



HMP RISLEY
INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT

April 2010 – March 2011

1 STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and IRC to be monitored by an Independent Board appointed by the Home Secretary 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 it 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 the right to access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison records.

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3 Description of the Prison

HMP Risley is one of the largest Category “C” training prisons in the UK, currently housing an average of 1080 male prisoners with an operational maximum of 1095.

The prison continues to be a hub for foreign national prisoners in the North West and UKBA staff are permanently based in the prison.

The population profile showed that at the end of the reporting year there were 160 foreign nationals, 220 sex offenders, 145 IPP’s and 95 lifers.

The Risley estate consists of 7 residential wings, two of which house vulnerable prisoners/sex offenders. There is also a care and separation unit with its own outside exercise area.

The training facilities within the establishment provide for 12 workshops and 14 education classrooms plus a library.

There is a health centre with a full time doctor and nursing staff. In addition dental, ophthalmic, physiotherapy and podiatry services are provided.

Other facilities include a sports hall and two gyms.

To cater for the various faith groups of prisoners there is a multi faith centre and this is supported by several ministers from the various faiths

4 Executive Summary

The board is asked to comment on areas where they have concerns or where they wish to highlight examples of excellence.

The board has serious concerns over the following issues

i. The quality of healthcare provided for prisoners (Section 5.3)

The waiting times for a prisoner to see a doctor are longer than those in the outside community. Prisoners frequently report to the IMB that they cannot get past a triage nurse and see a doctor. This triage process has resulted in some injuries being overlooked.

ii. The quality of accommodation provided for prisoners in Birchwood wing (Section 6.1)

The residential unit known as Birchwood unit has passed its sell by date and although remains used it is not the best environment in which to keep prisoners. The replacement of this wing is long overdue. This has been brought to the attention of previous ministers. The costs of running such an old unit are a strain on the current budget.

iii. The level of purposeful activity. (Section 5.4)

The board have concerns regarding the level of purposeful activity which remains too low. Despite the efforts of the prison to provide additional facilities, they remain inadequate, with prisoners held in cells for too long. The provision of the full contracted hours would go some way to achieving an acceptable level of purposeful activity. The board asks that the Minister investigates this shortfall and if he will make the resources available to allow full time purposeful activity for all prisoners.

iv. The use of CSU for holding vulnerable prisoners (Section 5.5)

The use of the Care and Separation unit to hold vulnerable prisoners whilst suffering severe problems with mental health issues has been raised before by the board, but this practise continues. The board understands that this is often the only place available but would like to see a specialist area used for this purpose offering a more acceptable environment.

Questions for the Minister

When are funds going to be made available for the rebuilding of Birchwood wing? It has been known for many years that this wing is unsuitable and has it featured in the HMIP reports. It must surely have got to the top of the priority list by now.

What measures does he intend to take to ensure that all prisoners can engage in purposeful activity for a much larger proportion of the week and consequently be held in their cells for fewer hours?

Questions for NOMS

Do you believe that primary healthcare resources at HMP Risley are adequately funded?

Do you believe that the standard of care provided for prisoners is comparable with that provided in the community?

Do you believe that the facilities for holding vulnerable prisoners on open ACCT'S in HMP Risley are adequate?

The board would like to highlight the introduction of the C2i initiative. (Section 6.2)

This initiative has proved to be a great success and the board congratulates all those who have worked to make it such a success and commends it to other establishments.

5.1 Diversity

During the year, as a cost saving, the non operational Diversity Manager was declared surplus and the role was incorporated into the role of an Operational Residential Manager. As a result, the development of new policies, such as care plans for elderly and disabled prisoners has been proceeding much more slowly than the board would wish. All Residential Units now have designated staff to support the Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) and these are being trained in the completion of care plans. The work of the Equalities Officer has been redirected to other departments in line with PSI 32 and 33/2011. The complaints clerk is now maintaining a log of reports of discrimination and these are directed to the Diversity Manager for delegation to an appropriate investigator. The Quarterly Equalities Questionnaire to Equalities Group is now completed by the Diversity Manager with plans to move the work to the Business Change Unit (BCU). A cell and shower room were recently refurbished on Glazebury Wing so that Risley could receive a sex offender with a high degree of disability so that he could complete an Offending Behaviour Programme (OBP). This facility will allow Risley to receive similarly disadvantaged prisoners to attend OBPs in the future. Links have been forged with Warrington Disability Partnership and some awareness training has been delivered to prisoners and staff. The programme of awareness training continues to be rolled out. Other initiatives include the formation of an older prisoner's forum with guest speakers attending to discuss various subjects in relation to men's health including, oral hygiene, cancer, mental health. A training programme for Wheelchair Buddies has been developed with dedicated training being delivered by the Disability Liaison Officer, Health and Safety Advisor and Diversity Manager and has allowed prisoners in wheelchairs to access services and facilities more easily. A dedicated room for Retired Prisoners has been developed on Glazebury Wing it is open during the core day and is currently being used by 6 prisoners. A TV and DVD player have been ordered, with a special concession with the prison library to obtain 6 DVDs per month. Puzzles and books have also been supplied by the library and other departments. This is a commendable initiative devised by staff on Glazebury Wing which ensures that retired prisoners have purposeful activity during the day and the opportunity to maintain their mental well being and to socialise with their peers.

Under the new Equalities PSIs 32/33 2011 RIRF forms have been replaced by Discrimination Incident Report Forms (DIRF) with a plan to stop using these in 2012 and move all Discrimination complaints into the Complaints system. During the first 3 months after their introduction (July, August and September) there were 23 DIRFs with 2 being proven and 21 not proven.

An Equalities Questionnaire has been introduced on Induction and gives new receptions the opportunity to declare any protected characteristics including, Race, Religion, Disability and Sexual Orientation. This is a relatively new initiative and no figures or data is available yet which identifies numbers of prisoners in each category. An officer has volunteered to act as a contact point for prisoners who are gay or bisexual to ensure that their particular needs and concerns are met but, as yet he has received no requests for help.

The prisoners Race Action Committee has now changed in format and Race Representatives, Disability Representatives and Older Prisoner Representatives have been incorporated into a new group of Diversity Representatives called the Diversity Inclusion & Equality Team

(DIET) which deals with all matters of Diversity rather than individual protected characteristics.

5.2 Learning and Skills

In our annual report for 2009-2010 the board drew attention to the inadequacy of the number of places available for prisoners' employment and education at HMP Risley. The situation remains unchanged; there are still some 12% of prisoners who are unemployed and a shortfall of at least 100 places. The majority of other prisoners work only part time or are in part time education. There are very few prisoners who are engaged in purposeful activity for the whole of the working week. A random spot check by the board revealed some 28% of prisoners behind their doors. The government's stated intention of improving the quality of education in prisons is commendable but this must not be at the expense of providing a greater quantity of places. Even in the current economic climate the board believes that the number of places should be increased. There are opportunities for further contract work within the local area but the prison is unable to take advantage of this due to budget constraints. The board repeat their concerns that in a prison that is designated as a training prison it is completely unacceptable to have so many prisoners who are unemployed, the majority of whom are eager to attend work or education.

The partnership provided delivering the OLASS contract is Manchester City College and the prison continues to have an excellent relationship with them. There is a wide range of opportunities available to prisoners most of which now lead to external qualifications. Where there are no external qualifications at present, the college and the prison are working together to address this problem. There is a high level of prisoner satisfaction with the courses and attendance is over 90%. The majority of applications received by the board in this area concern the difficulty in obtaining and keeping a job.

The longest period of forced unemployment, which has come to our notice, is six weeks. The board have observed that the length of time that it is taking to get prisoners into work after their arrival at Risley has increased. On investigation, the board concluded that this delay was frequently due to incorrect completion of job application forms. A recent sample of 24 job application forms from prisoners showed that 75% of them had errors in them and this had led to delays in allocating jobs as the office staff no longer had any capacity to resolve any discrepancies. Delays in processing applications sometimes led to prisoners starting work on a wing before it had been officially approved. This frequently led to disputes about pay and prisoners not receiving pay for the work done. The board recommends that this practice be discontinued.

In the absence of the ability to provide any new training places the prison has concentrated on making maximum use of the available resources and the number of purposeful activity hours has increased to 27.1 hours per week, well above the target of 24.5 hours. In the current economic climate the board is concerned that the prison will not be able to continue to deliver such a high standard of education and employment. The introduction of national procurement contracts has been an extra burden on the education budget. For example, the construction department must purchase sand at £80 per tonne from the contracted supplier but they are aware that they could purchase it at £35 from a local one. At a time when economies are needed, commodities should be purchased from the cheapest available source. The board would like to see these contracts abandoned and more local control of procurement.

5.3 Healthcare

Healthcare at Risley is provided by Warrington Primary Care Trust. The board has serious concerns about the provision and delivery of outpatient healthcare at Risley. The number of applications from prisoners relating to healthcare, which was received by the board, was 26, some 11% of the total.

Many concerns expressed by prisoners to the board revolve around the lengthy waiting periods to see health practitioners.

Figures given to the board by healthcare were as follows:-

To see:			
A nurse	urgent	“special sick”	same day
A nurse	non urgent		3 days
A doctor	urgent		same day, but only if felt to be to be necessary by a triage nurse
A doctor	non urgent		2 weeks
A dentist			6 weeks
An optician			4 weeks
A physiotherapist			8 weeks
A mental health nurse	urgent		same day
A mental health nurse	non urgent		

It was stressed that these were minimum waiting times, anecdotal evidence from prisoners indicates that waiting times are sometimes much longer than those given above. A case of a prisoner waiting 7 months for a dental appointment was brought to the board’s attention. On investigation this was found to be true, the prisoner’s dental appointment having been cancelled several times through lack of a dentist.

Prisoners are able to see a nurse very quickly if they report “special sick”. Many prisoners complain that when they do report “special sick” they only see a nurse and cannot see a doctor without being referred by a nurse. Some have been sent back to their wing without any treatment. Prisoners often have to attend “special sick” several days running and risk getting a written warning before they get an appointment with a doctor. This triage process has resulted in some serious injuries such as a broken ankle being overlooked.

Many prisoners have reported to the board that the nurses are sometimes rude to them; the board not having been present at any such exchanges cannot confirm this.

The healthcare team at Risley is currently short of one doctor, one staff nurse and one administrative officer, so it is not surprising that waiting times are quite long.

All of the prisoners interviewed by the board for our survey agreed that when they did get past the initial hurdles and received treatment, the quality was excellent and comparable with that received in the outside community.

Healthcare services provided for prisoners should be comparable with those provided for the outside community. The Government’s guideline for the NHS states that patients should be able to see a doctor within 48 hours. The NHS GP survey for 2009-2010 states that 80% of GP practices were meeting this target. Healthcare services in HMP Risley are falling a long way short of this target.

The main waiting area in healthcare has been refurbished during the year and now provides a more comfortable and safer environment for prisoners waiting for healthcare appointments. There are plans to refurbish the separate waiting area for vulnerable prisoners.

5.4 Safer Custody

The safer Custody Committee draws together issues concerning suicide and self-harm prevention, anti bullying and violence reduction.

During the past reporting year a total of 212 ACCT documents were opened. The board is finding there are more and more vulnerable prisoners coming into Risley and extra vigilance is necessary. Board members have attended a sample of ACCT reviews and are satisfied that all relevant standards are being met. A board member also attends a sample of the monthly safer custody meetings.

Instances of bullying are being addressed by the officers using the TAB system and this is having a major impact within the prison. The IEP system is also being used to great effect. The board have received a number of applications on these subjects but on investigation have found in all cases that the criteria have been applied correctly. Listeners are volunteer peer supporters selected, trained and supported by Samaritans, using their same guidelines, to listen and offer emotional support in complete confidence to their fellow prisoners who may be in crisis, feel suicidal or who need a confidential sympathetic ear. The objectives of such a scheme are to assist in preventing suicide, reducing self-harm and generally to help alleviate the feelings of those in distress.

Within HMP Risley the listener scheme started several years ago and has proved to be successful with the listeners giving advice and support to those who may be vulnerable. Currently there are 24 listeners spread throughout the seven wings. The Listeners themselves have gained in self confidence and self esteem. However, over the last financial year some concerns have been raised by wing managers, and Listeners, with regards to prisoners assessed as 'High Risk' on their Cell Sharing Risk Assessment, having access to Listeners. Whilst prisoners assessed as high risk can have listeners, if a prisoner is considered too dangerous to deploy Listeners, the Samaritans telephone is offered in line with the protocol set in HMP Risley's local Suicide and Self-harm Policy.

Links continue to be developed with Samaritans and they attend the quarterly Safer Custody meetings. Throughout the prison there are dedicated phones to telephone Samaritans which are available on request.

A Violence Reduction Workshop provides mandatory training for all prisoners receiving adjudications for assaults, fights or using threatening abusive behaviour. There were 45 reported incidents of self-harm during the year. During 2010-2011 HMP Risley had 1 death in custody. The IMB was informed promptly and the Board monitored this under the serious incident protocol. All officers have now been issued with fish knives.

Staff in the chaplaincy makes a significant contribution to safer custody. They attend ACCT reviews and we have noted their professional and expert knowledge of prison rules and prisoners rights. The relationship between the chaplaincy and the IMB remains good with both sharing many of the same goals. The view of the Independent Monitoring Board is that

the prison takes this part of its work very seriously and the Management, officers and staff work in a professional manner

Communications between the CSU and the board members remain good as has been seen in previous years and the procedure for informing the board of prisoners being relocated to the CSU continues to be effective.

5.5 CSU

The number of prisoners located to the CSU during the year 149 and the average length of stay was 9.2 days. There were no disabled prisoners relocated to the CSU during the year. There has been a decrease in the number of prisoners held in the CSU since 2009 and this reflects the policy of the prison in managing challenging behaviours on the wings where possible.

Breakdown of Reasons for Relocation to CSU

Rule 45A	38
Rule 45B GOOD	41
Rule 53 Pending Adjudication	100
Rule 55 Cell Confinement	4

Those prisoners relocated pending adjudication have increased from the previous year; nevertheless most of these prisoner's were dealt with speedily and removed from the CSU.

There was one prisoner who stayed in the CSU for more than 3 months; in the main this was due to his previous behaviour and the lack of relocation opportunities given by other establishments.

The special unfurnished cell was used on 1 occasion and this is a decrease of 50% compared to last year. The use of force protocol was used on 6 occasions and this compares favourably to the previous year's figure of 13. There were 3 dirty protests during the year and this is the same as the previous year.

On the CSU there were 28 prisoners on open ACCTS held in the CSU and this is a decrease of 8 compared to last year.

The board members attended a sample of ACCT reviews and were satisfied with the standard of care and the protocols put in place.

There have been 809 adjudications during the past year that have been dealt with by the CSU staff and this has increased their work load. The greatest number of adjudications was given when the prisoner held unauthorised articles.

The regime within the CSU is basic but fair with access to exercise, showers as prescribed in the relevant PSO's.

There has been only 1 complaint from prisoners held on the CSU which is a significant decrease compared to the previous year. The Board has only received 2 applications for the whole of the year. This demonstrates good management of the unit by the prison staff and the good relationship between prisoners and prison staff. The board continues to be impressed by the work carried out by the CSU staff and by the professional conduct and dedication in which they go about their daily work. The staff care for the most challenging prisoners under difficult circumstances as their work is sometimes hampered by other establishments or other internal prison staff failing to ensure that prisoners being relocated to the CSU have access to those belongings which are permitted as quickly as possible.

The board members have attended segregations reviews and all have been properly conducted and in an exceptional circumstance where a prisoner was held for a lengthy period of time the board was satisfied that the prison staff explored every avenue to remedy the situation in a timely and effective manner. Whilst all reviews were held within the allocated timescale, there were 2 Algorithms that went out of the 2 hour timescale during the past year.

The accommodation in the CSU continues to be unsuitable with the unit office and the adjudication room being small and cramped. In addition the exercise yard is too small. However it is recognised that with current spending cuts and no positive news with regard to future funding, that this situation will remain unchanged in the future.

Communications between the CSU and the board members remain good as has been seen in previous years; the procedure for informing the board of prisoners being relocated to the CSU continues to be effective.

6.1 Residential Areas

The residential wings within HMP Risley have become a cleaner and safer home for prisoners, the cleanliness and good decorative order on the wings has been noticed and commented on by visitors and officials visiting Risley, prisoners are happier with their environment and actively encourage its graffiti free existence. This has been achieved by a review of the size and efficiency of cleaning parties, introduction of training for cleaners and food service workers, the introduction of trained prisoner painting parties and the proactive involvement of staff encouraging prisoners to respect their environment.

Some of the flooring causes concerns as financial restrictions have meant areas being patched up which looks unsightly and still causes problems as a potential trip hazard for prisoners and staff.

The showers on Appleton Wing have seen some refurbishment, although some teething problems resulted in prisoners having to use other wings' showers. Contractors were called back several times to fix leaks etc which prisoners and staff found frustrating but good relationships between staff ensured that a good degree of patience was shown. The showers are now all working and it is hoped that this will continue.

The buildings are bright and clean but will age considerably unless more money is spent to replenish old parts of the buildings. B wing still remains, albeit mentioned in numerous annual reports as being unfit for purpose.

Risley does not have any football fields or large open areas for prisoner activities and suffers due to the small footprint, prisoners have mentioned on numerous occasions it would be a better place if those facilities were available.

The management have made the establishment a better environment for the housing of prisoners, but more needs to be done, this will prove harder with time as less money is available to spend on such things.

Grounds maintenance (flowers and vegetable produce) remain at a very high standard.

6.2 C2i (change to improve initiative)

In September 2010 the C2i (Change2improve) strategy was established at Risley. Its purpose is to underpin MQPL and empower staff and prisoners by involvement in listen to improve forums which develop positive relationships and the prison community which in turn enhance the quality of life for those you live and work at Risley.

The intention was to explore ways of improving the quality of life. The C2i(change2improve) meetings have been attended by many members of the senior management team. A huge number of issues were raised and an initial list of 460 items was compiled some major some minor.

All of the issues have been investigated many have been resolved and to date about 100 suggestions have been implemented. Where a suggestion cannot be implemented detailed feedback has been given about the reasons why it is not possible to implement it. New items are being added to the list all the time; items are only removed from the list when everyone is in agreement.

Overall the system works well with prisoners pleased with the speed and positive outcomes received. The initiative allows the prisoners to be heard and they are in contact with all the management team within the prison. This has resulted in a more settled environment.

The initiative has proved to be a great success and the board congratulates all those who have worked to make it such a success and commends it to other establishments

6.3 Visits

Despite the addition of a second phone line for visits booking, some problems still exist. If both phone lines are busy the system defaults to an answer phone message. This is a particular problem for those visitors who need to use public call boxes, and who must insert money only to find that they cannot book a visit. Assurances have been given that this problem has been rectified but a visitor survey indicated that it is an ongoing problem. Some prisons do have computer booking systems and the board's view is that if this could be implemented at HMP Risley, it would provide a much improved service.

The visits area has been upgraded during the year, the majority of the hard plastic seating has now been replaced by more comfortable chairs but the visits hall is still extremely noisy

when full, prisoners and their visitors needing to shout at each other to make themselves heard. The board would like to see the area improved further by the provision of a carpet to help to reduce the noise levels. The children's play area has also been upgraded with a good stock of toys and is staffed by a qualified play worker. There are 43 spaces in the visits hall, plus 2 (suitable for use by people with disabilities) and 6 closed booths and the visits hall is frequently fully booked up.

There have been no family days during the year and the board would like to see these reinstated to help to maintain the bonds between fathers and their children.

6.4 Security

During the reporting period the security department have improved on most areas as prisoners held within Risley HMP have felt safer, particularly the vulnerable prisoners held on F & G wings.

Continued efforts are being made with a view to reducing drugs within the establishment, the overhead netting has resulted in fewer throw over's and has enabled officers to concentrate on other possible areas that cause concern.

Mobile phones are still an area of concern, the staff are continuously searching and with the help of the area search team, numerous intelligence led searches have proven successful in finding contraband items, this has resulted in prisoners feeling safer whilst detained within HMP Risley.

Relationships with the local police force have been strengthened, with the local police taking an active interest in the importation of illegal items, car park searching as visitors arrives into the jail, this has proved successful and has shown the public that the Prison Service and Police are uniting in their fight against illegal items being taken into Prisons.

Overall the security team have done an excellent job, making HMP Risley a better and safer place.

7.1 Board statistics

Recommend complement of members	20
Number of board members at the start of the reporting period	11
Number of board members at the end of the reporting period	10
Number of new members joining during the reporting period	0
Number of members leaving during the reporting period	1
Total number of board meeting during the reporting period	9
Average number of attendances at meetings during the reporting period	8.3
Number of attendances at meetings other than board meetings	34
Total number of visits to the prison	412
Total number of applications received	237
Total number of segregation reviews held	
Total number of segregation reviews attended	159

Applications

Code	Subject	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
A	Accommodation	10	9	7
B	Adjudications	6	5	3
C	Diversity related	3	6	4
D	Education/employment/training	19	25	17
E	Family/visits	31	33	20
F	Food/Kitchen related	4	3	2
G	Health related	15	16	26
H	Property	91	39	38
I	Sentence related	23	31	39
J	Staff/prisoner related	14	29	23
K	Transfers	35	23	15
L	Miscellaneous	126	52	43
	Total	377	271	237

7.2 The work of the board.

The Board usually meets once a month, however the number of board meetings has been reduced this year to accommodate the new reduced budgets set by the Secretariat. The monthly board meeting is the forum for members to discuss issues arising from prison visits and issues arising from prisoner's applications to the board. A half hour slot prior to the board meeting allows either for internal training or briefing on specific topics by prison personnel.

All the board members have special areas of interest and use the monthly board meeting to feed back relevant information to the whole board. In addition during this year a training day was organised to update board members on serious incident monitoring.

Four members have attended the new member's course run by the Secretariat on behalf of the ministry of Justice and two members attended the IMB Annual conference held at a venue in Leicester.

The number of applications from prisoner's received by the board has remained at a similar level to the last reporting period and considerably less than the previous year.

The board has not had the resources to attend the prison as frequently as they feel is necessary to maintain the required level of monitoring. The current number of board members is only ten and this is insufficient to monitor a large busy prison.

The board would like to record their thanks to all members of staff for their help in maintaining high standards to ensure a safer environment in which to house prisoners. The chair would also like to thank the board members for their continued support despite the trying times we are going through.

8 Glossary

ACCT	Assessment, Care in Custody & Teamwork – Replacement for F2052SH
CARATS	Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice & Throughcare Scheme - drug & alcohol team
CSU	Care and Separation Unit (segregation)
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
HMCIP	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons
IDTS	Integrated Drug Treatment Service
IMB	Independent Monitoring Board
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
NTA	National Treatment Agency
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
OLASS	Offender Learning and Skills Service (part of LSC)
PASRO	Prisons Addressing Substance-Related Offending
PCT	Primary Care Trust
REAT	Racial Equality Action Team
RIF	Racial Incident Form
UKBA	United Kingdom Border Agency
YOI	Young Offender Institution