

IMB

HMP RANBY

The Annual Report of The Independent Monitoring Board

to

The Secretary of State at The Ministry of Justice

Reporting Period - 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013

ANNUAL REPORT

Section 1

Statutory Role of the IMB

The Statutory Role of the IMB

The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and immigration removal centre to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State for Justice from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

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

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

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Section 3

Location / Description / Changes from last year's report

3.1 Location

i) HMP Ranby is situated in North Nottinghamshire, mid way between the towns of Worksop and Retford. The Category C male adult training prison was converted in 1971 from its previous function as a Forces Army Camp.

3.1a Accommodation / Capacity

i) The Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA) at HMP Ranby as at the end of March 2013 was 1074 and its Operational Capacity (OC) is currently 1098.

3.1b Agencies / Contractors

The non-exhaustive list of agencies and contractors help HMP Ranby achieve its vision:

- Applied Security Design (ASD); Electrical Component Assembly Plastic Injection Mouldings.
- Offender Learning & Skills Service (OLASS 4); Milton Keynes College Education provision.
- Nottinghamshire County Council Library services.
- Trackwork Ltd; Specialist training for the Rail Industry.
- Utilise Ltd; Specialist training for Utilities Industries.
- One 3 One Solutions (internal prison market); Woodwork, plastics, engineering, powder coat, textiles.
- Print UK; Plastic coat hangers / mouldings.
- Tow Tester; Caravan Multi Tester.
- Plasgran; Plastics recycling.
- HMP Ranby recycling; Textiles; office and cell furniture.
- Toolfast; Assembly of shower components and fixing packs.
- Fletchers Metals Ltd; Metal recycling.
- Creating New Futures; Moulding plastic chairs.
- XTA; Moulding & assembly of snow shovels & ice scrapers.
- HMP Ranby printing; Provides printing for Ranby.
- The Well; Voluntary service for visits.
- Toe by Toe; Shannon Trust peer reading.
- Catering Equipment LTD.
- Medacs which commissions healthcare and is also involved with the Drug Strategy Programme;
- Milton Keynes College which holds the contract for Education, Learning and Skills;
- The Samaritans, who provide a counselling service for prisoners. They assist in the training of prisoners who volunteer to be "listeners" helping other prisoners who are in need of someone to talk to who is not in a position of authority.

3.1c Buildings / Facilities

i) The residential accommodation consists of ten wings. Located on the wings are: the departments for the induction of new prisoners, Resettlement, Skills for Life, Safer Custody, Street Works, Trackwork, and the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) gardens. Two wings comprise prisoners on Integrated Drug Treatment System (IDTS) and Induction.

ii) There is no provision for a 24hr healthcare service as HMP Ranby has no hospital unit. The single storey building, which has been extended, accommodates other functioning departments such as Prisoners Addressing Substance Related Offending (PASRO), Counselling Assessment Referral Advice and Throughcare Service (CARATS), Integrated Drug Treatment Strategy (IDTS), Mandatory Drug Testing (MDT) and Voluntary Drug Testing (VDT) which ended in August 2012, and Alcohol treatment.

iii) The Care and Separation Unit (CSU), located in one of the old buildings, has sixteen cells, of which four are used as doubles. Attached to the CSU is a small paved exercise yard, which is contained by a high wall.

iv) Education is allocated within two buildings, one of which also holds the Library. For prisoners who cannot leave the wing, and those in the CSU, the education is tailored for their needs and teachers visit them regularly.

v) The workshops in industries consist of Painting / Decorating, Engineering, Powder Coating, NVQ Woodwork, Woodmill, Wood Assembly, Clothing Exchange Store (CES), Plumbing, Data Input, four workshops working in electrical and packing, three Textile workshops, Industrial Cleaning, Complas, (this workshop has a three shift pattern, days afters and nights, and produces plastic items, e.g. tooth brushes amongst others), Gardens, (this area is being cut back dramatically), and Europe Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) which closed in December 2012.

vi) Physical exercise takes place within two buildings and the sports field. One building instructs prisoners mainly on weights and also treats prisoners who have physical disabilities / stroke complaints. The other concentrates on football, rugby and indoor sports. Football is played with visiting teams. Away games are not permitted. HMP Ranby delivers NVQs in this area.

vii) The Board must bring to your attention the excessive activity that the Reception Building at HMP Ranby deals with as there are almost 3000 prisoners each year arriving and departing to other establishments. The prisoner movement occurs six days a week. In addition, Reception deals with prisoners attending Court, prisoners on Release On Temporary Licence (ROTL), prisoners who have served their sentence, Police Production, Hospital appointments, and Security moves.

3.2 Changes from last year's report

3.2a Accommodation / Capacity

No changes

3.2b Agencies / Contractors

Lincoln College to Milton Keynes College.
Offender Education Skills (OESS) to One 3 One.
Branston to One 3 One.

3.2c Buildings / facilities

No changes

Section 4

Executive Summary. Summary of Whole Report. Particular issues requiring a response. Previous year's concerns.

4.1 Executive Summary

Questions to the Minister

i) Residential – kitchen

As there has been a reduction in the budget, due to inflation and national cuts, and the cost of food has risen, can the Minister explain how the decrease in the budget for meals is beneficial to the well-being of the prisoners in a working establishment? Will expected savings on new contracts not be negated by rising prices while the prisons are not compensated for this?

ii) Staffing and Resources

How can the Minister approve a reduction in the level of staff and expect to provide all those who work and live in HMP Ranby a safe and secure establishment?

iii) Safer Custody

There has been an increase in the number of serious incidents as mentioned in this year's annual report with a greater amount of drugs and mobile phone packages entering the prison with fewer staff to police the prison. Does the Minister not consider that this will risk an increase in more serious incidents reflecting the effect of cost-cutting exercises in such an extensive site?

iv) Mental Health Issues

The Board has again, as in past annual reports, brought to your attention that prisoners in HMP Ranby who have severe mental health and other serious medical conditions should not be in this establishment for their own safety and for that of others. Why were the appropriate establishments, which were better equipped to look after and serve these prisoners, closed down, leaving only prisons which are not suitable or equipped for such prisoners?

4.2 Summary of Whole Report

4.2i) The Board has grave concerns regarding the reduction in staffing levels at HMP Ranby as the cuts have affected most areas. Although HMP Ranby strives to keep prisoners safe, the Board needs to satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody and the effectiveness of the programme for release of prisoners into the community. Drastic staffing reductions will not facilitate such a programme. (See 5.1g page 13)

4.2ii) During the reporting year, there was an increase in the number of incidents recorded such as attempted suicides, barricades, prisoners on the netting, assaults and serious threats on staff and other prisoners. Drugs and mobile phone packages thrown into the prison presented a real problem. (See 5.1g page 13)

4.2iii) The government cuts mean the allowance for a prisoner's daily meals dropped from £2.10 to £1.96. In the Board's last three reports it brought to the Minister's attention that the amount of £2.10 per prisoner per day was a serious concern. In the Board's view, the present reduction to £1.96 is deplorable. This Board has already expressed its concerns to the Minister directly believing this allocation to be totally insufficient. (See 5.1h page 13)

4.2iv) The Board has serious concerns regarding the reasons prisoners are being sent to / arrive at HMP Ranby. Prisoners are sent on an open Assessment Care in Custody and Team work (ACCT) document and the Healthcare Department is not always made aware of this by Reception. In some instances, prisoners have been taken off an ACCT document a day or so before being transferred, seemingly to make them appropriate. Ranby regularly receives prisoners who are just not suitable for a Category C establishment. (See 5.1d page 11)

4.2v) Again, as in many of the Board's Annual Reports, "A" wing has left the Board with serious concerns of security and safety. "A" wing has been a major concern as it does not have full coverage available to the CCTV. This wing has no in-cell sanitation. Fights and gambling can take place in the communal shower area. In the reporting period there was a serious beating. Searches have produced significant finds on the wing. (See 6e page 16)

4.2vi) ROTL at HMP Ranby has been cancelled due to the pressure put on those prisoners working outside to bring in illegal items. (See 5.1f page 12)

4.2vii) The Board understands that Black Mamba and Subatex are the key drugs being found on searches. Black Mamba is not detectable as a drug. The Illicit Brewed Alcohol Detection (IBAD) dog searches are very useful in finding HOOCH. Illegal finds in the reporting year have included mobile phones, SIM cards and home made weapons. The cooperation with the police still works well as suspect prisoner visitors are being detected by the search dogs with over 50 illegal items found. They are then prosecuted. Bullying / fighting / staff assaults are a serious problem. This is intensified by the effects of government cuts. (See 6e page 16)

4.2viii) The cuts to the budget have adversely affected the safety of all those who live and work in HMP Ranby. The good work carried out by staff has been damaged by the drop in staffing levels. It is the Board's view that the cut in the budget has not been determined with an appreciation of what is needed to manage and administer a secure and safe establishment. (See 6f page 16)

4.2ix) As reported in our last Annual Report the Board still has concerns that prisoners with mental health issues are languishing in the CSU. These prisoners should be in an appropriate unit where their specific needs can be catered for. (See 5.1a page 10)

4.2x) The Board has had concerns within this reporting period regarding the poor performance in the Equality and Inclusion Department due to staffing cuts and other changes. (See 5.1b page 10)

4.2xi) The Healthcare Department during the reporting year has left the IMB with a catalogue of concerns mainly arising from the performance of the "Medacs" contract, but also from some regime shortcomings owing to staff limitations. (See 5.1d page 11)

4.3 Particular Issues requiring a response

1) Care and Separation Unit (CSU)

5.1aiv) The use of the CSU for those with mental health issues.

5.1avi) The poor facilities in the holding room of the CSU.

2) Equality and Inclusion

5.1bii) Staffing problems and delays during the year affecting the service.

5.1biii) Poor identification methods regarding disabled prisoners.

3) Education, Learning and Skills

5.1cv) Prisoners working towards a qualification not able to complete their course due to lack of assessors or the closure of a workshop.

4) Healthcare and Mental Health

5.1di) Healthcare and disabilities - problems of communication.

5.1dii) Medical records from other prisons sometimes inadequate.

5.1diii) Cancellation of hospital appointments due sometimes to lack of escorts and transportation and sometimes to other non - prison reasons.

5.1div) Healthcare system differing from the prison system making IMB monitoring of prisoner applications difficult.

5.1dv) Medication queues at the pharmacy being occasions for bullying etc.

5.1dvi) Length of waiting list for dentist and other services.

5.1dvii) Conservatory, designed for mental health prisoners to use as a meeting area, not completed to the contracted time and still not completed and available.

5.1dviii) Staff reductions in mental health team leading to six to eight week waiting list.

5.1dix) Some prisoners on Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork (ACCT) document not always being referred to mental health team.

5 Purposeful activity

5.1ei) unsatisfactory recruitment of suitably qualified instructors

5.1eii) Unsatisfactory flow of work

5.1eiii) too many prisoners not in education or employment

6 Resettlement

5.1fi) Family/lifer days having been integrated due to budget cuts.

5.1fii) ROTL, for whatever reason, being deferred in this prison

5.1fiii) Budget cuts resulting in ending of a debt advice agency service; possibility that the advice offered by prison officers may not be of the same standard.

5.1fiv) Lack of suitable accommodation for some difficult-to- place prisoners.

7 Safer Custody

5.1gv) Fear of increased violence and self harm possibly due to reduced staffing levels.

8 Residential - Accommodation

5.1hi) Real effect of budget cuts on the quality of each prisoner's care especially in the food allowance cuts.

5.1hii) Supply and quality of mattresses not being fit for purpose.

5.1hiii) Reductions in staffing on wings creating situations where any extra needs cause a strain on available staff.

5.1hv) Problems still arising on "A" wing which is antiquated and inadequate as repeatedly reported in previous years.

8 Residential (continued) -- Food Catering and Kitchen

5.1hvi) Unsatisfactory system of Breakfast packs being issued with evening meal .

5.1hvii) Real concerns regarding the cut to food allowance from £2.10 to £1.96.

5.1hviii) An increase in the number of prisoner applications and many comments regarding food portions.

4.4 Previous Year's Concerns

1. Mental Health

a) Concerns regarding prisoners sent to HMP Ranby without prescriptions / medication.

b) Delays with previous establishment sending medical records.

Resolution

A & B. Not resolved

2. Learning & Skills / Industries / Purposeful Activities

a) Educational and vocational activities likely to be further limited by budget restrictions.

Resolution

A. Not resolved.

3. Staffing and Resources

a) Regime requirements being at variance with staffing capacity thus curtailing services, activities and administration.

Resolution

A. Not resolved.

4. Security

a) Discipline issues such as bullying, threats and drug abuse; assaults and serious threats on staff which have been a real concern.

b) The inappropriateness of "A" wing building which provokes problems for the safety of prisoners there.

Resolution

A & B. Not resolved

5 Resettlement

a) Serious alarm regarding the decline in suitable housing for released prisoners, despite HMP Ranby meeting its (KPT) targets.. This is due to Government closures in suitable accommodation, along with some councils not allowing prisoners to apply for housing before leaving HMP Ranby. Prisoners leaving with no fixed abode have to meet with their single point of access, but this does not guarantee them a place to reside. It is distressing for prisoners and valuable staff time is taken up in seeking accommodation.

Resolution

A. Not resolved

6. Drugs / Mobile Phones / HOOCH

a) The volume of drugs and mobile phones entering the establishment causing real concern especially in their ability to cause discipline problems.

b) Worrying number of HOOCH finds.

Resolution

A & B. Not resolved

7. Transfers

a) Difficulties HMP Ranby has with transferring prisoners especially with family ties in mind. Transfers south are a particular anxiety.

b) Some establishments informing prisoners that they are going to a prison other than HMP Ranby and, on finding out on arrival where they are, prisoners becoming angry or anxious as it is not the "near home" transfer they requested.

Resolution

A & B. Not resolved.

8. Lifers / Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection (IPPs)

a) Concerns regarding availability of suitable programmes and other issues in this area.

b) Increases in the number of Lifers / IPPs coming to this prison putting considerable strain on management and staffing resources.

Resolution

A. Not applicable

B. Change in legislation and programme to expedite to CAT D – Resolved.

9. Safer Custody

a) Changes to the staffing affecting the consistency of the service. Delays in appointments increasing this problem.

b) The regrettable reduction in hours of the Safer Custody manager.

c) A regrettable lack of formal training in violence reduction for the whole staff.

Resolution

A. Not resolved.

B & C Resolved.

10. Residential

a) Remaining concerns about "A" wing. There is no clear observation possible on spurs, neither is there in- cell sanitation.

b) "Doubling up" following the closure of "B" wing which has caused problems.

Resolution

A. Not resolved.

B. Resolved.

11. Healthcare

a) The lack of 24hr care in HMP Ranby which concerns the Board.

b) The arrival of inadequate documents relating to a prisoner's needs from the previous prison which is not satisfactory.

Resolution

A & B. Not resolved

12. Property

a) Concerns regarding the volume of property allowed "in position" at different establishments in the same category and between Private and Public Sector prisons as the private prisons will evidently send over the volumetric allowance. Transporting vehicles such as GEOAMY not being equipped to carry enough of the property that has been approved for those prisoners.

b) A disturbing lack of interest shown by previous establishments regarding issues of prisoners' property.

Resolution

A & B. Not resolved

13. Chaplaincy

a) The restriction, in some cases, in the number of prisoners wishing to attend Sunday services.

b) No Anglican Chaplain at HMP Ranby for 14 months.

Resolution

A. Part resolved

B. Resolved

Section 5

Mandatory Reporting Matters

5.1a Care and Separation Unit (CSU)

i) The Board considers this is a well-run department with staff delivering a high standard of professionalism. The team of officers is diligent about paperwork completion and documentation is almost invariably complete for review panels, the overwhelming majority of which the Board attends.

ii) On days when the IMB is in attendance it is notified of new arrivals at the CSU as routine. On the days when no IMB member is available messages are left on the IMB office phone for the Chairman to pick up.

iii) Review panels are well-conducted with the requisite specialists from Healthcare and others in attendance. Prisoners are given every opportunity to speak for themselves if they wish. The Board is notified on the morning of reviews regarding time of panel and number to be completed.

iv) Prisoners with mental health issues are unfortunately in the CSU from time to time to the regret of staff and the IMB. The IMB has no complaints about the way prisoners are treated and, indeed, believes they are accorded sympathetic treatment despite often being difficult to assist.

v) The Board carefully monitors time in the CSU and discusses with the CSU officers reasons for “long-stayers” and rarely finds itself at odds regarding the reasons for prolonged stays. A note is made on a prisoner’s review sheet if he has been in the CSU for more than 28 days then an e-mail is sent to the Governor.

vi) The Board has concerns about the holding room which houses prisoners awaiting adjudications. When the judge is sitting, there can be in the region of 12 to 25 prisoners in this room which has a partially-glazed roof and no ventilation, making it very hot in the summer. There are no toilets or drinking water facilities in this vicinity for prisoners to use. Prisoners have to make a request to staff for this provision at a time when they are at their busiest. Prisoners have to wait until staff has the time to attend to them. Some prisoners can be in the holding room for up to 3 hours.

5.1b Equality and Inclusion

i) The Board has, currently, two members who are disabled but no members who are from an ethnic minority. Attempts have been made to recruit in this area with very limited success. A targeted recruitment drive had no success although the Board did have one ethnic minority volunteer who, though he was making good progress in training, was obliged to leave for personal reasons. The Board places advertisements, locally, with the BCVS (Bassetlaw Council Volunteer Service) and in such public places as libraries. Despite this, recruitment as a whole is proving very difficult, at the present time, not attracting volunteers of the necessary calibre who are able to offer the time commitment.

ii) During the reporting year, the prison has lost key staff responsible for the delivery of Equality and Inclusion. The loss of the DLO (Disability Liaison Officer) role was particularly disappointing as the DLO at Ranby was an excellent appointment. In addition, the Equalities Manager was promoted and left the prison in May 2012. This post was not filled until February 2013 during which time the line manager over-seeing this area retired, his responsibilities in Equality being transferred to Head of Residence.

iii) Liaison in several areas became poor with methods of identifying disabled prisoners being reliant upon self-referral at reception only, rather than by a diversity questionnaire completed at induction and by reports on the wings for that purpose which the DLO had introduced. Disability equipment held and issued by Healthcare staff has not been returned from the wings due to no member of staff having direct responsibility for it. After such a disappointing period the Board welcomes the appointment of the new Equalities Manager.

5.1c Education, Learning and Skills

i) The prison library, run by Nottinghamshire County Council library services, offers an excellent environment for all prisoners who use it. Prisoners studying Open University courses can use computer terminals there to access learning materials. A high level of satisfaction was evident among prisoners who were asked about library facilities. The availability of such a wide range of books and other materials is to be applauded.

ii) Education services are now delivered by Milton Keynes College. The literacy and numeracy classes with maximum class sizes of 8 have a waiting list as do other classes offered, a consequence of cuts in staffing as well as high demand/need. The classes comprise prisoners who are identified at reception as being below entry level for NVQ etc. The details of these prisoners are sent to OMU for inclusion in individual prisoner plans and for other purposes. This area of Education and Skills attracts very few negative comments from prisoners.

iii) Candidates for the literacy and numeracy classes who are identified at reception do not always elect to take the classes and opt instead for a workshop. It is hoped that these and others on a higher entry level will benefit from the “embedded” learning offered by tutors-instructors there.

iv) In some areas, including the CSU, learning resource boxes are provided and re-stocked by the Education and Learning team. These are for areas where there are, temporarily, no tutors/ instructors or to engage prisoners when there is no work in the workshop. Take up is poor on this option which is unfortunate as recruitment of suitable tutors/instructors in class and workshop areas is not easy

v) Other classes offered by Milton Keynes College include IT and Virtual Campus taught in groups of 6-8 and ESOL (English as a Second Language) and Creative Writing. Waiting lists exist here also. The current waiting list for all education courses stood at 170 when last checked.

vi) Of concern to the Board, in this reporting year, was the effect, on prisoners who are working towards a qualification, of workshop closures such as occurred with NVQ Gardens. The prison kitchen had difficulty locating a suitable assessor to complete Level 2 NVQ Catering for one prisoner. The Officers’ Mess NVQ, run by Milton Keynes took some kitchen workers to complete the qualification, fortunately.

5.1d Healthcare and Mental Health

Healthcare

i) The Board has concerns that since the loss of a Disability Manager the service provided for healthcare has been discontinued. Prisoners with a range of disabilities are not being brought to Healthcare’s attention, even though there is a screening process in Reception. This process relies on voluntary disclosure and prisoners will not always declare needs.

ii) Some prisoners arrive at Ranby without their medical records. Healthcare must contact the “sending” establishment to obtain access to their systemOne, which creates extra work and wastes time. Prisoners arriving without medication, whether on-going or acute, have to be prescribed an interim supply but medication needs could be compromised if the prisoner needs specialised medication.

iii) Cancellation of hospital appointments, whatever the cause (including staffing problems for escorts, hospital cancellation etc) cause anxiety for the prisoner concerned.

iv) Prisoners who make complaints to Healthcare now have to use a system of complaint differing from the general prison complaints system. This is difficult for the IMB to monitor as no record is passed for distribution to the Board.

v) Prisoners wait in line for medication at Healthcare. With the lack of staff, incidents of anger

and bullying have been witnessed by the Board. No direct officer supervision is available during this period.

vi) Waiting lists for services such as dentistry, sight-testing and treatment etc have been, at times, unacceptably long.

vii) During the upgrading of the Healthcare premises, the conservatory which is to be used partly as a meeting area for prisoners with mental health issues has not been completed to the contracted time.

Mental Health

viii) The Board must reiterate the belief that prison, and more particularly the CSU, is not the place for prisoners with serious mental health/personality disorders.

ix) Staff reductions on the mental health team have led to a 6-8 week waiting list to see the Community Psychiatric Nurses, except for emergencies.

x) Some prisoners with mental health problems on an ACCT document are not always referred to the mental health team.

5.1e Purposeful Activity (includes work)

i) The workshops cover some twenty areas offering a range of work and training opportunities. A representative sample suggests that there is an adequate number of instructors in each workshop with varying numbers of work places available. The biggest concern is the recruitment of suitably qualified staff. A prolonged period without instruction, which does happen in more specialised areas, can hold up prisoners seeking qualifications.

ii) Of great concern to the Board has been the on-going problem of failing to find a steady stream of work for each activity. Prisoners are frequently at the workplace but not actively working. One 3 One failed to deliver almost 50% of their Planned contracts.

iii) Of equal concern is the number of prisoners who are not in education and who also do not have active employment in any industrial area but who are neither over-age nor long-term ill. These prisoners are very much in evidence on the wings during working days.

iv) Some areas, such as Railtrack, are outstanding in both the quality of instruction and the volume of purposeful activity offered. NVQs and other qualifications are available and, in the Board's opinion, contribute directly to the prisoner's resettlement. More successful courses are needed if resettlement is to become the priority as it should do.

5.1f Resettlement

i) The Board considers that the Resettlement Team is continuing much of its excellent work but regrets that it has been necessary to amalgamate "Family/Lifer days" because of staffing. Very high levels of prisoner and family appreciation of the days have been recorded by the Board and the new arrangement may put a limitation on both categories (lifer and family) that formerly had exclusive use of visits' allocation on those days. Nevertheless the support given by Sure Start to the family days is first class and has been acknowledged by Sure Start's success in obtaining funding for parenting classes for HMP Ranby.

ii) The Board regrets that ROTL is not currently available to suitable prisoners. The suspension of ROTL is due to pressure being put upon prisoners on ROTL, to bring in contraband articles. The Board believes ROTL is an important part of some prisoners' progress to rehabilitation and release.

iii) Unfortunately the outside charity providing debt advice is no longer attending owing to cuts to their funding but the work is being maintained by prison officers. Liaison with housing associations and local housing is helpful in obtaining accommodation for prisoners on release. Other voluntary organizations are in regular contact for other aspects of rehabilitation.

iv) The Board is concerned, however, by the lack of appropriate accommodation for difficult-to-place prisoners at Probation Hostels or other suitable supervised accommodation to help with continuity and prevent a return to prison.

v) The Board is also concerned about the impact of existing and pending changes in the Benefit system but does recognize that these concerns are national rather than peculiar to HMP Ranby.

5.1g Safer Custody / Violence Reduction

i) For the majority of the reporting period, the Safer Custody Manager did not have the appropriate level of resourcing. In November 2012 the department acquired an Administrative Officer (AO) but, there was no full time uniformed staff to assist with the running and the responsibility that such a unit dictates. However a new supportive Safer Custody Governor has now been identified.

ii) Despite this the department maintained a thorough record of all relevant statistics and trends and was successful in implementing the new ACCT documentation and the Safer Custody strategies.

iii) In January 2013 the Violence Reduction System (VRS) was replaced with Zero Tolerance, a more open system, allowing the department to structure a more rapid support and /or behavioural compact for the perpetrators/victims.

iv) The new AO met with the Samaritans Coordinator and a functioning relationship including the new Listener selection procedure has, since March 2013, produced a new training course that will benefit those prisoners in need of help.

v) The statistics shown below show the increase/decrease in the reporting period;

- Self harm – This has increased from 37 to 81
- ACCTs -- This has increased from 116 to 211

Prisoners monitored on the Violence Reduction Regime until the new Zero Tolerance came into action:

- Stage one -- This has increased from 103 to 187
- Stage two – This has increased from 35 to 60
- Stage three -- This has increased from 27 to 43

Assaults on staff in the reporting period have increased from 18 to 23. This includes the serious threats made to staff.

Assaults of prisoner on prisoner in the nine months to December 2012 rose from 40 to 100.

In the Board's view the increase in violence is mainly due to lower staffing levels in such vital areas as wings. There is a growing level of intimidation which has led to increases in self harm and the consequent issuing of ACCT documents which suggests prisoners are feeling under increased pressure and, possibly, less safe.

5.1h Residential Services (includes accommodation, food, catering and kitchens)

Residential - - accommodation

i) Budget cuts have had a real effect on the quality of each prisoner's care. The question of cuts to the food allowance, effective from October 2012, is raised in another part of this report more fully.

ii) Concerns have been raised by prisoners regarding mattresses supplied on the wings. These have always been of an unsatisfactory nature but prisoners have in the past "doubled up" new mattresses with old to give an adequate thickness. New issuing instructions, consequent upon the budget cuts, have required the surrender of old mattresses upon the issue of a new one and a reduced number of mattresses being allowed to each wing every month. This has removed the "doubling up" possibility. We believe the mattresses have always been unfit for purpose and cuts have made the situation worse.

iii) Reductions in staffing allocations on the wings have created a situation where “extra” needs cause a strain upon available staff. One disabled prisoner was unable to access the shower on his wing and staff were not always readily available to assist. This occurred on “J” wing where the water pressure for the showers is poor if more than one landing showers at the same time. There are insufficient washing machines/dryers for the numbers on the wing and again, staffing reductions mean there are not always sufficient officers to escort prisoners to the Clothing Exchange Store (CES). “J” and “K” wings have had this, and other problems, that stem mainly from the inbuilt design fault of the building.

iv) “C” wing has again had repairs to the flooring which apparently has a design fault and which is not specific to HMP Ranby.

v) There are still issues concerning the difficulty of monitoring “A” wing spurs at night. “A” wing has had a serious violent incident this reporting year.

Residential - - Food, Catering and Kitchen

vi) The Board wishes to acknowledge the high quality of the work in the kitchen which has gained a grade 5 in Health and Hygiene. The work in the Officers’ Mess is also of a high standard but is run independently of the kitchen.

vii) Breakfast packs are still being issued with the evening meal. This regime allows the food to be consumed later in the evening. Prisoners will then have to wait until lunch the following day. HMP Ranby becomes a “working prison” on the 1st April 2013 so the prisoners will possibly be going to work without a meal. The Board does not consider this to be satisfactory.

viii) The catering allowance of £2.10 per prisoner per day has remained the same for 3 years whilst the cost of food has risen during that time. It is now reduced to £1.96 per prisoner per day. This will present a great problem for the catering department in trying to maintain its high standard if the nationally expected savings via new contracts are not realized.

ix) There has been an increased number of applications and verbal complaints from prisoners regarding portion size of meals. The Catering Manager has added soup to the menus to increase food available but the very tight budget will make this increasingly difficult unless extra capitation is found from other areas of the budget.

Section 6

Issues of exceptional concern to the Board / Special Commendation

6a Chaplaincy

i) The Board is concerned that the hours of the chaplaincy team have been reduced and particularly that the Imam's hours have been reduced from 50 hours to 30 and, more recently, to 20 in a prison with some 160 Muslim prisoners. A general reduction in time has curtailed the pastoral work possible. The team feels that the bereavement counselling, which is an important aspect of their ministry, is not now at the desired level due to staffing cuts in the prison not allowing for volunteers to come into the prison to counsel prisoners as too few officers are available for escort.

6b Foreign Nationals (FN)

i) The Board is concerned at the staffing and hours levels of the staff dealing with FN. Only two members of staff, the FN Coordinator and an assisting officer, are working in this area. They are profiled with extra duties and FN duties are classified "Flexible" so that the duties are regularly dropped. Recently six FN prisoners arrived on one day and six from another prison the following day demonstrating how much in demand the FN officers can be.

6c Personal Officer

i) The Board's concerns with the Personal Officer scheme are that the staff does not have specified time for the work any longer and the ratio of prisoners to personal officer has increased. There is little time for on duty prison officers to undertake such work as they are fully occupied with general wing duties. As a result, the number of IMB applications from the prisoners, dealing with matters which would have been referred to personal officers, have increased. Before budget cuts the work of wing officers was described as "good" but since then it has been assessed only as "acceptable".

6d Transfers

Operations Department

i) The Board acknowledges again that the small team in the Operations Department work extremely hard being frequently faced with a heavy workload and the temporary redeployment of its staff to other duties. The large number of prisoners awaiting transfer or recategorisation is the normal situation in this prison which has an Operational Capacity of 1098. There have been almost 3000 moves within the year. The greatest addition to the workload has been the increase in numbers of prisoners recategorised to Category B, a fact which the Board considers a matter for concern.

ii) The volume of complaints from prisoners and letters from solicitors takes already busy staff a great deal of time thus hindering the work on transfers.

iii) Prisoners are still being told by the establishments sending prisoners, that they are transferring closer to family when in fact they find themselves at HMP Ranby often further away from their home area. This is distressing for prisoners and an unnecessary pressure on receiving staff. This practice often results in early requests for another transfer from HMP Ranby.

iv) The removal of the 56 days wait before applying for transfer continues to exacerbate the situation.

Reception Department

i) Again the Board recognises the hard work done by staff in Reception to handle the amount of work involved at HMP Ranby which has no set criteria for acceptance of new arrivals where other establishments have.

6e Security

i) The Board has for at least the past six years maintained that "A" wing is seriously inadequate as living accommodation. Assaults on "A" wing have risen and bullying is as much a problem as it has always been due to the structure of the wing with some areas out

of sight of the CCTV where fighting and gambling can take place. The Board has always suggested that “A” wing is a brutal incident waiting to happen, and in this reporting period this has proved to be the case as there has been a serious beating on the wing which involved the police. Some prisoners from “A” wing have been transferred back to category B establishments. Target searches are approved and recently on one spur six were carried out in one day and significant finds were made. Over the reporting period on “A” wing there have been 415 Serious Incident Reporting forms (SIR) and 100 finds.

ii) In this reporting year ROTL has been cancelled indefinitely due to the pressure put on prisoners to bring in illegal items such as drugs, mobile phones, SIM cards etc. The gang culture in HMP Ranby does not ease this problem and has grown more influential in recent years. Prisoners can be made to collect and hold illicit items that come over the fence and through visits.

iii) In the Board’s view, Black Mamba and Subatex are the principal drugs being found on searches. The Illicit Brew Alcohol Detecting (IBAD) dog searches are carried out on specific days. The Board believes this gives those involved in illegal actions a better chance of avoiding detection. Searches would be better served if they were varied so that any searches can make full use of the access needed for successful finds. The police still make arrests in visits due to the cooperation of staff and the extended cameras that have been placed in there. Unfortunately HMP Ranby has a vulnerable perimeter which needs to be higher. The prison is near to the A1 so is accessible from all areas of the country allowing prisoners’ contacts from far and wide to throw drugs over the fence. Prickly bushes have been planted as a deterrent and cell windows reinforced so that lines cannot be thrown. Security intelligence has been improved but boundaries remain easy targets.

iv) The Board is of the opinion that bullying and fighting amongst prisoners on their way to and from work each day is a problem that is growing and staff can be, and are, seriously threatened by those prisoners. In the Board’s view this should be classed as assault. The Board considers it is exacerbated by the government cuts which leave fewer staff to cover the necessary duties.

6f Staffing and Resources

i) During this reporting period the Board has had serious concerns with the staffing levels. Since the reduction of staff within the year, the Time Off In Lieu (T.O.I.L) owed to staff has increased. This has had an effect on the prisoners’ association time, mainly in the evening, as the wings are locked down on a rota basis to allow staff to reclaim their hours. This loss of association could mean that incidents after tea increase as disgruntled prisoners show their disapproval. This was verified by a member of the Board who during a rota visit arrived at a wing just as an incident had been dealt with to hear that another incident was occurring on another wing.

ii) The increase in staff duties along with the “droppable duties“ in Operations, Foreign National, Safer Custody and Reception departments has made this extra work problematic and has affected staff sickness levels causing the good work carried out by staff to be damaged.

iii) The Board has concerns that since the number of governors has been reduced down to five, not including the prison governor and deputy governor, this has also had an effect on the functioning of a large establishment. An example of this happened when a prisoner spoke to an acting governor who agreed to assist him with an issue. The governor then went off duty for three weeks and the arrangement fell through.

iv) It is the Board’s view that as HMP Ranby can have up to 1100 prisoners, the cuts in the budget have not been effected with an appreciation of what is needed to manage and administer a secure and safe establishment of this size. In the Board’s view it has been made as a cost cutting exercise.

Signed for on and behalf of the IMB Board HMP Ranby

C Gee Chair

Section 7 Board Statistics

Appendix 1

**THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD
DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD**

BOARD STATISTICS 2012 / 2013	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	19
Number of Board Members at the start of the Reporting Period	12
Number of Board Members at the end of the Reporting Period	6
Number of New Members joining within the Reporting Period	3
Number of members leaving within the Reporting Period	7
Total number of Board meetings during the reporting period	12
Total number of Visits to the Establishment	1
Total number of Care and Separation Unit Reviews Held	148
Total number of Care and Separation Unit Reviews Attended	144
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	24 /10 /12

Section 7 Board Statistics

Appendix 2

PRISONER APPLICATIONS TO IMB DURING REPORTING PERIOD

CODE	SUBJECT	2012 / 2013	2011/ 2012	2010/ 2011	2009/ 2010
A	Accommodation	32	35	48	42
B	Adjudications	18	12	10	37
C	Equality & Diversity	12	9	18	21
D	Education / Employment / Training inc IEP	40	53	59	28
E1	Family / Visits inc mail & phone	40	() (34)	() (36)	() (24)
E2	Finance / Pay	6	() ()	() ()	() ()
F	Food / Kitchen Related	12	4	4	Nil
G	Health Related	69	81	69	41
H1	Property (within current establishment)	43	() ()	() ()	() ()
H2	Property (during transfer / in other establishment)	71	() (117) ()	() (84) ()	() (90) ()
H3	Canteen, Facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	25	() ()	() ()	() ()
I	Sentence Related	60	81	65	82
J	Staff / Prisoner Related	21	26	19	21
K	Transfers	69	68	77	49
L	Miscellaneous	40	81	55	43
	Total Number of Applications	<u>558</u>	<u>601</u>	<u>544</u>	<u>478</u>
	Total number of Confidential Access	<u>12</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>