



# Independent Monitoring Board

## Annual Report 2012

Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre  
Independent Monitoring Board  
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## 1. Introduction

This annual report covers the period from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012. This is submitted by Dungavel House Independent Monitoring Board relating to Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre, Scotland for the information of the Minister for Immigration as required by the Detention Centre Rules 2001.

The regulations require the board to advise the Minister on the estate and administrations of the centre. This includes recommendations and suggestions which members consider appropriate.

In consequence, the board continues to adopt the form of presentation which they hope will inform and interest the reader as well as assure the minister that all comments are given without prejudice and in good faith. Diagrams, statistics and data relating to detainees have not been included.

## 2. Executive Summary

2.1. It is almost an impossible task to write a report which, on each occasion, requires the use of superlatives. Fortunately this is the happy circumstance once again in the 2012 report on the performance of Dungavel.

2.2. This was confirmed by the opinion of other independent agencies and resulted in Dungavel being awarded the Sword of Honour by the British Safety Council. The Sword of Honour represents a pinnacle of achievement in the world of health and safety management. Firstly, an organisation must have achieved five stars in the British Safety Council Five Star Health and Safety Audit and must then go on to prove they are among the 'best of the best' to an independent adjudicator. It is to the Contractor's great credit that the Five star Health and Safety Award and the Sword of Honour was achieved within the first year of them taking over the contract. Worldwide, eighty companies were awarded the Sword of Honour during 2012.

2.3. In addition to this, the Chief Inspector of prisons, Mick Hardwicke, described Dungavel in his recent report as "the best Immigration Removal Centre we have inspected". Amongst other praiseworthy comments Mr. Hardwick refers to the "excellent relationships between staff and detainees".

2.4. The Board is delighted to have their views concerning the painstaking commitment of staff so positively approved by HMIP.

2.5. Resulting from the increase in available space, following internal rehabilitation work, the contractor has made further improvement to regime initiative to prevent boredom. In turn, the caring environment has been widened further with more counselling, nurse-led clinics and quiet space for detainees who require assistance and encouragement.

2.6. There is little doubt that the Director of the Centre, John McClure, and His Deputy, Tom McCallum, act in the best professional manner, continuing the important progress in the Centre's past achievements.

2.7. Final confirmation

Finally, The Board is pleased to confirm that in the period under review (year 2012), the premises at Dungavel have been maintained in a satisfactory manner and the persons who are detained there are treated with care, consideration and humanity.

### 3. Location and background

3.1. Dungavel House IRC is the only removal centre in Scotland. It occupies a position of considerable strategic importance with access to major travel facilities both within the UK and internationally.

3.2. Situated on the A71 (Ayr, Edinburgh) close to the town of Strathaven, South Lanarkshire, access can be reached to the main M74 (Glasgow, London) within 10-15 minutes. The international airports are a mere 25-35 minutes away.

3.3. Dungavel House was built originally as one of the Duke of Hamilton's hunting lodges but served over the years as a naval hospital in both world wars. It later became a training college for the National Coal Board and a care home for the Church of Scotland. Its final role was as a class C prison until its closure in 2000.

3.4. Substantial alterations were undertaken by the Home Office following its acquisition and the premises were fully commissioned for use as an Immigration Removal Centre on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2001.

3.5. Set in upland scenery at 700 feet above sea level it enjoys clean, pure air, attracting visitors and hill walkers to the area throughout the year.

4. Accommodation, Clothing, Food and Hygiene (Rules 12, 13, 15 and 16)

4.1. The accommodation at Dungavel continues to meet all requirements of the legislation necessary to the comfort, health and safety of detainees, as does the appropriate hygiene and toilet facilities provided.

Disabled persons are able to be housed in three specially equipped rooms and three detainees can be accommodated in each room.

Detainees are housed in various units or housing blocks with the number of bed spaces in each as follows: -

<b>Main House (Dormitory Style)</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Bed spaces</b>
Middle and top floors	Male	89
Middle floor	Female	14
<b>Loudoun House</b>		
One Floor	Male	70
<b>Hamilton House</b>		
2 Floors	Male	44
<b>Total Availability</b>		<b>217</b>

En suite facilities are provided in Loudoun House and Hamilton House with a television and telephone in each room.

Adequate laundry rooms are available for use at any time. Fresh towels and bed linen are changed or provided as often as requested or required.

4.2. The increased space gained from converting the former accommodation for children into Healthcare and Reception departments has proved to be of great assistance in providing excellent facilities for discharging the valuable work they undertake in the operation of the centre.

4.3. it is a pleasure, therefore, to confirm that the contractor has pursued a positive

programme of maintenance and improvement to both residential and operational areas, with increased comfort to detainees.

4.4. Residents are encouraged to wear their own clothes if they wish but excellent quality clothing is readily provided by the contractor either by need or request.

4.5. There is little doubt that the satisfaction of detainees with the conditions in which they are held is strongly enhanced by the reliable service of acceptable food.

4.6. In this regard The Board are greatly impressed by the painstaking efforts of the contractor in delivering consistent quality, variety and quantity to each detainee's meal.

Fish, meat and pastas are served frequently, as recommended by the Food Standards Agency, together with vegetables and vegetables always being available.

In meeting the requirements of cultural dietary needs, the contractor continues to operate a separate cultural kitchen in which detainees are encouraged to prepare and cook their own meals with others of similar tastes or ethnic backgrounds.

There are three sessions daily – morning, afternoon and evening – with sufficient supply of fresh meat, fish and vegetables to serve at every session.

This promotes diversity, communal interest and understanding between detainees in a most effective enterprise. The Board commends the contractor's initiative.

In addition to catering provided during the day, snacks are available for consumption during the night with toasters, microwaves and Brevilles available throughout the night.

## 5. Regime (Rules 17 - 19)

5.1. The importance of a wide-ranging regime in which detainees can engage cannot be over emphasised and it is pleasing to record that the contractor ensures that every opportunity is taken to reduce the possibility of boredom during an individual's stay at Dungavel.

5.2. Education subjects available include language, computer and IT familiarisation, as well as drawing, painting, cookery and sewing. They are all taught by capable instructors.

A comfortable library contains books on legal and religious subjects as well as modern fiction. Any particular secular or religious book will be sourced and provided on request. Daily newspapers, as well as language newspapers, are always on display.

5.3. Sport activities are programmed daily in order to give the largest number of participants possible in each event. Bad weather can, of course, alter programmes but arrangements are then made to increase the uptake for indoor rather than outdoor activities.

Football remains the most popular pursuit for detainees and the investment by the Home Office of the all-weather football pitch is amply repaid by the enjoyment of its use. Competition between houses is well supported and a game between staff and detainees is always welcome as further entertainment which must not be missed.

Snooker is played by almost all detainees on one of many tables placed at different

locations around the centre. Its popularity is closely followed by bingo, which is played at least 3 or 4 times per week, both in the evenings and weekends. Karaoke and suitable discos take place at least once a week when detainees are allowed to have their own disc-jockeys playing the music of their choice.

5.4. Every detainee is given the opportunity to undertake paid employment within the centre. The positions can include gardening and tidying the grounds, keeping dining rooms and association rooms comfortable and encouraging others to keep living quarters well presented.

5.5. The employment of suitable detainees in the large poly-tunnel has proved very successful and gives an opportunity to interested individuals to take back skills in dealing with plants to their own country.

The café-shop remains an important socialising area in the centre and detainees appreciate the excellent offers of discounted goods and SIM cards, as well as access to delivery by Argos stores for any particular item they wish to acquire.

## 6. Religion and Religious Affairs (Rules 20-25)

6.1. It is pleasing to record that there are no instances of religious acrimony or conflict. The Board confirm that this is due to the care taken by the contractor to fully meet the religious and cultural diversity of each detainee. Arrangements are in place for a meeting with ministers of religion soon after induction, should that be requested.

6.2. Ministers serving the main groups of adherents are encouraged to meet as regularly as they wish. Followers of the most obscure religion are given equal prominence and importance.

6.3. The main religious groups are able to meet in the multi-cultural chapel but prayer rooms are situated in all residential buildings. These could be used at any time by any religious persuasions or individuals.

6.4. Religious holidays, fast days or observations are fully supported by management and catering arrangements are made as appropriate.

6.5. The religious department also engages in the initial training of staff, ensuring that diversity is fully understood as company policy which must be followed at all times.

## 7. Communications (Rules 26-32)

7.1. Communications with others out with the centre is of vital importance to detainees and all assistance possible is given to each detainee as his/her needs require.

The welfare officer encourages contact with friends, next of kin and lawyers by use of the free mobile phones supplied by the contractor. Telephone cards are made available at the café/shop at the excellent discount prices of £3.50 for a £5 phone card. BT public telephones are situated at various points throughout the centre for those who wish to use this form of communication.

Friends or relatives are free to visit on as many occasions as the detainee wishes and are conducted in the comfortable and well-furnished visits hall which is also used by solicitors to meet and counsel clients on their position under immigration law. Fax and copying machines are available to contact Embassies or consuls as required.

The welfare officer also acts as an important bridge of communication for detainees on questions of every kind. This includes contact with other IRCs on property belonging to them as well as money or articles still held by prisons of the police.

This has proved very satisfactory to those concerned.

To facilitate visits, the contractor operates a free bus service to and from Hamilton bus/railway station. The service runs 4 times daily throughout visiting hours which are 13:30 – 20:30.

8. Health Care (Rules 33-37)

- 8.1. The work of enlarging the Health Care premises has given much needed space to the department's contribution to welfare within the centre, particularly in counselling and nursing improvements.
- 8.2. This department operates under the Home Office Detention Services Orders Operating Standards for Immigration Removal Centres which are designed to build on the Detention Centre Rules and underpin the arrangements the Home Office have for the management of removal centres within the UK. The Board confirms that these are fully met at Dungavel House over 24 hours daily.
- 8.3. Health care work is contracted out to Primecare Forensic Medical and the nursing staffs are employed by Nestor Primecare Ltd.
- 8.4. Nursing staff includes 6 registered nurses and 3 mental health nurses. There are also 3 medical officers qualified as general practitioners who practice locally. Psychiatric clinics are held every fortnight and dental and optical treatment is available weekly.
- 8.5. An excellent relationship has been developed with Lanarkshire NHS, Lanarkshire social services and Lanarkshire public health departments for the

provision of particular healthcare needs such as communicable diseases, torture claims and suicidal claims or tendencies.

9. Requests and Complaints (Rule 38)

- 9.1. The main body of oral requests continues to be for transfer to IRCs in England so that visits from friends and relatives are readily available. This is not so evident with single men who are generally perfectly happy with conditions at Dungavel.
- 9.2. UKBA management are however ready to consider applications on a weekly basis, as appropriate to best cases made by detainees.
- 9.3. Detention Service Orders, 2006 sets out the procedure necessary to the investigation and resolution of complaints. This is closely followed by UKBA and the Board confirms the effectiveness and efficiency of any action taken by the Detention Services Complaints Clerk. It is also pleasing to report that written complaints by detainees at Dungavel number an average of one per month over the year. These mainly relate to property allegedly missing, stolen or lost and all issues raised are speedily resolved in each case.
- 9.4. Copies of all written complaints and subsequent correspondence relating to them are made available to the IMB and members are pleased to confirm that the required procedures are carefully followed by the contractor's senior

management team.

10. Safety and Security (Rules 39-43)

10.1. Conditions of safety and security are given the highest priority by management and staff at the centre and relate equally to detainees and the operational physical security of the complex as a whole.

10.2. The relaxed and secure ethos of the institution is wholly attributable to the skill and watchfulness of the staff, bolstered by the daily examination of information which counters the early formation of threatening groups or fractions by implementing any necessary action immediately.

10.3. In addition, there is a monthly meeting with the contractor and UKBA management attending when many questions affecting the situation are fully reviewed and classified for action according to perceived risk factors.

10.4. The IMB are able to attend all meetings and receive full reports concerning important matters at each IMB meeting.

11. Independent Monitoring Board (Part VI D.C Rules)

- 11.1. The board at Dungavel operates according to the legislation set down for the monitoring of the centre, in part VI of the Detention Centre Rules 2001, and its business is conducted by way of its Constitution and Standing Orders.
- 11.2. Board meetings are held each calendar month, when members are joined by the Contract Director and the Contract Monitor, for a full review of related matters affecting the centre.
- 11.3. There are 6 members in the Board, including the Chair and Vice Chair, and this number is considered sufficient to maintain appropriate duties and interest. In addition to attending board meetings, each member is allocated a week in the rota for Duty Visits. The role and function of the Board is carried out voluntarily by members without payment and the operational work of the Board is undertaken on a day-to-day basis, in the public interest. They believe that their work enhances the credibility of the centre as a safe and secure environment and feel justified in the success of their duties by the respect accorded them by members of both Houses of Parliament, on frequent occasions in the past.
- 11.4. This respect for the operational independence of the Board is absolutely

essential, ensuring that the general public readily accept the integrity of the board in the work they perform on their behalf.

## 12. Comments and recommendations

12.1. The Board are satisfied that many aspects of the removal of illegal immigrants are being internally reviewed by the Home Secretary and the Minister for Immigration and that the complexity attending the solution of one question impacts greatly on the many other questions which are raised in turn.

Nevertheless, the Board members are ready to assist ministers in every possible way and express their confidence in the decisions they make.

### 12.2. Voluntary Return Programmes

The Board continues to recommend that every effort be made to encourage the return of illegal immigrants to their country of origin. Whatever funds are required to gain optimum results is money well spent in the interest of both the detainee and the taxpayer, producing a rapid and efficient outcome to what could otherwise become a lengthy and costly process.

### 12.3. Legal Representatives

In view of the HMIP remarks concerning the number of legal representatives visiting at any one time, the contractor has now adopted an appointments system for legal visit to achieve who has chosen advisor.

Detainees have the option of 17 different companies from which to choose

from with a list provided on induction. The afternoon “open surgery” has been discontinued by Management.

Most of the lawyers are very professional in their duties but a close watch on the provisions of legal aid funds requires to be maintained.