design of the building, it is not feasible to give these detainees unrestricted access to the main activities corridors. Clearly this is a more restricted access to these facilities than is available to detainees in the main IRC wings who can freely circulate and return to their rooms as they wish.

Immigration do acknowledge that the rooms in IND and FN/LN are more cramped than those in the main wings of the IRC, and that it is the intention of Immigration that these rooms are to be used for short term stays only, with a limit on stays in this accommodation to a maximum of 7 days, which was consistent with the regime that existed under the STHF rules. CIRC have set up a management reporting system to track the length of stay in these rooms, so that action can be taken to re-house them onto the main IRC units as 7 days approach.

This reporting has demonstrated that due to high turnover of detainees and high occupancy rates at CIRC that it is not always possible to re-house detainees into the main wings within 7 days, and there are regular occurrences now where detainees are spending longer than 7 days in these facilities. The previous statutory safeguard has been removed and replaced with an operational measure which is not as effective in ensuring that these facilities are only used for short stays.

The Board recommend that cumulative stays in FN/LN and Induction units at CIRC should not exceed 7 days.

6.6. Re-tendering of Contract to Manage CIRC

The current contract to manage CIRC is held by Serco until August 2014. In anticipation of the current contract coming to an end, Immigration have undertaken a re-tendering exercise which aimed to culminate in the appointment of a new contractor to manage CIRC by mid 2013, allowing a reasonable handover period, of about 12 months.

At the time of writing this report, the Board understand that Immigration have decided to award a contract to manage both CIRC and the adjacent Harmondsworth IRC as one contract to operate both centres as a Heathrow Cluster of IRCs, and the contract was awarded during February 2014.

Given the extent of changes contemplated in managing two IRCs as one operation, the complexity of two outgoing contractors handing over to a third contractor, and the now constrained handover period of less than 6 months, the Board are concerned that the smooth operation of CIRC may be compromised by an inadequate handover plan / period.

The Board recommend that the Minister imposes a deadline for decisions to be made on the award of future new contracts that will allow sufficient time for an effective handover to be achieved.

6.7 Food Refusals

During 2013, CIRC has been subject to a concerted campaign of food refusals throughout the year. The reason for these food refusals was primarily a protest against the individuals continued detention or the status of their immigration case, rather than a complaint against the quality of the food at CIRC.

The number of individuals recorded on food refusal each month has fluctuated between 11 and 32, averaging 22 per month, and ending the year with 13 during December.

The maximum length of a food refusal was 127 days, although many were for much shorter periods than this.

A new reporting mechanism was instigated during the year, including a risk assessment, which enabled Immigration to escalate the more serious cases in terms of the risk to detainees health, and this process appears to have worked well as during the year these cases have been worked through and the issues have now been significantly de-escalated.

Nevertheless, the scale of the food refusals, and the need to monitor the impact on their health, has had serious knock on impacts on the Healthcare resources as separately mentioned under 5.3 above.

7. THE WORK OF THE IMB

7.1. Board Statistics for 2013

Approved complement of Board Members	16
Number of Board Members as at January 2013	12
Number of Board Members as at December 2013	9
Number of new members joining during 2013	0
Number of members leaving during 2013	3
Number of members on sabbatical during 2013	0
Number of Board Meetings during the Year	12
Number of visits to CIRC	313
Total Number of Concerns raised with the Board	353
Total Number of Segregation/Separation Visits	68

7.2. Issues raised in requests to see IMB

Code	Subject	2010 No.	2010 %	2011 No.	2011 %	2012 No.	2012 %	2013 No.	2013 %
A	Accommodation	20	4.6	22	6.8	35	12.4	23	6.5
B	Rule 40/42	7	1.6	6	1.9	1	0.4	5	1.4
C	Equality & Diversity	11	2.5	4	1.2	6	2.1	19	5.4
D	Education/Activities	21	4.8	7	2.1	15	5.3	7	2.0
E	Family/Visits	19	4.4	10	3.1	7	2.5	11	3.1
F	Food/Kitchen	31	7.1	29	8.9	23	8.1	26	7.4
G	Health	84	19.4	58	17.9	66	23.3	67	19.0
H	Property	50	11.5	43	13.2	26	9.2	35	9.9
I	Detention/Immigration Status	85	19.6	90	27.7	57	20.1	78	22.1
J	Staff/Detainee	55	12.7	22	6.8	24	8.5	41	11.6
K	Transfers	38	8.8	27	8.3	16	5.6	28	7.9
L	Miscellaneous	13	3.0	7	2.1	7	2.5	13	3.7
	Total Number of Concerns Raised	434		325		283		353	

8. GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

Abbreviation	Meaning
ACDT	Assessment, Care in Detention & Teamwork
CIRC	Colnbrook Immigration Removal Centre
DIAC	Detainee Information Activities Committee
ENU	Enhanced Unit
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
Ex FNO	Ex Foreign National Offender
HMCIP	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons
IDE	Immigration Detention Estate
IMB	Independent Monitoring Board
IRC	Immigration Removal Centre
PPO	Prison and Probation Ombudsman
PSU	Professional Standards Unit
SLA	Service Level Agreement
STHF	Short Term Holding Facility

Andrew Newell

Chair of IMB at Colnbrook IRC

March 2014

9. PROGRESS WITH PREVIOUSLY REPORTED MATTERS

Matter Reported in 2012 Report	Progress in 2013	Status for 2013 Report
To the Minister		
<p>The Board recommend that an Independent Panel should be established to examine cases of detainees held for lengthy periods (the exact period to be defined by the panel after consultation) to establish if prolonged detention is justified for exceptional and clearly evidenced circumstances only. It should publish its findings annually. Home Office should expeditiously review all cases in which the panel recommends release and publish its response.</p>	<p>Immigration action plan accepted the recommendation stating: -</p> <p>We have already established a National Detention Review Panel to review all enforcement cases detained over a specified time period on a four weekly basis. This will act as an expert and impartial panel to unblock problems and make the decisions around the maintenance of detention. This panel will be the stepping stone to the establishment of the National Removals Centre and will provide an added layer of assurance to the efficient, effective and legal use of detention.</p>	<p>The action taken has gone some way to addressing our concerns. There has been a reduction in the number of detainees held at CIRC with cumulative detention exceeding 12 months.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matter Improving</p>
To the UKBA/Immigration		
<p>The Board recommend that where detainees are being held in detention for longer than 12 months Home Office should provide a wider range of dental services</p>	<p>Immigration action plan accepted this recommendation in 2010, 2011 and 2012, and committed to reviewing this service for a possible contract modification. DSO 4/13 was issued in April 2013 confirming that dental check ups will be provided to detainees who have exceeded 12 months in detention and annually thereafter.</p>	<p>The IMB are pleased that this particular matter has now been satisfactorily addressed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matter Resolved</p>

Matter Reported in 2012 Report	Progress in 2013	Status for 2013 Report
<u>To the UKBA/Immigration (cont)</u>		
<p>The Board recommend that the Home Office Complaints Unit should quality review the standard of the responses provided to detainees, and should consider an appeal stage to the process before invoking the appeal to the Ombudsman</p>	<p>The Action Plan accepted this recommendation stating: -</p> <p>The Home Office Complaints Unit quality assure all responses but there will be occasions where this is not always possible due to staff/time restrictions. However, the DS CSU carried out a review of the quality of a sample of responses from all centres and the escort provider and highlighted a number of areas for improvement. A complaints workshop was then hosted by DS CSU with complaints clerks from the various Service Providers in the Estate to discuss the outcome of the review, other areas of concern and as a result of this, amended response templates were agreed and are now being utilised. The DS CSU will undertake a further review later in the year to see whether the changes implemented have helped improve the standard of responses.</p>	<p>Our own monitoring this year has not identified any new instances of poor quality control, although we have not undertaken a sample review of a months responses as we did in 2012.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matter Resolved</p>
<p>The Board recommend that DEPMU should be equipped with the appropriate IT systems to effectively manage the logistics of population movements in the estate</p>	<p>The action plan accepted this recommendation in principle, stating: -</p> <p>Following the recent announcement by the Home Secretary to merge UK Border Agency into the Home Office, work is underway to improve its IT efficiency, including at DEPMU where we are currently looking at alternative systems to effectively manage the population and logistics electronically.</p>	<p>The IMB are not aware that any new systems have been implemented or are being commissioned, and recent discussions with DEPMU would suggest that there has been limited progress in the last 12 months.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matter Static</p>

Matter Reported in 2012 Report	Progress in 2013	Status for 2013 Report
<u>To the UKBA/Immigration (cont)</u>		
<p>The Board recommend that there should be an agreed service level to house detainees within their accommodation within 90 minutes of arrival at CIRC, and this should be embedded in the New Contract.</p>	<p>The action plan accepted this recommendation in part, stating: -</p> <p>The new Operating Schedule for use from August 2014 will include a specific time for Service providers to house detainees in their allocated accommodation – this will be 3 hours.</p>	<p>This could well make matters worse, as CIRC are currently achieving around 90 minutes on average for females, and just over 2 hours on average for males. The Contract Monitor at CIRC is of the view that the 3 hour SLA is a maximum and anticipates that the average times will be much lower.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matter Static</p>
<p>The Board recommend that Home Office should provide a mediation mechanism to resolve long standing property disputes which cannot be resolved within a reasonable timescale by detainees.</p>	<p>The action plan accepted this recommendation, stating: -</p> <p>This is currently being considered. The mediation framework would be the preserve of the CSU and would form part of the complaints process.</p>	<p>Whilst the solution is different than we recommended this should at least provide a mechanism for difficult property issues to be resolved</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matter Resolved</p>
<p>The Board recommend that cumulative stays in FN/LN and Induction units at CIRC should not exceed 7 days</p>	<p>The action plan accepted the recommendation in principle, stating: -</p> <p>A new daily reporting system to Home Office highlights the length of stay in FN/LN and Induction Units and where stays are approaching or exceeding 7 days. Considerable efforts are made to transfer these detainees out of the Unit however this is dependent upon bed spaces being available in the Main Centre and other establishments.</p>	<p>The situation has stabilised in these units, but the IMB still regularly identify detainees who have spent more than 7 days in this accommodation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matter Static</p>

Matter Reported in 2012 Report	Progress in 2013	Status for 2013 Report
<u>To UKBA/Immigration (Cont)</u>		
<p>The Board recommend that DEPMU should ensure that the female STHF at CIRC is not over-allocated, as it is inappropriate to house females in a male IRC</p>	<p>The action plan accepted the recommendation, stating: - "Home Office authorised for the refurbishment of the Enhanced Unit in Colnbrook to a 27 bed female unit and this opened for use in March 2013. This will permit the IRC to accommodate the larger numbers of females during High Commission documentation exercises and to avoid unnecessary moves to Yarlswood for next day removals."</p>	<p>Recommendation was actioned through the opening of Sahara Unit which has considerably improved the environment for female detainees at CIRC. No instances of females being housed on male units in 2013.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matter Resolved</p>
<p>The Board recommend that Home Office send a prompt acknowledgement to detainees of receipt of a Section 4 application, with a reasonable timescale for processing the application</p>	<p>The recommendation was accepted in principle, stating: -</p> <p>An acknowledgement slip system will be implemented to confirm receipt of a Section 4 application. This will include standard processing times published by the Section 4 team for information.</p>	<p>The Manager of the area responsible for the applications attended an IMB Board Meeting in early 2013, and provided a contact number to the IMB to deal with any issues arising with this process. The issues with Section 4 applications have significantly reduced in 2013 indicating that the improvements have been effective.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matter Resolved</p>
<p>The Board recommend that Hospital Appointments are given a higher priority when scheduling operational activities, to ensure that missed appointments are eliminated or reduced</p>	<p>The recommendation was accepted in principle, stating:-</p> <p>Scheduling of Hospital appointments are prioritised based on medical need. Generally a minimum of two routine appointments will take place daily Mon- Fri with emergency escorts carried out as required.</p>	<p>The issues with failed hospital appointments have reduced in 2013, compared to 2012, nevertheless they do continue to arise be it on a reduced scale</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matter Improving</p>