



**HMP RISLEY**

**INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**April 2011 – March 2012**

## 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 1085 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 172 foreign nationals, 219 sex offenders, 147 IPP’s and 98 lifers.

The Risley estate consists of 7 residential wings, 2 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 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 and a Muslim Iman.

### 4 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### Issues for the Minister

The prison has responded positively to the budget reductions in 2011-2012 and will continue to do so into 2013. Managing these budget cuts takes considerable time and effort and inevitably can only damage the regime and its efforts to address offending behaviour. The board is aware of financial constraints on the public purse but would stress these cuts need to be limited in order to maintain a safe environment in which to keep prisoners. Some prisoners have suffered with the regime cut backs, these mainly being older, infirm prisoners who have been left in their cells for periods of 22 hours. The board would like the Minister to give assurance this will not continue and extra funding will be found to eliminate this practice.

The residential unit, known as Birchwood unit, has passed its “sell by” date and although it remains in use, it is not the best environment in which to keep prisoners. This has been brought to the attention of previous ministers. The costs of running such a unit are a strain on the current budget.

The board have major concerns regarding the level of purposeful activity which remains too low. A number of workshops are not getting the correct number of prisoners therefore not operating to full capacity, and the board would like to see all workshops operating at 100% capacity, giving prisoners the opportunity of out of cell activity. Despite the efforts of the institution to provide additional facilities, the facilities remain inadequate, with prisoners held in cells for too long. The board asks that the Minister investigates this shortfall and will make the resources available to allow full time purposeful activity for all prisoners.

Issues requiring a response operational response

Learning and skills

Over the last few years many positive changes have been made within this area, but there is scope for further improvement, the provision of the full contracted allocation of hours would go some way towards achieving an acceptable level of purposeful activity for all prisoners.

General

The continued requirement to make savings is having an adverse effect upon staff and prisoners, resulting in more violence (prisoner on prisoner and prisoner on staff), this is unacceptable and more resources should be given to ensure that prisoners are not left in cells for extended periods.

In spite of the efforts of staff to maintain the normal regime, a reduction in the level of overtime covering for staff absences is resulting in the deterioration of some aspects of prison life.

The continued 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 would like to see specialist areas used for this purpose offering a more acceptable environment.

## 5.1 DIVERSITY

Since our last annual report the focus of diversity related issues has widened to include not only racial issues but also those relating to disability, age religion, sexuality and nationality.

The responsibility for this wide ranging area is now part of the portfolio of one of the governors and given that they have many other responsibilities progress towards fulfilling the recommendations of the 2010 HMIP report has been slow, however an updated diversity policy is now in place.

In the new format the forum for discussion of diversity related issues is the DEIAT meetings. Attendance at these meetings has been poor both by staff and prisoner representatives. The designated governor monitors all the DRIF forms and they are discussed at the DEIAT meetings.

The number of DRIF forms submitted during the year was 78 and 19 were proven. A sample of DRIF forms have been scrutinised by the board and all found to be completed comprehensively. The breakdown of protected characteristics showed that the vast majority were race related.

There are 17 disabled prisoners in HMP Risley. Facilities for disabled prisoners have been improved and there is now a wet room for wheelchair users. The wheelchair buddy system is now fully functional and this means that prisoners in wheelchairs no longer have long waits to be moved from area to another, 11 of the disabled prisoners are able to go to work with the help of their buddy.

Care and personal evacuation plans are now in place for all prisoners where the prison is aware of need. The prison management is also aware that there are other prisoners in Risley who might benefit from similar plans but who have not declared a need, the staff are adopting a 'softly softly' approach so as not to upset or embarrass anyone.

For those prisoners who do not go to work, either because they are medically unfit or because they are over the age of 65, far too much time is spent behind their doors, typically 22 hours per day. The board has made many representations to the prison management over what they consider to be an unsatisfactory regime.

Risley contains a large number of foreign national prisoners. The prison management is addressing their particular problems and many documents have now been translated into other languages. Pictorial canteen sheets have been introduced. The telephone translation service is still used quite sparingly with other prisoners often assisting with translation. ESOL classes are very well attended and the education department provides outreach classes in some workshops.

There are still a number of sentence expired prisoners being held in Risley 24 at the last count, the longest period being 23 months over sentence and 187 have been deported during the year most of them under the early release scheme. The majority of sentence expired prisoners are awaiting the results of appeals but some are due to difficulties in obtaining travel documents from foreign embassies.

Following a complaint to the ombudsman in respect of contamination of Halal food which was upheld the prison have made efforts to prevent it. It has been identified that the contamination is occurring at the servery not in the kitchen. The training of servery workers needs to be more rigorous. Instances of incorrect tools being used have been observed, screens in the serveries to separate the halal food would be ideal.

## 5.2 LEARNING AND SKILLS

In each of the annual reports over the last five years the board has highlighted the fact that Risley is a training prison without sufficient training places, the current position is that there are 943 places for 1085 prisoners. However these figures do not convey a true picture of the situation because the majority of these places are part time places and the full time equivalent is only about 600 places.

There is an urgent need to provide more training places but also to better utilise those places that are available. On the one hand the board continues to receive applications from prisoners stating that they are unable to get a job and on the other hand there are some classes and workshops that are not full to capacity, for example a pre release employment course is about to be closed because of poor numbers taking it up. The board believes that this course with topics such as mock interviews and CV writing contained in it should be maintained and much greater efforts be made to steer prisoners nearing the end of their sentences towards it.

Measures also need to be put in place to ensure that the precious resources are not being wasted. A recent example being that of a class with twelve prisoners nominally on the roll consisted of only five prisoners the day a board member visited it and enquires as to the whereabouts of the missing prisoners revealed that two of the class members were actually on another course at the same time. This course was being staffed by two people for five prisoners.

Attendance has dropped from an excellent figure last year of 90% to only 81% this year. This coupled with the fact that not all the training places available are being utilised is very disappointing. It did seem inevitable when the job of head of learning and skills was demoted from a full time post to a part time post that there would be some deterioration of the service. Risley is a training prison containing over 1000 prisoners; it should warrant a full time leader of this vitally important department.

The partner delivering the OLASS contract is Manchester City College and the prison continues to have a good relationship with them. The prison management is acutely aware of the deficiencies in the amounts of purposeful activity available to prisoners and is working with Manchester City College and outside agencies to expand the number of places available. The new funding arrangements under OLASS 4 will make this task even more difficult given the large number of foreign national prisoners.

The board has received a number of applications from prisoners about being unable to secure a job or being dismissed from a job. The reoccurring theme was "I don't know why". On investigating these applications the board found that all procedures had been carried out correctly but that in nearly all cases the prisoner concerned had not been given any explanation for the action taken. When the reasons were explained to them all the prisoners were satisfied that they were being treated fairly.

### 5.3 HEALTHCARE

The healthcare facility at HMP Risley aims to provide a health service that is equivalent to primary care services provided to NHS patients within the Warrington community.

Warrington Community Services Unit joined with other community services in the region to prepare for Foundation Trust Status. The new provider organisation is currently known as "Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust."

The number of applications received from prisoners regarding Healthcare issues has increased from 26 to 30. This increase has mostly been with regard to prescription drugs, prisoners requesting certain medication and either being offered alternative medicines or refusal. This could be attributed to the changes within the Healthcare model as described.

A new model of GP Practice has been introduced which has significantly reduced the need for locum GP's, this should improve the continuity of GP care.

The nursing team is now at maximum with no vacancies.

The administrative team has also been redesigned and now has 2 assistants working with the office manager.

There is a new dental decontamination room and a further 2 consulting rooms allowing a greater through put of patients.

The mental health service has an additional 2 primary care workers.

All the above can only assist, providing a better and speedier service to prisoners.

The main concern for the IMB will be the change in the way Offender Health Services are commissioned. In 2013 it is expected that a National Commissioning Board will be set up and divide into regional sectors, this is anticipated to assist with efficiency in the allocation of resources and services.

Again in the past twelve months the IMB have been concerned with the management of prisoners who have extreme mental problems, Risley still has no in house facility within Healthcare unit and has to use the Care and Separation Unit to house these prisoners. We again stress the inappropriate use of such an area, when patients are in need of something a little less hostile.

## 5.4 SAFER CUSTODY

The Safer Custody Team supports and monitors vulnerable prisoners and is assisted by the Peer Support Group. Monthly meetings of the Suicide and Self Harm Group are well attended and the minutes of these meetings are well documented.

Issues regarding listeners and prisoners are also documented in great detail, as is training courses for listeners. The listeners continue to provide support to fellow prisoners and the availability on listeners throughout this reporting period has been sufficient.

The Board have carried out an overview of all minutes and documented presentations of the Safer Custody Team, reference ACCTS on Licenced Recalled Prisoners (both monthly and annually), Foreign National Prisoners (again both monthly and annually), in-depth documentation on Current "At Risk" Prisoners and "Case Study Updates" on Raised at Risk Prisoners.

Case Study Updates covers:-

Positive Points of Practice

- Informative assessment
- Collaborative working practice exemplified by attendance at review of Chaplaincy
- Initial Care Map "Best Practice" submitted by S.O. Total detail incorporated into report, easy to understand, showing a sequential progression of issues
- Open process of documents completed within 24 hours of opening
- Good quality handovers from night to days

Safer Custody Incidents/Serious Self Harm

In the year to date, there have been 42 incidents, 10 of which were considered "Serious Self Harm" – major cuts, ligature or overdose - which required transport to hospitals. Most other incidents were reduced by the prompt action and skill of the officers on the wings. There was one "death in custody" which was from natural causes.

Documentation and Recordings of Safer Custody Incident

Having been given total access to files within the "Safer Custody Department", all incidents and ongoing incidents are fully and professionally documented.

## 5.5 CARE AND SEPARATION UNIT

Prisoners are located in the CSU (before or after adjudication) following a misdemeanour or for their own safety and protection. Prisoners relocated for own protection fall into two categories threats of self harm or threats from other prisoners. The total number of prisoners passing through the CSU during the year was 71 with the breakdown into categories as below

### Initial location under Rule

G.O.O.D Rule 45b	24
G.O.O.D o/p Rule 45a	11
Pending Adjudication Rule 53	36
R55	0

The numbers of prisoners in CSU varies considerably from day to day, however, during the first three months of the year the number of prisoners being received in the CSU saw a decrease by 2 and a further decrease was seen in the following three months by 9.

During the first six months of the reporting year there was a decrease from 17 to 2 prisoners coming into the CSU for their Own Interest; it is believed that this is a reflection of the violence reduction measures implemented and that there are less bullying/gang issues in the prison.

All prisoners on arrival at CSU are seen by healthcare and healthcare then monitor the prisoners thereafter on a regular basis. A Governor visits the CSU on a daily basis.

During the reporting year it was found that there were no unsuitable prisoners transferred to the CSU. The board remains concerned that prisoners on open ACCT's are being held in the CSU.

The PSO 1700 makes a mandatory provision for the protocol that is in place at HMP Risley that provides for an officer within the CSU notifying a member of the IMB whenever a prisoner is located to this unit. An IMB member then visits the prisoner as soon as is possible to ensure that all their statutory needs are being met.

The prisoners within the CSU have access to a shower, some of their own property, a radio and an outside yard for exercise. In the HMIP report it was recommended that benches be provided in the exercise yard, none are present yet.

The board attend a sample of adjudications, when members do attend they ensure that all the adjudications are carried out in a fair manner and in accordance with the relevant guidelines. They also ensure that the prisoner has sufficient time to prepare their case and are given every opportunity to speak for themselves at the adjudication.

Segregation reviews are carried out routinely as required; board members attend the majority of reviews. Often members of staff who have had contact with a prisoner before their relocation fail to attend segregation reviews, frequently their input would be very helpful.

Prisoners claiming 'Own Interest' after adjudication has seen a decrease from 23% to 0 in the first quarter and this remains at zero. Prisoners do not appear to be committing offences in order to relocate themselves to the CSU.

The IMB is concerned that there is a lack of effort to provide education and constructive activities for prisoners in the segregation unit.

The board consider the CSU to be a very well run unit with staff providing for a high standard of care. The CSU continues to be quiet, clean and relatively peaceful given its purpose. At a time of extreme difficulty in relocating prisoners from the CSU to other establishments the board have witnessed the hard work the governors put in during the reviews particularly to achieve reallocation to other establishments when appropriate to do so. The prisoners tell us they are well treated by the officers who form a small dedicated and appropriately trained team.

## 6.1 VISITS

Throughout the year there have been problems with visits. Prisoners constantly report to the IMB that their visitors have difficulty in getting through to the prison to book visits. When IMB members try phoning the visits lines they often get no response. Investigations have revealed that if there is a staff shortage then the staff member scheduled for the visits booking line is one of the first to be redeployed and frequently the staff member responsible for checking in visitors will also be answering the phone. Legal visits can be requested via e mail, this system is working well so it would seem sensible to extend it to family visits. A system is being trialled in the prison where prisoners can book the visit dates themselves and then inform their visitors of the date that they have booked but this is still a paper system. It is a step in the right direction but it would be much more preferable to move to an automated system as is already available in some prisons.

The staffing problems which affect visits also affect correspondence and VO's on their way out to visitors often get stuck there for up to a fortnight. These delays in processing correspondence also affect incoming mail and the board have received applications about registered and recorded letters having been signed from the post office's care into that of the prison which have still not reached their recipients 10 days later.

The visits area has benefited from some new more comfortable seating this year but the noise level when the visiting room is full continues to be unacceptable.

The visitors centre outside the gate is small and frequently overcrowded often with 100+ visitors. Disabled visitors have great difficulty using the toilet facilities. The centre is in dire need of refurbishment.

## 6.2 CHAPLAINCY

The number of prisoners attending formal worship is not high, only about 10% of the prison population; however, the services of the chaplaincy team are much appreciated by prisoners and staff alike. Many prisoners first come in to contact with the chaplaincy team when there is death or serious illness in their family outside the prison. Chaplaincy members organise attendance at funerals and visits to hospitals. The leader of the chaplaincy team is one of the prison's family liaison officers.

A chaplain visits all prisoners on ACCT's daily and a team member attends CSU reviews. One of the chaplaincy team is an ACCT assessor and attends the majority of ACCT reviews. A small palliative care unit is due to be opened and will be included in the role of the chaplaincy.

The chaplaincy team is large with many part time members, great efforts being made to provide spiritual guidance for all faiths even those with only a tiny presence in the prison, e.g. a representative from the Mormon Church has recently been appointed but, regrettably, have refused to undergo security clearance. He is therefore unable to take up the post.

### 6.3 ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

The residential wings in Risley continue to deteriorate, prisoner painting parties have improved the decorative order and keep the place graffiti free. It is the state of the facilities and equipment which concern the board most, particularly on B wing which has been described in numerous reports by HMIP as unfit for purpose. Although the minister is well aware of the problem he has not seen fit to address it.

Some of the problems of B wing are as follows:

Despite the best efforts of pest controllers who visit the prison regularly there are still reports of cockroaches on the wing. The showers sometimes do not work due to the low water pressure. The TV reception in the wing is very poor resulting in a very limited choice for prisoners. The facilities for association are very small and cramped for so many prisoners.

It is not just on B wing that problems are encountered, the maintenance and repair of all the equipment in the prison is poor, where washing machines and driers fail they take a long time to repair. One tumble drier has been out of action for seven months apparently waiting for spare parts. The result of this is that prisoners are drying their washing draped over the railings on the walkways restricting visibility and causing a nuisance when items drop onto the floor and the netting. It also results in items going missing causing frustration amongst the prisoners.

In the kitchen there were at one time some ten items of equipment that were awaiting repair or renewal including the dishwasher and several ovens. There were three fryers out of action resulting in chips being off the menu for several months. Many of these items had maintenance contracts in place but even so they took months rather than days to get contractors in to repair them.

After a long wait the showers on A wing were refurbished but some of the work was faulty with water leaking through the floor to the floor below. The time which it took to get the contractors back into the prison to rectify the work was unacceptably long.

Food service areas in the residential units have been a concern with sneeze screens being broken, reported numerous times but with no action being taken, not only is this a health hazard but a danger to both prisoners and staff as sharp shards of Perspex remained in place which can be used as a weapon.

There have been difficulties with the smoke evacuation vents not closing correctly letting in rain and allowing birds to enter the building which resulted in bird excrement being deposited on the snooker table. Again why does it take so long to get these things fixed?

The tannoy system does not work in some areas and needs a thorough overhaul.

The HMIP report of 2011 stated that small repairs were done promptly but the items listed above which indicate a range of problems tell a different story. It is not the experience of the IMB that repairs are done promptly indeed the IMB themselves had to wait two years to get new IMB boxes fitted. The works department having mislaid the first set of boxes that were purchased. Generally the residential area are clean and tidy but with the majority of them aging they are in need of comprehensive refurbishment.

#### 6.4 SECURITY

HMP Risley remains a safe environment for prisoners, but the ever increasing problem of drugs and mobile telephones still proves a challenge for the security staff.

The IMB have concern over the lack of drug dogs within the prison. The number of dogs and handlers has been reduced due to austerity cuts, leaving the prison vulnerable and increasing the work load of the already overstretched security staff.

The security department have made great efforts in ensuring the safety of prisoners within Risley. The governance of the security department has had a number of changes within the last twelve months; however, this does not appear to have distracted them from their goals as a recent audit was very favourable.

The board have a close working relationship with staff and security is an issue for all who work within Risley. Due to the high vigilance of staff, Risley remains one of the safer jails within the North West and therefore a safe environment for prisoners.

The board have some concerns over the willingness of the security department to share relevant information with other departments.

## 7.1 BOARD STATISTICS

Recommend complement of members	20
Number of board members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of board members at the end of the reporting period	10
Number of new members joining during the reporting period	2
Number of members leaving during the reporting period	2
Total number of board meeting during the reporting period	10
Average number of attendances at meetings during the reporting period	
Number of attendances at meetings other than board meetings	
Total number of visits to the prison	388
Total number of applications received	272
Total number of segregation reviews held	
Total number of segregation reviews attended	

### Applications

Code	Subject	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
A	Accommodation	9	7	3
B	Adjudications	5	3	18
C	Diversity related	6	4	3
D	Education/employment/training	25	17	11
E	Family/visits	33	20	24
F	Food/Kitchen related	3	2	7
G	Health related	16	26	30
H	Property	39	38	49
I	Sentence related	31	39	31
J	Staff/prisoner related	29	23	21
K	Transfers	23	15	14
L	Miscellaneous	52	43	51
	Total	271	237	272

## 7.2 SUMMARY OF THE WORK DONE BY THE BOARD DURING THE REPORTING YEAR

Each week board members attend the prison to conduct rota visits and monitor adjudications.

They also respond to prisoner applications, attend Separation and Care reviews and observe prison management meetings. Board members also observe ACCT reviews.

The Board holds a monthly meeting at which the Governor or his deputy attends in order to brief the Board on prison matters and to discuss issues from rota reports. Presentations have been given by prison staff to the board to inform them about specialist functions within the prison.

Two Board members attended the IMB Annual Conference in 2012. Members have attended National and local training courses.

Members have visited other establishments during the year. The chair has attended area Chair meetings at numerous establishments throughout the year.

The Chair would like to thank the continued support of the Board, with particular thanks to the Vice Chair and Board Development Officer and the assistance given to the IMB from Prison staff.

8 GLOSSARY

ACCT	Assessment, Care in Custody & Teamwork – Replacement for F2052SH
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
IMB	Independent Monitoring Board
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
OLASS	Offender Learning and Skills Service (part of LSC)
PCT	Primary Care Trust
UKBA	United Kingdom Border Agency
YOI	Young Offender Institution
IPP	Indefinite Public Protection
DRIF	Discrimination Incident Reporting Form
DREAT	Diversity Race Equality Action Team
SO	Senior Officer
PSO	Prison Service Order
PSI	Prison Service Instruction
GOAD	Good Order and Discipline
VO	Visiting Order