



**HMP RYE HILL**  
**INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

**April 2012 – March 2013**



# Section 1

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## **STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB**

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.

The Prison Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and IRC to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State 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 right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

# Section 2

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# Section 3

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## **DESCRIPTION & FUNCTION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT.**

- HMP Rye Hill opened in January 2001 and was operated by Global Solutions Limited on a 25 year contract to the Home Office. In August 2008 GSL was bought by G4S who took over the running of the prison.
- The premises are purpose built with eight residential units consisting of two Vulnerable Prisoner units where prisoners who have committed an offence making them eligible for the Sex Offenders Treatment Programme are held separately from mainstream prisoners, and six mainstream units.
- The prison is a Category B male training prison with certified normal accommodation of 600 and operational capacity of 625. It held 621 prisoners at the end of the current reporting period.
- The prison currently holds 119 prisoners under traditional life sentences with a further 145 held under Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection.
- There are 520 category B, 101 category C prisoners and 0 category D prisoners.
- 20% of the prisoners are foreign national prisoners, higher than the national average of 13%.
- The ethnic breakdown has remained reasonably stable for some years at approximately 60% White, 22% Black and 10% Asian.
- Prisoners over the age of 50 represent 14% of the total population although only 10% of these are over 65 years.
- Health care is provided by sub-contract to a new division of G4S called G4S Integrated Services. This contract started on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012.
- The Education provider is City College Manchester.
- Catering is provided by Aramark.
- Links with Samaritans are established together with a Listeners Service.

# Section 4

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report covers the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. The current Senior Management Team is aware of the following issues and has been working to address them since the end of the reporting period.

During the reporting year there has been a high incident of senior staff changes, this may be a contributing factor to the frequently cancelled meetings, increase in serious incidents, and higher admissions to the Care and Separation Unit (CSU). The frequent changes to management of the CSU have given especial cause for concern. (see section 5.4 and 5.5)

Significant progress has been made in Equality and Inclusion with each strand now being led by a senior member of staff. (see section 5.1)

A number of useful Action Plans were initiated during the year including Violence Reduction, Full Employment and Improved Substance Mis-use treatment. Although measurable progress has been made, these plans remain behind schedule. (see sections 5.7 and 6.1.)

The staffing problems within Health Care reported last year have now been addressed with waiting times for both doctor and dentist substantially reduced. In common with other prisons the substantial number of prisoners with mental health needs continues to exceed the resources available with some unable to progress through their sentence plans as the appropriate 1 to 1 therapy is not offered and places in prisons who do offer this option are very limited. (see section 5.2)

It is pleasing to note that the admissions procedures, especially property handling, has improved markedly during the year. (see section 6.4)

As reported last year there are still a lot of ISPP prisoners over their tariffs and concerns about availability of the activities needed to progress their sentence plans continue. Additionally concern has been raised this year about more prisoners being released direct from Rye Hill, a Cat B prison originally designed for long sentence prisoners. Previously these prisoners would have been moved to a local prison for their last few months. This change is limiting the support these prisoners can be given to adapt for release. (see section 5.6).

**Overall the prison has operated with respect and fairness towards prisoners during the year however the high occupancy rate of the CSU and the increase in serious incidents and assaults is worrying and we would look to urgent action to reverse these trends.**

# Section 5

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## **ESSENTIAL REPORTING AREAS**

### **5.1 Equality and Inclusion**

Significant progress has been made with each strand of Equality (Race, Faith & Religious Belief, Disability, Age, Gender & Sexual Orientation and Foreign Nationals) now being led by a senior member of staff. Each group meets regularly, with the exception of the Gender & Sexual Orientation group which is about to start. Our concerns last year regarding unacceptable delays in resolving EAT issues has been significantly improved principally due to these regular group meetings. However it is disappointing that the Equality Action Team's (EAT) alternate monthly meetings have on many occasions been cancelled or re-scheduled.

Equality analysis data indicates that the racial spread in all areas falls within the Equality designated range (see also section 5.4).

We have been pressing for a Gypsy & Travellers group. Work is underway on this and we are hopeful that this will be in place shortly.

### **5.2 Healthcare & Mental Health.**

The issues over Healthcare staffing reported last year have been resolved, new staff now include GP, dentist, Health Care Assistant, RGN, RMN, with a further RMN to be appointed. Health champions have also been trained in peer support on each unit. Waiting times have improved with no waiting time for GP and triage nurse and only 3 weeks wait for dentist.

The counselling service has been replaced by IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Services) and there is no waiting time for IAPT with self-referral accepted.

There have been various nationally recommended changes in the use of strong pain killers and a Pain Clinic is now in place to assess chronic need for analgesia.

We still have the following concerns:

- The inpatient cells are still being used for non-clinical cases. The proposal to care for behavioural issues on the unit has not been implemented.
- There is a lack of clinical room in the Health Care Unit and chronic disease management and health screening cannot develop further without more room; this results in underuse of valuable nursing skill as well as poorer patient care.

- The rate of referral to hospital appointments has outstripped the operational capacity, with a limit of 2 potential escorts a day, this has resulted in long waiting times.
- There is still a large number of prisoners with mental health issues. In-reach is slow to respond and mental health placements are almost impossible to arrange unless a patient is a very high risk.

### **5.3 Education, Learning & Skills**

There have been many staff changes and the Manchester College team is now managed by NW region.

The numbers attending education has reduced from 250 per month to 200 per month; this may be associated with actions to increase the time spent at work. Accredited courses are well attended and there are also approx 60 men undertaking distance learning (OU, Stonebridge or GCSE) although IT provision is poor for all levels.

There is increasing concern about challenging behaviour of some students with poor motivation to learn. This together with a lack of consistency of operational support with a different PCO supporting education each day is leaving staff feeling more vulnerable.

### **5.4 Safer Custody**

There have been frequent changes of Senior Manager and prolonged periods where operational staff numbers have been at the bare minimum. Staff has been taken from other roles such as security intelligence and the Offender Management Unit (OMU) to fill gaps. This has been partly addressed by an intake of new recruits but has left staff feeling stretched and with low morale at times. The same staffing issues have led to internal meetings being frequently cancelled and re-scheduled at short notice which is impacting the awareness of trends and progress on improvement plans.

Violence Management/Reduction has been a stated priority this year and there are some signs of progress however the number of assaults has risen in the second half of the reporting period (double the rate of the first half) and this trend does not seem to be reversing.

The Violence Reduction and Unacceptable Behaviour procedure (ASB) has led to the use of properly formulated care plans and this has helped to improve practice. However, IMB would like to see the management of I&EP levels more closely reflect incidents and behaviours reported. Overall the I&EP scheme has historically not been well used but management focus during the last year has seen a more proactive use of demotion to basic for persistent poor behaviour or major non-co-operation such as refusal to work.

Incidents of self-harm have reduced and the provision of detailed ACCT (Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork) records was improved but it remains difficult to monitor the review process effectively as timings of reviews are seldom predictable.

Vastly improved recording methodology is currently being introduced for safer custody statistics.

Only 3 SMARG (Segregation Monitoring and Review Group) meetings were held during the year although 4 are required by the PSO.

### **5.5 Segregation and Care & Separation Unit (CSU)**

CSU had a stable start with numbers admitted being gradually reduced, reasons for holding them and the treatment they received largely consistent and professional. Procedures were, by and large, correctly followed and IMB was confident the Unit was well managed and run.

However the situation has deteriorated markedly during the second part of the year. There is over-use of the facility with paperwork and procedures sometimes unreliable with errors and omissions. Staff attitudes and interactions with prisoners are less consistent and less in tune with expressed policy, sometimes bordering on disrespectful to prisoners. This has been exacerbated by frequent changes of staff both at CSU management and Senior Management level.

Over the year there has been a small number of prolonged stays and an overall lack of Exit Planning [At the very end of the reporting year, this is being addressed.] Because of the high occupancy of the CSU accommodation, Health Care has on occasions been used as 'CSU overspill' though this is being addressed.

There is an apparent trend towards prisoners manipulating admission to CSU, and continued residence there, by inappropriate behaviour largely as a means of securing transfer. While this is an ever-present factor in CSUs, Rye Hill management has struggled to produce an effective strategy for addressing it.

There have been difficulties in accessing education and library for prisoners in CSU, with breaks in the process and no sense of ownership of the issues.

### **5.6 Resettlement**

Although Rye Hill was not originally intended to hold prisoners with less than 6 months remaining to serve, of the 51 prisoners due for release this year, 80% were released directly from Rye Hill. Few of these prisoners have local connections near Rye Hill and finding residential accommodation in their home region is proving especially challenging, if not nigh impossible, due to the need to co-ordinate with many remote agencies while having no local

knowledge of the target area. This has resulted in some prisoners being released to 'no fixed abode'.

## **5.7 Purposeful Activity**

In January 2013 a new Industries Workshop opened to provide purposeful activity for an additional 40 prisoners. There was also planned to be 10 places in the new training kitchen available to Vulnerable Prisoners (VP) and 20 additional places in the VP garden. These are still under development having missed completion deadlines. Partly as a result of these missed deadlines but also a reduction in contracts for the workshops the Action Plans to increase purposeful activity places by 80-90 by January 2013 have not been met.

The lack of contracts for work in the Industries workshops is having a very negative effect on the actual purposeful activity undertaken, although as the prisoners still attend the workshops this does count as 'time out of cell'. Activities to bring in more suitable/additional work seem to have been unsuccessful so far.

The weekly hours of purposeful activity ranged from 25.76 to 29.94 against a target of 28.5, which was reached only in 4 months of the year. Unit based jobs continue to take up a high percentage of purposeful activity, a situation the Action Plan was hoping to change.

Availability of staff to supervise both in the workshops and gardens has sometimes meant prisoners have not been able to carry out the work that is available adding to their frustration.

## **5.8 Residential Services (*accommodation, food, catering and kitchens*)**

Few issues have been reported with the main accommodation units though there continues to be some delays in the repair of machines in the laundry rooms. Talks are under way for a new contract to address this.

The only bath available for disabled prisoners is in Health Care and the associated hoist has been broken for some time.

The Kitchens offer NVQ Training Courses to mainstream prisoners and food quality is generally considered acceptable with the main complaints relating to portion sizes and deliver/service issues (e.g. soggy chips) resulting from the time taken from its cooking in the Kitchen to it being served on the Units.

The cost and supplying of some special diets is causing ongoing budgeting concerns for the Kitchen Manager.

# Section 6

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## **OTHER AREAS.**

### **6.1 Drugs**

The team, now known as the Substance Misuse Team, re-located to new portacabins in June 2012. The new team reports to, and is funded by, the National Health Service not G4S although a senior manager from existing G4S staff heads the team. There have been senior management changes twice in the year and the team is currently a drug worker short.

One of the mainstream units has been identified as a drug recovery unit for IDTS (Integrated Drug Treatment System) patients and Substance Misuse clients plus peer support; although progress on implementing this is slow. There is extra space for group work in the new cabins and holistic support treatments are now provided in the old cabins.

The slow response to the needs analysis of 2011 is disheartening; promises of a better service for Substance Misuse Team clients have not been delivered so far resulting in de-motivated men and loss of trust resulting in poor cooperation ( e.g. in the development of the drug free unit)

The IDTS Team and the Substance Misuse Team continue to have tensions around care provision and fail to adequately communicate. IDTS is still not delivered from the portacabins due to IT, staff and accommodation concerns. The treatment of Substance Misuse appears poorly understood and consequently badly prioritized by the larger prison community: there are tensions between operational and clinical needs.

### **6.2 Induction**

A new induction process has been introduced albeit a couple of months behind the date scheduled. IMB members attend induction sessions to talk about the work of the IMB.

### **6.3 Offending Behaviour Programmes**

The Sex Offenders Treatment Programme (SOTP) courses have again reached their performance target for completions. SOTP no longer has a recorded waiting list, instead it trawls round for qualifying prisoners [including other prisons] when each course is at the planning stage. This has worked to ensure courses are full and bed-blocking minimised.

The Thinking Skills Programme courses (TSP) has also met its completions target but does have a waiting list. It currently stands at 46 mainstream prisoners, plus 28 VPs, the latter number is difficult to interpret as many are a 'virtual' queue, i.e. they are already engaged on SOTP and cannot do both courses at once. The 2012 figure was 65 total so the situation is broadly stable.

#### **6.4 Reception & Admissions and Property**

The admissions process has improved significantly with offenders and their property being much more efficiently handled.

The backlog of boxes destined for long term storage are being repacked, and they have nearly caught up in returning these boxes to Branston. There is still a 3 months delay in retrieving boxes and this is frustrating for offenders.

There are still problems transferring property with offenders, with transport buses often being too small to take all a prisoner's property and some prisons refusing to accept the additional property after the offender has been transferred to them.

#### **6.5 Security**

Extra cameras and better key training has substantially reduced the number of gate compromises in the latter part of the year.

A change to how search dogs are used in the prison is being looked at with the aim of being able to direct their use from intelligence received rather than contractual hours at each task.

SIR's have increased month on month throughout the year. Security staff members are sometimes called to other duties so it is difficult to keep up to date on intelligence analysis and extra staff would be beneficial.

#### **6.6 Visits & Visitor Centre**

As reported in previous years there is still no regular Sunday visits, although some Sunday family days are held. Saturday visiting availability has improved, although it is hampered by up to 40% no show, with the same prisoners block booking the Saturday slots in case their families can come.

# Section 7

## THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

### 7.1 Membership & Recruitment

At the end of the period there were 13 members with the Board remaining significantly below establishment strength of 17. Again prioritisation of monitoring areas has been in operation for most of the reporting period.

During the year 2 members left and 1 member unfortunately died. 4 new members were recruited, the 4<sup>th</sup> new member only joining at the very end of the reporting period.

### 7.2 Applications to the Board

*See section 7.3 for breakdown of topics*

295 applications were received during the period, a significant decrease with 354 and 342 for the previous 2 years. Only 2 applications were received under Confidential Access. This decrease may be attributable to a clerical officer being regularly available on the unit to deal directly with minor problems which previously were often referred to the IMB for resolution.

Property and healthcare related problems were a significant proportion of the applications received.

### 7.3 Board Statistics

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	17
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	12
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	13
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	4
Number of members leaving within reporting period	3
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the prison	612
Number of applications received	295
Number of CSU review sessions scheduled to be held*	Ca. 150

Number of CSU review sessions attended*	Ca. 140
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	March 2013

\*A review session included up to 5 reviews

## Application Statistics

Code	Subject	2011/12	2012/2013
A	Accommodation	23	5
B	Adjudications	10	0
C	Equality & Diversity (inc religion)	10	7
D	Education/employment/training inc IEP	42	32
E 1	Family/visits inc mail & phone	16	27
E 2	Finance/pay	22	15
F	Food/kitchen related	14	8
G	Health related	40	42
H 1	Property (within current establishment)	64	56
H 2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)	10	8
H 3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	4	6
I	Sentence related (inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	13	15
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc bullying	36	20
K	Transfers	24	13
L	Miscellaneous	26	40
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	354	295
	Of total: number of Confidential Access was:	44	2

Miscellaneous included personal issues, clothing, legal matters and intelligence.

## Acknowledgement

This report has been compiled from information gathered by all members of the Board.