

ANNUAL REPORT

2010



**Independent Monitoring Board
YARL'S WOOD
IMMIGRATION REMOVAL CENTRE
Chair: Jane Leech
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Section 1

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 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 immigration removal centres.
- (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 far the immigration removal centre has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those held in the centre.

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

Section 2

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Section 3

DESCRIPTION OF CENTRE

3.1 Yarl's Wood IRC ("the Centre") is a purpose-built Immigration Removal Centre operated under the Detention Centre Rules 2001. It is located outside the village of Clapham in Bedfordshire and was opened in 2001. In February 2002 Yarl's Wood was closed following a serious disturbance and fire in half of the building. The undamaged half was re-opened in 2003 with an initial capacity of 60 detainees; the Centre's occupancy was increased to 120 by August 2004 and to its full operational capacity of 405 by the end of 2005.

3.2 Until December 2010, Yarl's Wood was the principal UK centre for the detention under immigration legislation of women and families. It is operated on behalf of the United Kingdom Borders Agency ("UKBA") by Serco Limited ("Serco" or "the Contractor").

3.3 The accommodation at Yarl's Wood consists of four residential units housed in a large, two-storey building. There is a family unit (Crane), a female induction unit (Bunting) and two female units (Avocet and Dove). The four main residential units are connected by a central corridor, from which all ancillary areas, including the Healthcare centre, can be accessed. Detainees in temporary confinement under rule 42 ("TC") are held in the Kingfisher separation unit. There are removal from association ("RFA") rooms for use under rule 40 in Kingfisher and rooms on Bunting are also sometimes used for this purpose. During 2009 the Bunting RFA rooms were converted into a Family Care Suite. There is a separate school building serving the family unit.

3.4 There is a Healthcare Centre on site, which is operated by Serco Health. This provides primary healthcare for detainees, with secondary care being the responsibility of the local Primary Care Trust.

3.5 In July 2010 the Government announced a review of the policy of family detention. For the second part of 2010 the numbers of families detained were greatly reduced and those detained were held for very short periods. On 16th December 2010, the government announced that the family unit at Yarl's Wood would be closed to families with children with immediate effect.

3.6 From 1st September 2010 some of the rooms on the family unit were absorbed into Dove unit for use by single women.

3.7 In 2010 Yarl's Wood continued to operate in the spotlight of intense interest from non-governmental organisations and pressure groups and, periodically, from the media. This continued to present enormous challenges to staff and management.

Section 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4.1 The IMB recognises the value of the cultural, religious and welfare provision at Yarl's Wood and welcomes the publication of a diversity policy. **(Section 5.1)**

4.2 Despite the undoubted efforts of management to provide entertainment and distraction, there is still insufficient purposeful activity for detainees. **(Section 5.2)**

4.3 Improvements in Healthcare have continued during 2010, with a significant reduction in complaints about this service. Access to mental health services has also improved, although there is concern about the detention of women with mental health issues. **(Section 5.3)**

4.4 Safer Detention continued to be appropriately managed and staff are generally responsive to detainees' moods and anxieties. The recorded incidence of bullying and violence remained low and management continued to demonstrate a commitment to encourage detainees to report their concerns. **(Section 5.4)**

4.5 Use of RFA reduced by one case in 2010. Use of TC increased by 10 cases, but 19 cases directly followed the incident on February 8th 2010. One detainee remained in the Kingfisher unit for 12 days following that incident. **(Section 5.5)**

4.6 Recorded instances of use of force have almost doubled over 2009. This increase appears to be due to a change in reporting criteria and the IMB does not view it as a cause for concern. **(Section 5.6)**

4.7 There was a slight increase in the numbers of women leaving the Centre after less than 30 days. However, 18 women were detained for more than a year; four women for two years. The IMB regards this as unacceptable. **(Section 5.7)**

4.8 The IMB highlights once again the position of time-served foreign national prisoners serving lengthy, indeterminate periods of detention. We also highlight discrepancies in sources of information about length of detention. **(Section 5.8)**

4.9 The quality of food served to detainees has improved, but food continues to be used as a means of protest. The opening of two Cultural Kitchens is welcomed. **(Section 5.9)**

4.10 The IMB welcomed the government's announcement in December 2010 that the family unit at Yarl's Wood would close to families with children. 2010 saw a substantial reduction in the numbers of children detained. **(Section 5.10)**

4.11 Detainee complaints reduced significantly during 2010. The IMB has not enjoyed full access to complaints. **(Section 5.11)**

4.12 The IMB highlights examples of detainees being moved at short notice or with insufficient explanation: there is also concern about the adequacy of detainee documentation and the lack of IMB monitoring of charter flights. **(Section 5.12)**

4.13 The IMB continued to be concerned in 2010 about the number of removals which failed or were cancelled at very short notice, particularly those involving children. **(Section 5.13)**

4.14 The IMB reports concerns about the effect of the closure of Refugee and Migrant Justice on detainees' access to legal advice and assistance. **(Section 5.14)**

4.15 The IMB's detailed observations about the incident on February 8th 2010 are recorded in this report. Although there were some concerns about the management of the incident, the IMB did not witness any physical or verbal abuse by officers towards detainees. **(Section 5.15)**

4.16 Generally the physical facilities at Yarl's Wood are kept clean and in reasonable condition. **(Section 5.16)**

4.17 The IMB was without a permanent clerk during the latter part of 2010, but this has been resolved. **(Section 5.17)**

SPECIFIC AREAS OF MONITORING

5.1 Diversity

5.1.1 The IMB has noted in successive annual reports that the Centre operated without a written Diversity policy. This has now been addressed, with the implementation in January 2010 of the new Diversity Policy, together with a system of Impact Assessment, which requires managers to assess the potential impact, in terms of diversity, of any new policy, decision or practice. The policy covers Mental Health, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Age, Equal Opportunities, Race and Religion. In support of this policy the Diversity Team has undergone comprehensive training. The introduction of this policy is to be regarded as a major step forward.

5.1.2 The Race Equality Action Team (REAT) meets once a month to discuss and monitor all aspects of diversity. The meeting is also attended by representatives from UKBA, Religious Affairs, the IMB, Healthcare and all relevant staff members. Residents are invited to attend the second part of the meeting to raise any concerns on their own behalf or that of fellow residents. A small number of residents usually attend. A report is produced for each meeting which provides statistics of ethnicity and religious affiliation in relation to such matters as complaints, use of force and RFA. Whilst it is important that such data is collected, there is not sufficient analysis in order to highlight trends or areas of concern. This inadequacy has been acknowledged by management and it is hoped that it will be addressed to make the meetings more productive.

5.1.3 Focus groups have taken place for different nationalities throughout 2010. They are well-publicised in different languages, and individual invitations, translated appropriately, are delivered to residents from smaller ethnic groups to encourage them to participate. Despite these efforts, some groups are not well-attended.

5.1.4 At certain points in the year there have been tensions which have brought the Chinese detainees into conflict with the Jamaican and Nigerian detainees. There was a perception on the part of the Chinese women that they were not being treated fairly, culminating in a fight in the Avocet dining room in May. In June there were disputes over the use of the Christian prayer room, which were sensitively handled by the Co-ordinating Chaplain. In addition, there was concern amongst the Chinese detainees about the welfare of a detainee who by the summer had been detained for two years and who was apparently anxious to return to China. The local UKBA team and Serco displayed a commitment to resolve these problems. UKBA, with the Criminal Cases Directorate ("CCD"), started a weekly forum for Chinese nationals with the assistance of a local interpreter. Serco then retained the services of the interpreter who still visits once a week. The interpreter and the Buddhist minister provided an essential means of communication and problem-solving, with the result that the tension dissipated to a large extent.

5.1.5 Welfare team: These specially appointed staff members have seen their workload increase in the past year. The most common issues they deal with concern property, legal representation, access to and information from UKBA, flight details

and removal arrangements. The team provides a very important resource for residents and is to be commended for its hard work.

5.1.6 The arrangements for Ramadan went smoothly in 2010. Food was provided for Muslim detainees at appropriate times, including hot milk for cereal at 3am before they started their daily fast.

5.1.7 The REAT committee also organised two Diversity Roadshows in 2010, in June and September. June's event was poorly-attended, and management sought suggestions from staff and detainees for the September event, which included, inter alia, a World Quiz, World arts and crafts, several food stalls (including food cooked by detainees) and a Cultural Beauty stand. It proved to be a most successful and popular event, with a welcoming and celebratory atmosphere and very positive interaction between staff and detainees. There are also many more, smaller-scale, cultural and religious celebrations throughout the year. In addition, arrangements were made for officers to visit various places of worship in order to gain a greater understanding of the different religions followed by detainees at Yarl's Wood. This was a particularly sensitive piece of training.

5.1.8 The Co-ordinating Chaplain and his religious affairs team continue to provide a very valuable resource for staff and residents. We have commented previously on the importance of the religious provision for detainees at times of extreme stress, and that provision continued with a high level of commitment in 2010.

5.2 Activities, Education and Employment

5.2.1 The paid work scheme continued, somewhat expanded, in 2010. By the end of the year there were 48 paid jobs (up from 43 in 2009), including serving meals, cleaning and working in the library. Each role is part-time, some for a few hours a week, and some for up to 15 hours. Some residents also took part in project work, such as making curtains and painting. In December five new posts were created, for "Resident Greeters", with detainees welcoming and providing support to newcomers. This is a particularly successful development. Information collated by the REAT team indicated that the allocation of jobs to detainees of different national groups in 2010 reflected the population of the Centre.

5.2.2 In our 2009 report we referred to plans to allow detainees to work in the kitchen and recommended that management implement those plans as soon as possible. Unfortunately, that did not happen during 2010, although we understand that a group of detainees will be starting work in the kitchen in March 2011.

5.2.3 The provision for formal education is the same as in 2009. There has been some extension in leisure provision, with knitting classes proving extremely popular, and twice-weekly Yoga and Aerobics classes.

5.2.4 Many cultural and other activities are organised to provide the detainees with something to occupy their time. In 2010 these have included family days, a summer fete, fundraising activities such as a fun run, as well as frequent cultural and religious celebrations. We acknowledge the importance of these events – particularly in fostering staff-detainee relations - and the fact that Serco's provision of activities exceeds its contractual requirement. Nonetheless, we remain of the view that there

is not enough purposeful activity, particularly for the many detainees who are long-stayers. A total of 182 detainees were engaged in paid work during 2010. This is a very small proportion of the 4120 detainees who arrived at Yarl's Wood during 2010. As we have pointed out in previous reports, a proportion – 25-30% in 2010 – of the detainees are ex-prisoners, who are used to a core day centred around work or education. The ex-prisoners also tend to be the longest-staying detainees. Despite the undoubted efforts of management to provide entertainment and distraction, the structure is not in place to provide proper, purposeful activity. IMBs across the estate are also concerned that budget cuts might restrict paid-work and educational provision in future.

5.2.5 The IMB was concerned that from May to end-November 2010 there was no qualified librarian in post. We accept that this was the result of recruitment difficulties, but the absence was unfortunate as the librarian is an important source of information and assistance for detainees, as well as being a recommendation of the Detention Centres Operating Standards.

5.2.6 Hummingbird House, the school building formerly used for the children, now stands empty. The IMB would like to see it put to some constructive use, such as adult education and/or activities.

5.3 Healthcare and Mental Health

5.3.1 During 2010, the IMB received ten applications about Healthcare. This includes informal applications as well as written complaints. Although this is a slight increase over 2009, the overall number of applications to the Board has also increased, for the reasons explained in section 5.11.4 below, and we do not consider that this is a cause for concern. There were 12 medical complaints submitted to UKBA via the DCF 9 procedure, a significant reduction from the 26 submitted in 2009.

5.3.2 Applications made to the IMB about Healthcare during 2010 mainly concerned matters such as appointments, chasing up services or results. Most of them were resolved quickly and easily with a visit to Healthcare. The general trend of improvement in the department observed in 2009 has continued. The Board still has a concern about the potential conflict between Healthcare's duties to its patients, and its contractual obligations to certify whether detainees are fit to be detained or to fly, which we have identified in previous years. That said, no major concerns of this nature have been raised with the Board in 2010.

5.3.3 There was one major lapse in procedure in the case of a young female detainee who arrived at the Centre in May 2010. A few days after her arrival she took an overdose of a prescription medication which she had been allowed to keep in possession. The decision to allow medication in possession was not referred to the nurse-manager, as it should have been, given the assessment of her risk of self-harming. This is a serious lapse but fortunately it did not result in long-term harm to the detainee concerned. As is explained in section 5.4.5 below, there were also other contributing factors.

5.3.4 During 2010 some of the Chinese women raised concerns with the Board about access to a doctor. This may be because they did not understand the triage

system, whereby a detainee who wants to see a doctor has to be assessed by a nurse first. [This system does not apply when a detainee first arrives at the centre, when she is given an appointment with a doctor within 24 hours of arrival.] The IMB commented on the triage system in its 2008 report. It is not an unreasonable use of resources but it is not the system which operates in the community and can cause tension. That said, when we have accompanied detainees to Healthcare and asked if they can be seen by the doctor there has been no difficulty about making an appointment. Moreover, we regularly find that the detainee has missed an existing appointment, sometimes because a legal or social visit has been booked at the same time. We would like to see some co-ordination between these appointments.

5.3.5 The policy about photographing detainees with alleged injuries was unclear. For example, there was a delay in photographing one detainee who claimed to have been injured during the February 8th protest. The IMB recommended that photographs should be taken of alleged injuries whenever a detainee requests, and such an instruction has now been issued by UKBA.

5.3.6 A female doctor was permanently available one day a week throughout 2010. In addition, the duty weekend doctor is often female. This is an improvement on the situation in previous years.

5.3.7 The IMB has expressed concerns in previous reports about the plight of mentally-ill detainees and those with mental health issues. In 2010, with one notable exception, the situation seemed to have improved, with few problems of access to mental health services coming to light. The one exceptional case was that of a Nigerian national, detained for two years by November 2010, who in the early part of 2010 made frequent self-harm attempts. She also presented staff with extremely challenging behaviour, as a result of which she was periodically placed on removal from association. She was given a mental health assessment at Bedford Hospital in March, following which she was returned to Yarl's Wood as no mental health condition was diagnosed – a decision those dealing with her may have found somewhat surprising. Her behaviour continued to be extremely challenging, and the impression of the Board was that management had to fight to get external support and guidance for staff in dealing with her. Support plans were ultimately drawn up with the assistance of the Crisis Team at Bedford Hospital, and staff worked hard to keep her safe and manage her erratic behaviour, but, as one officer put it, they are not trained to deal with this type of situation. This case illustrates the plight of detainees who are not diagnosed as mentally-ill but who clearly have serious problems, and, in the Board's view, may not be fit to be detained, but equally may not be fit to be released to care for themselves in the community.

5.4 Safer Detention

5.4.1 Safer Detention meetings continue to be held monthly, with an IMB member in attendance. The standard agenda items include ACDT (Assessment, Care in Detention and Teamwork) reports, anti-bullying reports, support plans for residents, staff training and policy development. The emphasis in the meeting is on reporting, rather than analysis, but an important addition to the committee's discussions in 2010 has been an in-depth review of an ACDT file, selected at random. This is a good training and monitoring tool for assessing the quality of officers' and managers' care of these vulnerable detainees.

5.4.2 Management figures indicate that during 2010, 143 ACDT plans were opened, representing 3.7% of admissions. These plans are opened as a result of concerns on the part of staff, resulting from actual self-harm, attempted or threats to self-harm. The majority of ACDT plans opened in 2010 were opened by Healthcare staff. The number of plans opened has increased from 2.28% of admissions in 2009. The increase may be attributable to the decision to place detainees who have missed a certain number of meals on an ACDT, regardless of other concerns about the detainee's behaviour or mood. ¹

5.4.3 Our monitoring during 2010 showed that prescribed checks and reviews were taking place properly. It is not part of our regular monitoring to attend ACDT reviews unless there is a specific reason to do so. IMB members attended two such reviews in 2010 and found the staff involved to be empathetic and supportive.

5.4.4 A case in May 2010, referred to in section 5.3.3 above, caused concern. A detainee arrived at the Centre and was seen by Healthcare on admission. She was put on a raised awareness plan because of concerns about her state of mind. She was prescribed medication, which, due to a failure of procedure, she was allowed to have in her possession. She remained on a raised awareness plan for a day following her arrival but was taken off it because she did not present staff with any concerns. The next day she took an overdose of the medication and was admitted to Bedford Hospital. Fortunately she made a complete recovery.

5.4.5 An aspect of this case which causes concern is the absence of any indication on the detainee's IS91 (UKBA's authority to detain) of any risk of self-harm, despite the fact, as we understand it, that she had expressed thoughts of self-harm when in police custody immediately prior to her detention at Yarl's Wood. In addition, her GP from the community made a telephone call to the Duty Operations Manager warning him about her record of self-harm, and this was logged on her file, but a day later she was taken off raised awareness as she was not causing any concern.

5.4.6 The reported incidence of bullying during 2010 remained low with 10 cases opened, of which only a handful were proved. However, as reported in 2009, there is still a concern, acknowledged by the Safer Detention committee, that bullying may be under-reported. Management is clearly committed to tackling this but it is proving understandably difficult to get detainees to report incidents. A bullying survey was distributed in August. This was translated into five languages – an improvement on the survey of March 2009, which was only in English, but there were still only 20 responses. The analysis of these responses is still awaited.

5.4.7 An indication of management's commitment to facilitating the reporting of bullying and reduction of its incidence is the introduction of a new Violence Reduction Policy. This has been developed during 2010 and will shortly become operational. The policy will cover bullying and aggressive behaviour as well as physical violence and verbal abuse and it should be easier, through the use of "hear me" forms, for detainees to report their concerns in a confidential way to the violence reduction team. The policy also involves the appointment of anti-bullying champions

¹ The figures in this section are taken from local management information, do not represent UKBA published figures and may be subject to change

from amongst the detainees. This should improve reporting, if only because in some languages the word “bullying” is not easily translated and it may be a concept that some detainees find difficult to understand.

5.4.8 In November 2010 the procedure for the midday and evening roll-counts was changed. Although residents still have to be on their own residential units at these times, they do not have to be in their rooms and there is no formal roll-count at that time. The residents are checked off as they enter the dining-room, and officers have to locate those residents who do not attend the meal. The change, which was implemented months earlier on the family unit, removes two of the pinch-points during the day and has helped to create a less prison-like atmosphere. In addition, residents sometimes complain that male officers enter their rooms at roll-count too quickly after knocking on the door. No formal complaints of this nature have been upheld, but it is something that the IMB has been concerned about in the past and this procedural change has removed two occasions where such allegations may arise. The morning roll-count has also been moved from 6.45 to 7.30am.

5.5 Separation: Removal from Association (“RFA”) and Temporary Confinement (“TC”)

5.5.1 RFA has been invoked on 50 occasions in 2010, a decrease of one from 2009. TC has been invoked on 27 occasions, an increase of 10 cases from 2009. It should be noted, however, that 19 of these cases related to the resolution of the incident on February 8th, when the detainees in the courtyard were taken into TC. Most were quickly released back onto their units, whilst a small number were transferred into RFA and remained there for a longer period. One detainee was held in RFA for 12 days before being transferred to HMP Holloway. This is an unacceptably long period and we do not understand the delay in finding her a prison place.

5.5.2 The principal reasons for the use of RFA and TC were because the detainee was disruptive, non-compliant or abusive to staff, or physically violent towards other detainees. RFA was used to assist with removal directions in only a handful of cases in 2010 – including the use of the Family Care Suite for “resettlement”, a practice highlighted in the 2009 report. The Family Care Suite was used in four cases in preparation for removal directions. Again, there appeared to be little distinction between the cases where RFA was used as against the Family Care Suite, and although the IMB was notified, we remain of the view that these “resettlement” cases should strictly be referred to as falling within RFA.

5.6 Use of force

5.6.1 Recorded instances of use of force have almost doubled from 48 cases in 2009 to 91 cases in 2010. This appears to be due to a different recording policy. Any time that an officer lays hands on a detainee, that is recorded as a use of force, even if it is to prevent self-harm or for guiding or assisting the detainee. Officers intervened to prevent self-harm in 29 cases in 2010, in several cases more than once in relation to the same detainee. In 26 cases force was used to stop residents from fighting or assaulting an officer or another detainee, including in some cases officers standing in between residents. There were also some cases where the minimum intervention was used, such as assisting a detainee out of the legal

corridor when she became distressed, or helping a detainee to a sitting position after she had fainted. Force was used to enforce removal directions in only nine cases. We therefore do not see the increase in the reported use of force as a matter of concern.

5.6.2 IMB members have not had any concerns about use of force which they have witnessed or reviewed on video.

5.7 Length of detention

5.7.1 In 2010 we received fewer applications about individual detainees' immigration cases but we encountered many detainees who were extremely frustrated about their continuing, lengthy detention. This was undoubtedly a factor in the protest on February 8th.

5.7.2 In 2010, a total of 3,163 single women left detention at Yarl's Wood. Of these:

- 372 were detained between 30 and 59 days; (2009 figure: 339)
- 190 were detained between 60 and 89 days; (2009 figure: 189)
- 104 were detained between 90 and 119 days; (2009 figure: 105)
- 155 were detained between 120 and 364 days; (2009 figure: 161)
- 18 were detained for more than a year. (2009 figure: 22)

73% (2,324) of single women who left detention from Yarl's Wood had been detained for less than 30 days. This is a slight increase from the 70% in 2009. ²

5.7.3 The figures set out above show a slight increase in the numbers of women detained for less than 30 days. There is also an apparent decrease in the numbers of women detained for more than a year, but we would like to make two points about that. The first is a general point about these figures, which is expanded in section 5.8 below, and it is that they do not take account of successive or interrupted periods of detention. They record women leaving detention at Yarl's Wood for any reason: that could be as part of a move to another centre, such as Dungavel, or the short-term hold at Colnbrook. When, as is often the case, the women return to Yarl's Wood, their period of detention as recorded in management figures starts again.

5.7.4 The second point we would like to highlight is that during 2010 we were aware from our monitoring visits of four women who had been detained at Yarl's Wood for two years or more.

5.7.5 It is not part of the IMB's remit to review the decision to detain. However, we would like to draw attention once again to the fact that around 36% of women and families detained at Yarl's Wood in 2010 were either bailed or granted temporary admission. This must call into question the decision to detain, and to maintain detention, and we welcome the fact that the Independent Chief Inspector of UKBA is to review this aspect of the immigration process during 2011.

5.7.6 In our 2009 report we attributed some of the difficulty and frustration experienced by detainees to the fact that the immigration officers at the Centre are

² These figures are taken from internal management information; as such they are provisional, subject to change and do not form part of National Statistics.

not case-workers. We referred to the initiative of organising more frequent attendance by case-workers from immigration and CCD at the Centre. This continued into 2010 with weekly surgeries. Unfortunately, the take-up for the CCD surgeries fell substantially after the financial incentive for Facilitated Returns was reduced, and the surgeries have now stopped. The Detained Fast Track team has also started conducting regular surgeries, although attendance can again be patchy. We feel that any increase of face-to-face contact between detainees and the officials responsible for their detention is a positive step, although the poor attendance at the CCD surgeries reveals that this is not the only solution.

5.8 Ex-Foreign National Prisoners (“ex-FNPs”)

5.8.1 The proportion of time-served foreign national prisoners of the single female population of Yarl’s Wood remained fairly constant, at 25-30%, falling slightly towards the end of the year. Again, many of these women were among the longest-staying, with several having been detained more than a year, in some cases two years. Our principal concern about the position of ex-FNPs at Yarl’s Wood is that there are still many women serving lengthy and indeterminate periods of detention after the expiry of their sentences. We are not always aware of the offences for which they were convicted, but in many cases they are document or immigration offences which would not seem to pose a risk to public safety. Moreover, in many cases, there does not seem to be a realistic prospect of removal, as required by Section 55.1.3 of the UKBA Enforcement Manual. A particular case in 2010 illustrated this. An ex-offender, a Romany gipsy, was detained in February 2009. She had lived much of her life in Manchester, where her family still lived, but the conviction made her liable to deportation. The problem was that her family had lived a nomadic lifestyle and her birth had not been registered; case-workers were therefore unable to identify her country of origin, despite the involvement of language experts. This situation went on for over a year, with the detainee eventually being granted bail in late 2010 after over 18 months in detention, during which time we noted a marked deterioration in her mental and physical health.

5.8.2 The Forum of IMB Chairs in the Immigration Detention Estate conducted some snapshot monitoring in July/August 2010 on the length of time detainees were spending in detention, and of the difficulties of obtaining accurate information about this. As part of this study, the IMB at Yarl’s Wood identified the five longest-staying detainees. All five were ex-FNPs.

5.8.3 UKBA locally produce a daily document entitled “Length of Stay”, which lists detainees in order of the length of time they have been at the centre. This was used as the starting-point for the survey, but it soon became apparent that it was not always conclusive of either the length of time at Yarl’s Wood, or the length of time in the immigration estate. However, this information was retrieved manually from local detainee records by the local deputy manager. Only one detainee had been at another IRC so it was relatively easy to trace the detention history.

5.8.4 The basic information about each detainee, as at 4th August 2010, is as follows. The “current position” is as at February 2011.

Case 1: Indian national

Length of stay per local list: 452 days

Actual time in immigration estate: approximately 1069 days. The discrepancy is due to a transfer to Dungavel IRC for seven days in May 2009. The time for her stay at Yarl’s Wood re-started on her return.

Current position: Released on bail late 2010.

Case 2: Moroccan national

Length of stay per local list: 736 days

Actual time in immigration estate: 783 days. The reason for the discrepancy was not clear.

Current position: removed.

Case 3: Nigerian national

Length of stay per local list: 329 days.

Actual time in immigration estate: 618 days. The discrepancy is due to her arrest in September 2009 on a charge of criminal damage at Yarl’s Wood; she was in the custody of Bedfordshire Police for a matter of hours; on her return to Yarl’s Wood the time started running again.

Current position: still detained.

Case 4: Nigerian national

Length of stay per local list: 476 days

Actual time in immigration estate: 476 days

Current position: removed

Case 5: Sudanese national

Length of stay per local list: 431 days

Actual time in immigration estate: 431 days

This detainee had served a term of 12 months for false documents.

Current position: bailed February 2011

5.8.5 It is accepted that some detainees do not assist with the removal process. They do not, for example, provide key information which is required for obtaining travel documents. That said, we repeat the observations made in previous reports, that there is an enormous amount of delay inherent in the system, which is causing these prolonged periods of detention, at great human and financial cost. Moreover, if detention is intended to encourage co-operation with the documentation process, then it is not working in many cases. We would also like to draw attention to the fact that only two of the five women whose cases are reported above have been removed.

5.8.6 In our 2009 report we reported an increased level of frustration amongst the ex-FNP population at Yarl’s Wood. In February this boiled over into a serious protest, which is covered in section 5.15 below. Tensions were diffused after this protest, and both Serco and UKBA local management have worked hard with this group, but they seem powerless to influence the fundamental problem. There has also been an increase in applications to the IMB about staff/detainee issues, which could be attributed to an increase in frustration.

5.8.7 We would like to repeat our observation, made in successive reports, that for the ex-FNPs at Yarl's Wood, there is in many cases the complicating factor of children being cared-for on the outside. The detainees are referred to as "single females" but the truth is that many have families and children, from whom they have been separated while in prison and from whom they are still separated, for a lengthy and indeterminate period. The existence of these children makes the deportation process more complicated, and increases the anxiety/distress for the women involved.

5.9 Food

5.9.1 We commented in our report for 2009 that there had been a diminution in the quality of the food during the latter part of the year. The appointment of a new catering manager seems to have reversed that trend and there has been a marked emphasis on improving quality, preparing more dishes in-house with fresh ingredients, and reducing waste. IMB members sample the food every week and in general have found it to be of reasonable quality, if a little unimaginative. There were only four complaints to the IMB about food in 2010.

5.9.2 The pre-order system, introduced in 2009, has bedded down now and has been successful in reducing waste, although portions are very generous and quite a lot of food is thrown away. On the other hand, some detainees have complained that they are not allowed to have second helpings. The reason given for this is that there may not be enough for everyone who wants a second helping, which is obviously driven by considerations of fairness, but we wonder if there might be some way around this to avoid food being thrown away. The pre-order system has, sensibly in our view, been discontinued on the family unit as this was difficult to manage, with only the adults being required to pre-order in any event.

5.9.3 Despite the positive developments, food is still a focus of discontent among detainees, although attendance at the Food DIAC meetings is poor. Sometimes there are very negative remarks in the food comment books, which seem to us to be indicative of other problems. Food refusal is also used as a means of protest against detention or other issues. This has happened on three significant occasions in 2010, where detainees have concertedly missed the meals provided by the Centre in order to register their protest against certain developments. These were: in the days preceding, and after, the protest on February 8th; in the family unit in July after the announcement in Parliament by the deputy Prime Minister that the policy of detaining families was to end; and in October after the death of the detainee, Jimmy Mubenga, during his removal from the United Kingdom. On this last occasion 95 detainees missed their evening meal. Only in the first case did the food protest escalate into anything more serious, and that incident is discussed in section 5.15 of this report.

5.9.4 The IMB is given a daily report of the detainees who have missed the meals provided by the Centre, and rota members visit those who have missed meals for a number of days. It usually transpires that the detainee is eating food purchased from the shop. It was difficult to keep track of this during the food protest in February, when many detainees missed meals for a long period, but we were satisfied with the monitoring systems put in place by UKBA and Serco to check their health. There have been only two occasions during 2010 where we have been concerned about the health of a detainee who appeared to be genuinely not eating. On both

occasions we were, however, satisfied with the response of Healthcare in monitoring the detainee's medical condition. In another case we were concerned to learn that a detainee who was referred to Bedford Hospital because she had not been eating did not appear on the list of detainees missing meals because she had attended the dining room at mealtimes but had not eaten anything. This case illustrates how difficult it is to keep track of detainees' eating patterns.

5.9.5 An enormously successful development in 2010 has been the opening of two Cultural Kitchens, the first in the family unit, then later in the year, for the single women to use. Groups of eight to ten detainees (or individual families in Crane) book the kitchen for the day and prepare their day's meals, having pre-ordered the ingredients through the main kitchen. Appropriate safeguards are in place for the use of knives. The atmosphere in the kitchen is very pleasant with a dining table, sofas and television. The detainees can relax after their meal, and spend the day there. This facility is hugely popular and is always booked a fortnight in advance. It is also used for groups of detainees to prepare food for large events such as the Diversity Roadshow in September referred to in section 5.1.7 above. The rules of the kitchen provide that food prepared for individual consumption must be eaten there and not taken away: there have been some minor difficulties about inconsistent enforcement of this rule and perceived unfairness but it seems that the rule is now being properly and consistently enforced.

5.9.6 Following the expansion of Dove unit there have been complaints to the IMB about length of the queues for meals on this unit which we have asked management to monitor.

5.10 Children and Family Services

5.10.1 2010 saw a drastic reduction in the number of children detained at Yarl's Wood, culminating in the Government's announcement on 16th December 2010 that the family unit would close. The IMB has expressed grave concern over successive years about the detention of children and therefore welcomes this development.

5.10.2 In November 2009 the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act came into effect. Section 55 of this Act requires that, inter alia, any function of the Secretary of State in relation to immigration, asylum or nationality must be discharged "having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are in the United Kingdom". This requirement had already started to have an effect on the number of families being brought into detention. From January to June 2010, 267 children were detained, compared with 336 for the corresponding period in 2009.

5.10.3 In July 2010 the Deputy Prime Minister announced a review of the policy of detaining families with children. He stated that the family unit at Yarl's Wood would close, but no time-scale was given. From July to December 2010, only 27 children were detained, and these were for very short periods [see section 5.10.9 below]. On 16th December 2010 a further announcement was made, marking the end of the review, that the family unit would close. Since that date the unit has been used for the detention of couples and family groups with children over the age of 18.

5.10.4 The Centre continued to achieve a standard of care for children that is reasonable within the constraints of the detention situation and the IMB would like again to acknowledge the dedication, patience and kindness of the staff involved in

their care. It has been a difficult year for staff, given the uncertainties over the policy and hence the future of the unit. The facilities were under-used; in the second half of the year they were empty for much of the time and the nursery and teaching staff had very little to occupy their time. They were offered the opportunity to re-train as custody officers but the specialist staff chose not to pursue that and were made redundant at the end of the year.

5.10.5 Physical facilities for children were generally good. The school-house, opened in late 2009, provided a welcome separated educational environment for the 5-16 year olds. Further improvements in the facilities for the association rooms, such as a pool table, Wii and flat screen televisions, were made in March and these are used by the older residents on Crane now.

5.10.6 Children on Crane had the opportunity to express their opinions on various aspects of life in the Centre through regular forum meetings held with their teachers. It is clear from the minutes that the children felt free to express their views, whether positive or negative. The minutes were circulated to the relevant managers within the Centre and also to UKBA enforcement teams, which have always been a source of negative comments from the children. This was an important part of the process.

5.10.7 In 2010, a total of 294 children left detention at Yarl's Wood (267 of these in the first 6 months). This compares with 808 (1,063 in the whole estate) in 2009. Of these 294,

- 76 were detained between 8 and 14 days; (2009 figure: 195)
- 32 were detained between 15 and 21 days; (2009 figure: 124)
- 23 were detained between 22 and 28 days; (2009 figure: 69)
- 21 were detained for more than 28 days. (2009 figure: 173)

48% of the children who left detention in 2010 had been detained for less than a week. This is in fact comparable to the figure for 2009 (47%).^{3 4}

5.10.8 It can be seen from the above table that, whilst the numbers of children being detained at Yarl's Wood fell dramatically, the proportions of those children falling within each time bracket remained stable. So, roughly half of the children stayed for less than a week; the same proportion as in 2009. Although slightly fewer stayed more than 28 days, the fact is that there were still 152 children held in detention for more than a week, 21 of whom spent an unacceptable 28 days or more in detention, despite the fact that all families with children had their Removal Directions set before being detained. As has been observed elsewhere, this does not take into account successive periods of detention. It was not uncommon for families to be brought into detention more than once.

5.10.9 In the second half of the year, however, the situation changed dramatically. We have already noted that only 27 children were detained at Yarl's Wood during this period. Of these, only one child stayed for more than seven days. This was a hugely welcome development.

³ These figures have been taken from internal UKBA management information; they are therefore provisional, subject to change and do not form part of National Statistics.

⁴ The 2009 figures quoted were for children detained at Yarl's Wood, Tinsley House and Dungavel.

5.11 Detainee complaints

5.11.1 Where a detainee makes a formal written complaint, using the DCF9 procedure, this is collected by UKBA and faxed out of the Centre for distribution to the appropriate agency. Complaints which fall within the Contractor's remit and responsibility are returned to the Centre and the Contractor is required to investigate and respond to the detainee within a prescribed time limit. In 2010, 58 such complaints were referred to Serco. This represents a substantial reduction from the 77 complaints filed in 2009. Note that it does not include any complaints to the Professional Standards Unit ("the PSU"), which deals with more serious allegations, effectively those amounting to criminal misconduct. With the exception of the complaints referred to the PSU after the February incident, the IMB did not have access to the PSU complaints during 2010. This is a serious restriction on our monitoring, as we will not necessarily find out if there is an allegation of criminal misconduct against a member of staff at Yarl's Wood.

5.11.2 Serco has continued to give full access to the IMB to review the complaints and responses for which it is responsible. Generally we have found that complaints have been properly handled, within the prescribed timescales. The highest number of complaints (26) are those classified as minor misconduct on the part of staff. Medical complaints reduced by 24 to 12.

5.11.3 Although the IMB has been given full access to complaints files within the Centre, in 2010 we still did not have full access to all complaints as agreed with UKBA. The agreed procedure is that the IMB Chair should receive, via secure email, copies of all complaints made from the Centre, together with their replies, unless the detainee has indicated on the form that she does not want the IMB to see the complaint. This system has not functioned properly during 2010. The Chair has received copies of very few complaints. This may in part be attributable to the fact that old-format complaints forms were in use at the Centre, despite the constant requests for these to be changed. (The old forms had a tick-box for the detainee to give a positive indication that she wanted the IMB to see the complaint. The correct format is a box for the detainee to tick if she does not want the IMB to see the complaint.) In addition, the Board has not been provided with the monthly complaints reports prepared by UKBA. The situation improved at the end of 2010, but the last two monthly reports did not show the detainees' names, which made it very difficult to monitor the complaints properly.

5.11.4 There has been a 65% increase in the level of applications to the IMB, compared with 2009. There appear to be three explanations for this: first, steps have been taken to raise the profile of the Board in the Centre, with new information boards and application forms. Second, from July the Board's rota system changed to allow for two members to be on duty, and hence around the Centre, each week. This has increased our contact time with detainees. It should be noted that recorded applications include informal approaches as well as written complaints. Third, as identified in section 5.8.6 above, there is an increasing frustration amongst the longer-staying detainees which translates into more applications. The IMB does not consider that this increase in applications represents any reduction in standards at the Centre.

5.11.5 Applications to the IMB cover a range of different topics (see Section 6). There is no one particular topic that stands out as especially causing concern.

5.12 Movement of detainees

5.12.1 Because Yarl's Wood is the main Centre for women and (until December 2010) children in the immigration estate, detainees are not frequently moved to different Centres. However, there are some examples during 2010 of detainees being moved out of the Centre at short notice. For example, in December a couple held on Crane unit were woken at 6.30am and told to get their belongings ready to go to the Pakistani Embassy for an interview. They claimed that they had not known about the interview before this and refused to go, particularly since they were told to take their belongings with them. Officers have told the IMB that short notice of interviews is not uncommon.

5.12.2 The IMB was concerned to learn on several occasions that transport was unavailable or late, leading to missed flights or a missed court hearing.

5.12.3 There is a general concern among IMBs in the immigration detention estate about the quality and completeness of documentation, particularly risk-assessments, relating to newly-arrived detainees. As one officer in Detainee Reception commented: "We just do not know enough about the people in front of us". We quoted the example in section 5.4.5 above of a detainee who arrived at Yarl's Wood with no indication of any risk of self-harm on her IS91, despite apparent indications of this risk while she was held at a police station.

5.12.4 In response to concerns expressed by IMBs across the estate about the inadequacy of detainee documentation, especially in those centres where there is dormitory accommodation, a number of Boards conducted an analysis of documentation during May and June 2010. At Yarl's Wood the documentation of 16 detainees arriving in the week ended 16th June was reviewed. The risk assessment was not completed in six cases. In five cases the photographs on the IS91 were copies and in two cases these were difficult to correlate with the photograph taken by the Centre on arrival. In one case, the medical information given on two different forms was inconsistent.

5.12.5 2010 saw an increase in the number and frequency of flights chartered by UKBA for the removal of detainees. These left for destinations such as Nigeria and Jamaica approximately twice a month, with six to ten detainees from Yarl's Wood per flight. We have observed the departure of detainees from the Centre on these flights on four occasions in the past year, and in all cases the process was well-organised and the departure went ahead smoothly, albeit slowly, with plenty of food and drink on the coach.

5.12.6 As was noted in paragraph 5.6.1 above, force was used on removal from Yarl's Wood in very few cases in 2010. It is usually at the airport that problems arise, leading to the use of force. We are very concerned, therefore, that the majority of these charter flights now depart from Stansted or Luton airports, where there is no IMB in place. We urge the Minister to make arrangements for monitoring of these charter flights to take place at these airports as a matter of urgency. We do not consider lack of funding to be an adequate reason for delay in meeting this need.

5.13 Failed/cancelled removals

5.13.1 The IMB continues to be concerned about the number of removals which fail or are cancelled at the last-minute, particularly where these involve children. Examples of this continued into 2010. A family left Yarl's Wood in January pursuant to removal directions, only to return six hours later after a last-minute judicial review. During this time they were let off the coach only once to use toilet facilities at the airport. In March a family left the Centre at 10am and returned at 10pm after a failed removal, the reasons for which we do not know. In April, one family had three failed removals, due to disruption at the airport; another family had at least seven failed removals. Clearly the reasons for removals failing are various and complex, sometimes including disruptive conduct on the part of the detainee, and are beyond the scope of this report. We are concerned simply to highlight the practical results which we have seen in the Centre in terms of wasted journeys and the emotional and physical upheaval for the children involved.

5.13.2 Removals also failed during the year due to inadequate planning. As an example, on one occasion in May a husband and wife did not leave the centre as there were only two escorts on the vehicle due to transport them and there were already three single women in the van. Other removals failed as a result of the escorts' refusal to take certain detainees because of open ACDTs, levels of disruption, or pregnancy. Another case which caused us concern was where a detainee left the Centre at 0730 for a flight from Heathrow (a journey of only 65 miles) at 1515.

5.14 Access to legal advice

5.14.1 The closure of Refugee and Migrant Justice had a marked effect on detainees' access to legal advice and assistance. Whilst ad hoc providers do attend the Centre, there is no permanent replacement and we are concerned that cuts in Legal Aid, as well as anticipated cuts in the budgets of other advice charities operating in this area, will cause distress and potential injustice.

5.14.2 A related matter has been detainees' access to fax facilities at Yarl's Wood. Under the Detention Centre Rules, detainees are entitled to send faxes free of charge to their legal advisers. They are also entitled to free postage of correspondence to legal advisers. Faxes are sent by officers from unit offices as part of their ordinary duties. After the February incident, the number and length of faxes being sent by some detainees increased enormously, with the result that some detainees' faxes were occupying the machines disproportionately, meaning that others could not send theirs. In order to achieve a level of fairness, a limit of 15 pages per fax was imposed. However, there is no limit imposed in the rules, and 15 pages is not sufficient for many legal documents. In addition, the limit was not being consistently enforced. After some months and discussions between the IMB, UKBA and Serco, the limit was increased to 30 pages per fax, with additional pages being posted free of charge, and this problem seems to have settled down. We understand the practical considerations, but it is vital that detainees have free access to their legal advisers.

5.14.3 The IMB was also involved in the issue of whether detainees were entitled to send faxes free of charge to the Yarl's Wood Befrienders. The Detention Services

Operating Standards 2008 state (“Communications, section 2”) “The Centre must provide detainees with access to [...] fax and photocopying facilities for the purpose of pursuing their case and meet this expense if a detainee does not have the necessary funds.” Centre management interpreted this narrowly and instructed officers not to allow faxes to the Befrienders, who argued that they often assisted detainees with their legal cases and that a wider interpretation was appropriate. Again, after some discussions, management made a welcome change in its interpretation and allowed faxes to be sent to Befrienders once again.

5.15 The February incident

Background

5.15.1 During the weekend of 5th/7th February 2010 there was unrest in the single female units at Yarl’s Wood, especially Avocet. This principally took the form of detainees refusing meals. Officers and management considered that some detainees were coercing others into joining the meal refusal protest. Serco and UKBA management decided that four women, considered to be the ringleaders of the protest, should be removed from the Centre on 8th February.

Summary of events

5.15.2 The four detainees who were to be moved out of the Centre were escorted to Detainee Reception shortly before midday on Monday 8th February, with no immediate incident. However, shortly thereafter, at around 12pm, a group of approximately 55 detainees gathered in the corridor known as the Avenue, where they sat down on the floor. The Avenue is a main accessway from the administration block and Visits to the residential units. When it became apparent that the detainees were not moving, the door to the Avenue was shut and locked. All movements around the Centre were frozen. The Command Suite was opened.

5.15.3 The detainees remained in the Avenue for about an hour before apparently indicating that they wanted to return to their rooms. Work was then started on a surrender plan. At about 1.15pm the duty operations manager asked the IMB Chair to accompany him to witness the surrender. However, shortly after that, 19 detainees managed to open a window in the Avenue and climbed out into the large service courtyard. At that stage the surrender plan was overtaken by events.

5.15.4 The women outside in the courtyard remained there until around 4.30pm when they started to come inside. They had been told that they had to come in via Kingfisher separation unit, in pairs. By 5.22pm all the women from outside were in Kingfisher.

5.15.5 The women remaining in the Avenue were held there until approximately 7.30pm, when they came out in pairs, were searched, and taken to the sports hall for a hot drink and some food. This process was observed by two IMB members and was entirely peaceful.

IMB observations

5.15.6 IMB members were on-site throughout the incident. At all times there was at least one member in the Control Room, observing the cctv screens. Two members

also spent some time monitoring events outside in the service courtyard, observing the protest there. The IMB also reviewed hand-held camera footage and cctv recordings of the incident.

5.15.7 The IMB members observing the incident did not witness any physical or verbal abuse by officers towards detainees. We did not see the first detainees coming through the window, but from the hand-held camera footage which records the last ones climbing out, it is clear that the officers present were not trying at that stage to prevent them. From our observations, there were only two occasions when force was used, and that was in the placing and maintaining of a riot shield at the open window. When first deploying the shield, the officer shouted a very clear instruction for the detainees to get away from the window, and then pushed the shield against it. There was also a brief scuffle later when it appeared that some detainees were trying to pull the officers holding the riot shield away from the window. However, we did not witness any excessive force being used here. Other than these two instances, we did not witness any officer using force on a detainee. Officers were talking to the detainees but for the most part standing away from them.

5.15.8 At one point in the afternoon, a police helicopter flew over the courtyard. The detainees outside ran screaming into the centre of the yard. One removed her top. When the helicopter flew off, the detainees walked back into their previous position in the corner of the yard. No officers put hands on a detainee to get them back.

5.15.9 In the hand-held camera footage one of the detainees asks why the officer was not filming when her fellow-detainee was on the floor being kicked by officers. As stated above, we did not witness any such incident.

5.15.10 It should be noted that there was a brief physical altercation between two of the detainees early on in the afternoon, recorded on the hand-held camera footage. Later in the afternoon one of those detainees is seen on the re-mon footage lunging at an officer. The same detainee was also physically aggressive to an officer later in Kingfisher.

5.15.11 For much of the afternoon the Chinese detainees were huddled in a corner. There was a lot of crying and wailing. They appeared to be almost corralled there by the more vocal leaders of the protest. At one stage one of the protesters tried to leave but was persuaded back by the leaders.

IMB concerns

5.15.12 We were not present when the door of the Avenue was shut on the protesters and we do not therefore know whether they were given the opportunity to leave before that happened, whether it was made clear to them that they would be held in the corridor or on what terms they were told they could leave. Their demeanour at this stage appeared to be entirely peaceful.

5.15.13 The women remaining on the Avenue were held there a long time after they had indicated that they were prepared to leave: as referred to above, at 1.15pm a surrender plan was about to be effected, which was abandoned when some of the detainees escaped onto the courtyard. We have discussed this with the Centre Manager and she has explained the reasons for this. Understandably, she needed to resolve the situation in the courtyard first; those detainees had to be taken via the

cellular accommodation in Kingfisher, searched and risk-assessed as to whether they could be allowed back onto the units. Management needed some of that cellular accommodation to be available before they could attempt to take the surrender of the detainees on the Avenue, in case any of them posed a security threat when they came out. We accept these as valid security reasons but it is regrettable that there did not appear to be any other options available to bring about an earlier resolution.

5.15.14 Once all the detainees had left the yard, there was another period of more than two hours before the detainees remaining in the Avenue were allowed out. It seemed to take a long time to put that second surrender plan into motion. The detainees had been on the Avenue from 12pm to approximately 7.30pm, with no access to toilet facilities, food or drink.

5.15.15 The IMB was hampered in its understanding of the progress of events by the fact that it was not given access to the Command Suite. This was raised with management and UKBA after the event and access has now been agreed in the event of any future incident.

5.15.16 We did not witness the negotiations between officers and detainees in the Avenue but we are concerned as to how these could be properly effected through the glass panel in the door. One detainee subsequently told the IMB that she could not hear what was being said and that she was frightened as a consequence.

5.15.17 We have reviewed the footage from the cctvs and from the hand-held video camera deployed on the courtyard. In respect of the hand-held video camera footage, we have the following concerns:

(a) There is only about 2 hours 10 minutes of footage from the yard, although the detainees were there from approximately 1.30pm to 5.20pm when the last women came inside. The footage also covers some of the women being taken into Kingfisher, so there appear to be some chunks of time missing.

(b) There was no date or time indicated on the recording which we saw.

(c) At one stage one of the detainees, a ringleader of the protest, removed most of her clothing. Instead of moving away slightly, the camera operator zoned in on her, which we felt was inappropriate.

We have made observations in previous years' reports about the quality of hand-held video recordings and it is therefore disappointing that the recording of this incident was not done in a more professional manner.

5.15.18 After the incident one of the detainees involved remained on Kingfisher for 12 days before being moved back into prison. We do not understand why it took so long to find her a prison place.

5.15.19 After the incident there was an enormous amount of media coverage and allegations were made about physical and racial abuse of detainees by officers. IMB members present that afternoon did not witness any physical or racial abuse on the part of officers. The incident has been investigated by the PSU. The IMB had sight of the PSU's draft report and had discussions with the department about it. We do

not know the current status of the final report. We understand that it is not usual practice for the PSU to publish its reports, but we would recommend that, subject to other legal considerations, this report be published.

5.16 Facilities management

5.16.1 Generally the physical facilities are clean and in reasonable condition, although the state of the laundries is a recurring theme of our rota reports. There were a few issues during the year with ironing board covers and also the maintenance of washing machines and tumble dryers on Dove unit, particularly after the extra rooms from Crane unit were absorbed into Dove, making it a much bigger unit. Improvements to the facilities included a very pleasant coffee bar and quiet room in the visits hall.

5.17. UKBA staff locally

5.17.1 UKBA staff have continued to be helpful and open with the IMB throughout the year. Unfortunately our clerk took up other duties in August and for the rest of the year there was no permanent replacement, which caused us some administrative difficulties. The situation has now been resolved.

Section 6

THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

BOARD STATISTICS	2010	Change versus 2009
Recommended Complement of Board Members	12	0
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	12	+4
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	11	-2
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	1	-3
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	2	+1
Total number of Board meetings within the reporting period	11	0
Average number of attendees at Board meetings during reporting period	9	+2
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	Approx 65	+10 (+18%)
Total number of visits to the IRC (including meetings)	Approx 271	+56 (+26%)
Total number of applications/complaints received (written and oral)	66	+26 (+65%)
Total number of segregation reviews held	N/A	N/A
Total number of segregation reviews attended	N/A	N/A

Subject-matter of Applications to the Board

Code	Subject	2010	Change versus 2009
A	Accommodation	4	+2
B	Access to/quality of legal advice	1	-
C	Diversity related	1	-
D	Education/employment/training/activities	3	-
E	Family/visits	1	-
F	Food/kitchen related	4	+2
G	Health related	10	+2
H	Property	8	0
I	Related to detainee's immigration case	7	-5
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee related	10	+4
K	Transfers/escorts	5	+3
L	Miscellaneous	12	0