



**HMP and YOI PORTLAND**  
INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
FOR THE YEAR TO  
31ST MARCH 2015

## SECTION 1

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### **STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB:**

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 OF THE PRISON

3.1 From 1921 to 1983 the institution at Portland was a Borstal. It was then a youth custody centre and became a young offender institution in 1989. In April 2011, both Adults and Young Offenders were accepted at the establishment, based on the following criteria:

- Young Offenders: with sentences under 10 years. This excludes Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection (ISPP) prisoners. ISPP prisoners may be accepted through prior arrangement with the Offender Management Unit (OMU)
- Adults: category C prisoners with sentences between 12 months and 4 years with a home address in CPA 13 (Avon, Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire). Again, adult prisoners who are subject to ISPP will only be accepted through prior arrangement with the OMU.
- Any prisoner who:
  - Has not been segregated under Rule 49 (GOOD) or own protection at any time in the last 3 months prior to transfer to Portland (except by prior agreement);
  - Has not been on the E list at any time in the 3 months prior to transfer to Portland
  - Has no outstanding court appearances within two months
  - Has no outstanding external medical appointments within two months.
  - Does not have a requirement for 24 hour medical cover
  - Does not have a requirement for location on ground floor accommodation
  - Is able to use stairs
- There are no Young Offender sex offenders (unless they have completed a Sex Offender Treatment Programme) and no adult sex offenders

HMP & YOI Portland is for Category C adult prisoners and a national resource for Young Offenders (between 18 and 21 years of age), it now has a designated role as a Resettlement Prison.

While Portland YOI is for Category C prisoners, it is run with many attributes of a Category B institution, in terms of manning, security levels and capability.

Portland YOI operational capacity or maximum total accommodation is now **530** prisoners, however during the reporting period it was 580. Certified normal accommodation (the number of prisoners possible if all cells were single) is 463. 135 cells are either doubles or 'doubled up' (available for two prisoners, whether the cell had previously been for single occupancy or not) at the time of writing: 47 double cells on Beaufort Wing, 43 double cells on Raleigh Wing, 39 cells on Benbow Wing and 6 double cells on Drake Wing.

As of latest census, conducted monthly the breakdown was

- 31.7% between 18-21 years
- 38.9% between 21-29 years
- 16.6% between 30-39 years
- 9.2% between 40-49 years

- 3.4% between 50-59 years
- 0.2% between 60-69 years

6% of the population were Foreign Nationals.

Only two prisoners have informed the relevant department regarding their sexual orientation. Posters are displayed on all notice boards and prisoners are asked to declare on induction.

There are 65 prisoners registered as racist offenders (10%) of the population.

There are 31 prisoners registered as GRT Gypsy/Romany/Traveller (6.5%).

There are (45%) registered as having a disability.

In terms of ethnicity, there are 69% White and 31% BME.

3.2 Accommodation consists of seven wings with a free-standing Care and Separation Unit. Collingwood wing is dedicated to the induction of newly arrived prisoners and those going out on ROTL

3.3 Education including some vocational training is undertaken by the contractor, Weston College. The prison also operates some workshops directly.

3.4 Charitable organisations working in the prison are:

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Samaritans
- The Airborne Initiative- a mentoring course on Dartmoor to develop team building skills and address challenging behaviour.
- Shannon Trust – a peer mentoring programme which encourages and supports prisoners who can read to give one-to-one tuition to prisoners who struggle to read.
- Shelter Debt Advice
- Footprints Mentoring
- Dorset Dialogue Resettlement support via Dialogue
- Prince's Trust Mentoring, team programme, post release training
- Peninsula Initiative Mentoring general through gates support
- Amber Project Housing with life skills support
- Vision of Hope Housing project with Therapeutic rehabilitation
- BCHA Housing and support on release
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance Sports related training to employment
- World Wide Volunteering Post release supportive activity
- Independent People ( Future For Me ) Accommodation and multi pathway support

3.5 Healthcare is operated by NHS Dorset Community Healthcare Services.

## SECTION 4

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4.1.1 The Board greatly regrets the tragedy of the Death in Custody which occurred at Portland in this reporting year.

4.1.2 We consider that, despite some important concerns enumerated in this report, the prison management has achieved a positive period of consolidation as a local and resettlement prison, whose population and staffing conditions have changed dramatically over the reporting period. We welcome the SMT's plans for the new regime over the current year.

4.1.3 The Board has again been grateful for the attendance of the Governor or his Deputy for part of every monthly meeting, for the written reports he has provided for us beforehand, and for his constructive frankness in answering questions at the time. The Senior Management Team continues to provide an invaluable monthly summary of the current preoccupations and activities of all the main prison departments. This is a much appreciated and very useful tool.

4.1.4 This Report is compiled within the policy of the Board, which is not to include in the Annual Report any issue or item which has not first appeared in a weekly Rota Report, or periodic Wing or Departmental Report. These are compiled by IMB members during the course of the year. The contents of this Annual Report, therefore, are born of Board members' first hand observations during the regular monitoring process which forms our role and responsibility at Portland, rather than from information provided for us from elsewhere.

#### **4.2.1 The Board commends the prison in a number of areas:**

1. We welcome the fact that Portland is the safest Young Offender Institution in the country according to the Prison Service's serious assault data.
2. We continue to find the CSU to be well managed by committed staff [5.7.1] and that Adjudications and Reviews are overwhelmingly carried out fairly and correctly [5.7.3].
3. We congratulate the staff of Collingwood Wing, who run an efficient and humane induction system and through their conscientious staffing of the observation cell, contribute to the good treatment of some of the most disturbed prisoners at Portland. [5.8.4].
4. We also commend the Reception staff for their efficient and humane treatment of new arrivals [5.8.4].
5. We commend the Safer Custody team [5.6.1, 5.6.5] and the creation of a Complex Prisoner Forum [5.6.2].
6. We welcome the SMT's concentration on improving access to fresh air and exercise.

7. We are pleased to be told that delivery of certificates for completed courses has improved, but regret there is no monitoring system to ensure this [5.2.6]
8. It is positive that, over the year, complaints about property loss went from rising at a high rate to a steep decline [7.2]
9. Resettlement KPTs have been maintained despite the more complicated make-up of the prison population. [5.5.1.]
10. The prison has maintained the number of drug and alcohol interventions, despite the roll reduction over the year. [5.3.8]
11. The number of complaints about discrimination or prejudice among officers is low and they are well handled. [5.1.1]
12. We welcome the SMT's plans for improved and increased workshop activities in the year 2015-2016

#### **4.2.2 However, there are problems:**

1. The widespread and apparently un-checkable presence of so-call 'legal highs' or 'Spice' on the wings. This is leading to trading, debt, bullying of more vulnerable prisoners and their families, criminal networking and gang activity, violence and unpredictable behaviour among prisoners [5.8.7, 5.8.8, 5.9.2]
2. The limitations and frequent curtailment of regime due to staffing numbers [5.9.5, 5.8.5]
3. The unacceptable number of prisoners with serious mental health problems being held at HMP/YOI Portland [5.3.2, 5.1.6].
4. The unsafe and unhygienic physical conditions of the Healthcare building [5.3.6, 5.3.7] and by the impact of 'no shows' on Healthcare's efficiency [5.3.5].
5. The provision of learning and skills training has improved only slightly during the reporting period and there is very little purposeful activity happening. Both suffer from frequent cancellations [5.2.5, 5.4.2].
6. OMU is significantly behind in completing OASys forms without which prisoners can make no progress [5.5.4]. Large numbers of prisoners are arriving without a completed OASys increasing the problem [5.5.5]. The Board receives regular complaints about Offender Managers being unavailable to their clients [5.5.4].
7. We were concerned about the double cells without adequate privacy provision on decency grounds, especially on Raleigh and Benbow wings. We note that since the roll has reduced these have reverted to single cells[5.8.1].
8. The problem of the non-provision of CSCS qualification for trained prisoners remains live.
9. The paucity of working cameras for use in and around the prison remains a dangerous restriction on evidence gathering for proper recording of incidents. [5.3.6, 5.9.1]

10. The Board regrets the decline of ROTL to a minimal level, following the Government's change of qualification criteria. [5.5.3]
11. There remains a worryingly high number of self-harmers and new ACCT books (238 during the year). Although the prison is compliant with its required training, we question whether enough members of staff have sufficient training to deal with this problem. [5.6.4, 5.6.5, 5.6.6]

### **4.3. Policy matters for ministers**

4.3.1 The Board considers that the situation at Portland is contained but that there is an underlying fragility caused by the high number of men and YOs unable to access purposeful activity and/or education and locked up and on wings almost all day.

4.3.2 In a closely related observation, the Board would also suggest that the Government's 'rehabilitation revolution' cannot occur without education, vocational training and appropriate activities to enable prisoners to improve their prospects of work or training after the end of a sentence. At the moment, this provision remains unsatisfactory.

4.3.3 We would therefore again warn against any more financial cuts, which the Board believes would make it even harder for staff and management, who are already extremely stretched, to maintain the most basic safe and humane regime.

4.3.4 The Board would again urge ministers to recognise that it is wrong to send men and YOs with severe and recognised mental health problems to an "ordinary" prison and in particular the inappropriateness of sending or retaining sectioned prisoners to the CSU [5.7.2]. The best efforts of staff and management, whose good work we recognise, do not mitigate this. We expect ministers to take active steps to change this practice.

4.3.5 We ask ministers to accept that it is counter-productive that Dorset resettlement prisoners are allocated to Channings Wood, Exeter and Winchester instead of to Portland and will they instruct the prison service to address the matter?

4.3.6 We would again ask that the government should change its policy of not allowing qualified prisoners to achieve CSCS cards.

### **4.4 Matters for the Prison Service**

4.4.1 The Board welcomes the current lower roll and commends the prison for coping with more change.

4.4.2 The Board has to report that over half of prisoners are regularly confined to the wings due to the lack of consistent provision of education and activities and to the reduced number of staff. The Board believes that this state of affairs is incompatible with the Government's proposed 'rehabilitation revolution'. [5.2.5, 5.4.2]

4.4.3 The influx of 'legal highs' into Portland should be viewed very seriously and we would urge the prison service to devote as much resource as possible to finding ways to stopping it getting into the prison, to controlling its dissemination and to finding ways to alleviate its effects. [5.8.7, 5.8.8]

4.4.4 We are still concerned by the number of highly vulnerable prisoners with recognized mental health problems who arrive at Portland and how long it takes to move them to somewhere more suitable. Officers at Portland are doing their very best and some of the work they do is exemplary – for example on Collingwood and in the CSU, but it is unacceptable to use prisons as warehouses for the mentally ill, where they cannot be treated properly. [5.1.6, 5.3.2, 5.6.2, 5.7.2]

4.4.5 Portland quite rightly gives priority to its complex and challenging prisoners, but the Board feels that the shortage of staff produces a number of negatives which are sidelined and should be addressed. We would highlight two – neglect of prisoners who don't call attention to themselves and might be the very ones who with support would not re-offend; disillusion among staff as specialist activity becomes less possible and more are just dispersed through the prison and plugging gaps.

4.4.6 We are concerned that mental health provision was reduced from 7 days to 5 days at the end of the reporting period [5.3.1]

#### **4.5 Previous Year's concerns** *(last year's concerns in italics)*

4.5.1 *The Board remains worried about the impact of the change of categorization, which has meant that more than half the population are now adults:*

- The Board agrees with and welcomes the new, current policy being put in place whereby, with a few exceptions, adult prisoners and YOs are housed in separate wings and welcomes the reduction in the roll to a more realistically manageable number;

4.5.2 *The Board continues to be very concerned by the number of prisoners with serious mental health problems:*

- This has not improved; the numbers are still unacceptable as is the apparent acceptance by Government and the prison service that imprisonment of people with mental health problems should continue.

4.5.3 *High numbers of self-harmers and new ACCT books and concern as to whether enough staff are trained to deal with them:*

- We are pleased that the prison has taken this matter seriously and has appointed a Safer Custody Manager who is addressing this issue.

4.5.4 *Continued concern over prisoners with severe mental problems in the CSU and other inappropriate occupants (own protection and perceived trouble makers):*

- The Board is still concerned by the number of mentally ill prisoners in the CSU, including several who were already or subsequently sectioned and some who were in the unit for long periods; it is also concerned that staff in the CSU are not always specifically trained for the work, which makes the prisoners' care even more problematic;
- The Board welcomes the prison's active programme of dealing with trouble makers on the wings and therefore reducing the number in CSU, and the creation of the Complex Prisoner Forum.

*4.5.5 The Board has continued concerns about the inadequate provision of education and purposeful activity:*

- The Board is pleased to note the seriousness with which the Governor and Senior Management has gripped this problem, especially latterly, and welcomes its evident determination to improve on provision which was given the worst possible mark of Four by HMIP in 2014.
- Equally, the Board is pleased to see that after a first part of the year where provision of places in workshops and on vocational courses was quite inadequate, and indeed the number and type of workshop and vocational courses itself was unsuitable and too limited, a real effort to improve this important area appears to be in place;
- However we remain concerned about the high number of prisoners behind their doors, or on the wings, and without purposeful activity throughout the day.
- We believe that a greater effort needs to be made to minimize the cancellation of courses, avoidable non-attendance, and the wastage of prisoners from courses where the system of cohort learning means that empty places cannot be refilled.

*4.5.6 Concern over continued failure to reliably provide certificates to course finishers and to account for past losses:*

- We note that Weston College and the prison maintain that this has improved, but note that there is not a system in place to monitor it.

*4.5.7 Concern over failure to provide OASys assessments for all prisoners and prisoners' finding Offender Managers unavailable:*

- This is still a very serious weakness in prisons today as so many prisoners are arriving without the required assessment, and although we welcome the fact that OMU is attempting to meet this persistent complaint, the number of men who remain without an OASys continues to disrupt all aspects of the prison's rehabilitation programme.

*4.5.8 Concern over decency deficiency in doubled-up single cells, privacy in double cells especially on Benbow and Raleigh wings:*

- We regret that Senior Management appears not to regard this as a top priority, as we consider this is a serious failing in the provision of care, and we find it difficult to accept that provision of privacy curtains, private toilets decently at distance from beds, viewable TVs and cleanliness are impossible to achieve.

*4.5.9 The Board's regret at inadequate provision of fresh air and exercise, especially at weekends and cessation of Sports Academies:*

- Provision of gym, Football and Rugby Academies, exercise and fresh air has improved and is now seen as a priority by SMT.

*4.5.10 The Board continues to deplore the lack of CSCS qualification provision for trained prisoners:*

- This has not changed.

*4.5.11 The Board was unhappy at the paucity of working cameras:*

- This has not improved, which means concerns about the ability to prove what happened in an incident and to monitor behavior around the prison is still problematic.

## SECTION 5

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### 5.1 Equality and Diversity

5.1.1 The number of complaints to the IMB concerning discrimination or prejudice on the part of officers and staff is low and such as there are have been dealt with assiduously and discreetly by the relevant assigned staff.

5.1.2 During the reporting year the Traveller group of prisoners has become more of an identifiable entity and more assertive. Their right to be regarded as a unique group is recognised by the prison, but there is concern about a perceived attempt to influence aspects of the regime.

5.1.4 At the start of the reporting period B&ME prisoners were expressing concern that they were less likely to gain ROTL status and be able to work outside the prison. This was taken seriously and addressed. However, the number of prisoners allowed to gain their ROTL became nationally very restricted after Government changed the qualifying criteria as a result of escapes from other prisons. Of the very small number of Portland prisoners working or studying outside, B&ME representation is proportional.

5.1.5 The population of the prison is roughly two thirds adult, of which the age group 21 to 30 makes up the largest. They expect to be treated as mature but not all can live up to that and are consequently more demanding of time, attention and facilities. The relatively few prisoners over the age of 55 adopt a low profile in general life but need greater staff, who are not trained for this work, cope for long periods.

5.1.6 The prisoners most difficult to help and manage continue to be those with mental health conditions. The waiting times for diagnosis, referral and, where necessary sectioning are worryingly long and such patients suffer disproportionately. Prison, in particular wing, staff who are not trained for this work, cope for long periods. The prison service's non-specialist care screens Government from exposure to condemnation for failing to provide adequate treatment and accommodation for these prisoners.

5.1.7 Over the reporting year a batch of newly trained staff has been recruited and the number of female officers has increased. Nevertheless, ethnic diversity is an ongoing lack, characteristic of the area in which the prison is situated.

5.1.8 This prison's Independent Monitoring Board also lacks diversity, being predominantly female, white and of middle or advancing years, with the welcome exception of one young recruit.

### 5.2 Education, Learning and Skills

5.2.1 Previous IMB reports have noted that education at Portland has suffered from a number of long-term weaknesses. These observations were reinforced by the HMIP inspection of July 2014 which gave the prison the ranking of "inadequate" and a follow-up visit of February 2015, which urged the prison "to raise standards at a much quicker rate than has been done since the inspection". The Board welcomes the SMT's apparent determination to give a higher priority to education and training and look forward to seeing their plan of action being implemented during the coming year.

5.2.2 The Board welcomes the decision to rebalance courses offered towards the kind of vocational training which is more appropriate to adult offenders.

5.2.3 The Board considers that the atmosphere in the education block suggests a greater sense of purpose than last year. Weston College has recruited four new instructors and five new cover teachers, while the number of staff on long-term sick leave has been reduced over the year. This is progress but there is still work to be done on staffing.

5.2.4 While the prison Allocations Department works hard to keep the system running smoothly, we believe that its work is made unnecessarily difficult by poor information and lack of prison-wide process. There could be more sharing of data between Weston College and the prison, which use different identifiers for offenders (learner numbers and prison numbers respectively), with no facility to allow for the easy mapping between the two. There is still no service level agreement between the prison and Weston College to specify procedures for day-to-day collaboration.

5.2.5 The prison makes limited use of data to monitor the quality and consistency of its education provision, even where appropriate data is available. For example, the frequent cancellation of courses is still being categorized as “non-attendance”, giving the misleading impression that this is due to prisoner refusal. A snapshot of the data performed in July 2014 showed that 64% of non-attendance was due to cancellations by Weston College or the prison and only 17% was due to prisoner refusal or poor behaviour. The remaining 19% of non-attendance was due to clashes with other activities, many of which might be avoided with better monitoring and timetabling.

5.2.6 Sanctions for non-attendance are inconsistently enforced.

5.2.7 Although we are assured that certificates are now being distributed to learners by Weston College, there is no routine reporting of data to ensure that this process is working properly.

5.2.8 The Board regrets that during the reporting period the prison’s good library was very under-used, mainly because there are not enough wing staff to accompany prisoners there. This lower number of staff has also meant that there is no provision of education on a Friday, which is also regrettable, particularly when the rest of the education (and purposeful activity) provision picture is so patchy. We note that the virtual campus is not fully used although we welcome plans to make it a resource for distance learners, of whom there were 43 at the end of the reporting period.

## **5.3 Healthcare & Mental Health**

5.3.1 A full reception medical screen takes place within 24 hours of arrival, and an examination by a doctor with 72 hours. Prisoners with known mental health problems will be seen by a member of the mental health team and be assessed on a needs basis.

5.3.2 Provision of mental health was reduced from 7 days to 5 towards the end of the reporting period. The mental health In-Reach team received 161 referrals in 2014. Of these 13 were assessed as requiring transfer to hospital. The board are very concerned about the time taken to transfer these prisoners to NHS mental facilities, the average wait being 61 days. For the 13 patients who were assessed by the team as appropriate for transfer, 4 had been in the segregation unit at the point of transfer request i.e. the completion of their Mental Health Act paperwork.

5.3.3 Those with severe mental health problems get treated sympathetically by the prison staff and the healthcare workers, and get seen more rapidly than those in the outside community.

5.3.4 Clinics at Portland include dentistry, chiropody, optician, physiotherapy, hepatitis and ultrasound. Waiting lists for dentistry are sometimes high, but this is partially down to missed appointments, in January there were 16.5 clinical hours lost and in February 18.5 hours through missed appointments.

5.3.5 The single biggest problem for the effective running of Healthcare in general is no shows. The reasons vary from reconciling the roll, prisoners declining and sometimes refusing to wait. The offenders who are healthcare champions feel that the system is also mistreated by the prisoners who book appointments and then complain about attending.

5.3.6 The holding cells are another challenge: they get congested, and prisoners can be kept in them for a long period of time. Assaults have occurred, one prisoner sustained a broken jaw, yet there are no CCTV cameras to record such incidents, despite our raising the issue in last year's report. The holding cells are in an unacceptably decrepit and dirty state, and they get trashed by the prisoners who spend so long in them.

5.3.7 The working conditions for staff in healthcare are poor. The offices are run down and the lighting is bad.

5.3.8 Courses providing interventions were the same as last year despite a reduction in population. There were 4 Alcohol Related Violence (ARV) courses of 10 participants with 35 completing, and 8 Thinking Skills Programme (TSP) courses of 10 with 74 completing.

## **5.4 Purposeful Activities, including work.**

5.4.1 The problems of cancelled classes, often at short notice, remains endemic and needs to be addressed.

5.4.2 In its inspection of July 2014, HMIP commented that it was "unacceptable" that 30% of prisoners remained locked in their cells during the day. Members of the Board regularly find more than 50% of prisoners on the wings. This finding is corroborated by our analysis of 12 days of data that were made available to us by Allocations for March 2015. These figures include those allocated to on-wing activities (wing orderlies).

## Proportion of prisoners engaged in purposeful off-wing activity (March 2015)

	Total prisoner sessions (am & pm)	Total sessions engaged in off-wing activity	Percentage prisoners engaged in off-wing activity
<b>AVERAGE</b>			<b>43%</b>
02/03/2015	988	438	44%
04/03/2015	977	420	43%
05/03/2015	1002	423	42%
09/03/2015	991	443	45%
10/03/2015	1736	899	52%
11/03/2015	1007	449	45%
12/03/2015	1024	330	32%
16/03/2015	1019	401	39%
18/03/2015	1034	476	46%
19/03/2015	1053	447	42%
25/03/2015	1027	469	46%
30/03/2015	994	397	40%

*Data collected by Allocations and collated by IMB*

In addition to these figures, between 10% and 15% of all prisoners are generally allocated to a variety of on-wing activities.

5.4.3 The prison has also initiated its own Horticulture course, to run alongside the Weston College one. All food grown there will go to Portland's kitchen, and flowers and shrubs should make the look of the prison more attractive generally. This is to be commended, since horticulture has an observable positive bearing on prisoners' outlook and behaviour. A bakery course and Patisserie are also planned on the Raleigh wing site.

5.4.4 The Board welcomes the appointment of an Industries Manager (from within the existing staff), whose role includes identifying employment opportunities and negotiating contracts with outside partners to use prison space and labour for their commercial activities. Several prison premises have been re-designated and re-equipped to maximise space and utilities for possible industrial use. These industries will be controlled by prison service staff, and the Board welcomes this drawing back from centralisation and bringing oversight and management back within the local Governor's sphere of responsibility.

5.4.5 The Board welcomes the fact that satisfactory completion of relevant course(s) – e.g. new British Institute of Cleaning Service (BICS) course and the Weston College carpentry course – will in future be a pre-requisite for appropriate employment in the prison, whether as a Wing Cleaner or in the new Wood Industries workshop, building the crates for the MoD's jacks.

5.4.6 It is good to see that Weston College's cohort learning system, which we criticised last year as creating unfilled opportunities for vocational training when spaces left vacant by dropouts are kept empty for several weeks (though we can see there are reasons why this might be justified) is being adapted by some instructors, who fill such spaces on level 2 NVQ courses with level 1 volunteers, thus giving them a head start in the courses they join.

## 5.5 Resettlement

5.5.1 Despite facing considerable uncertainty about its future and adapting to a new balance of prisoner population, Resettlement's KPTs have been maintained at a high standard. For the year ending March 15 they were:

- Accommodation. 93.25% of discharged prisoners into sustainable accommodation (target 90%)
- Released into employment 31.08% (target 28%)
- Released into training / education 30.32% (target 30%)

5.5.2 We hope that with the changes to the probation service that are underway that resettlement with its good record of reaching targets will not suffer.

5.5.3 Due to Government tightening of qualification for ROTL, the chances for prisoners to benefit from work experience has decreased. In December only 6 prisoners were allowed out leaving 14 vacancies unfilled, in March 2015, only 8 prisoners qualified for ROTL.

5.5.4 The backlog in the completion of OASys is still a very serious problem. In January there were 155 prisoners without it. It is important as prisoners can get released without an OASys assessment which could have public protection issues.

5.5.5 In addition, there have been major problems with prisoners arriving at the establishment without their OASys plan. Hence backlogs have occurred which can delay Activity, HDC and ROTL requests. On one occasion out of 97 prisoners arriving 47 had no OASys plan with them. It is to be welcomed that the prison says moves are afoot to alleviate the backlog.

5.5.6 Operations Band 4's are being redeployed from the OMU to do residential duties which means that sentence plans are not looked at until very close to the HDC date resulting in first offenders not being put on courses required in their sentence plan.

5.5.8 Eleven offenders engaged with Restorative Justice over the last year and were keen to complete an RJ conference with the victim, however all victims either declined to engage in the process or did not respond to communications. The team facilitated one face to face RJ conference between a prisoner and a member of staff who they had assaulted, which had positive outcomes.

## 5.6 Safer Custody

5.6.1. Helpful and comprehensive figures are produced monthly and shared with the IMB by the Safer Custody Team. They include ACCT books opened, violent incidents recorded, and incidents of use of force by prison staff. These issues were in the first part of the year dealt with in joint meetings, but are now split with Violence Reduction monthly and Use of Force, Suicide and Self Harm bi-monthly. The Safer Custody Team are very well organised, caring and knowledgeable about the prisoners they deal with.

5.6.2. A welcome development is the regular Complex Prisoners Forum dealing with those on ACCTs who present particular management challenges. Since Safer Custody staff carefully assess and monitor several prisoners with severe challenges some months, this is a good measure. We remain concerned that there are still prisoners too ill to be dealt with in a normal prison with the process of getting them Sectioned, if necessary, and found suitable care situations, very slow, compounded sometimes by a lack of spaces in hospital.

5.6.3. In the year in question, 262 ACCT books were opened. The most frequent reasons for opening tended to be cuts, low mood or threats/thoughts of self-harm. Young Offenders (18-20) are consistently the highest represented group with opened ACCT's. June and July were the highest months for ACCTs with 29 each; September the lowest with 14. Over the year, despite having adequate trained assessors, staffing strictures and detached duty have made it more challenging.

5.6.4. IMB members were saddened by the death in custody of prisoner. He was not on an open ACCT at the time of his death and we understand had not given staff cause for concern. He had, however, been on and off an ACCT book the previous year, at one point being under constant observation in a gated cell with anti-ligature clothing due to threats of self-harm and suicide. One of his reviews, sympathetically carried out, was attended by the IMB.

5.6.5. Safer Custody has usually been "amber" operationally speaking with room for improvement in recording. ACCT books and Care Maps have improved over the year. Although increased entries show attention to detail, comments are not always meaningful, more observation than conversation. The introduction of a system of allocating a Case Manager for each open ACCT has been beneficial.

5.6.6. The IMB has noted that prisoners on a self-imposed restricted regime for their own protection are often on ACCT books, raising the worry that bullying - and not feeling safe - contributes to the circumstances that saw them placed on ACCT. The availability of help from the MHT can be at a premium due to staffing issues. The lack of a designated officer to liaise with the families of prisoners at risk is another concern (the family liaison officer deals with deaths in custody) highlighted in the Harris Review into Deaths in Custody convened in the light of the massive (71%) national increase. Lack of activity and number of prisoners behind doors has been a slightly improving picture throughout the reporting period but does have an impact on ACCT numbers with boredom sometimes cited as an aggravating factor.

5.6.7. There were 231 adjudications for acts of violence in the reporting period. August was the worst month with 29, and this was reflected in the Use of Force figures. Young Offenders and Young Adults (i.e. 18-24 year olds) are the highest represented group at 83% over the year. Fights have been the most frequently recorded acts of violence but in August for example there were 7 assaults on staff. For several months there was no designated Violence Reduction Officer but this was corrected and the frequent meetings have been a positive development, however, at the end of the reporting period a Violence Reduction PSI, without which policy could not be formally formulated, was still awaited from HQ.

5.6.8. There are many intractable issues facing staff trying to deal with violence in the prison. Portland has a very high number of Score 3 (high risk) prisoners, averaging 19%. Gangs, drug dealing, debt and bullying are difficult to contain. The prevalence of the "legal high" known as "Spice" has presented particular problems, as it can (depending on the batch) incline prisoners to be aggressive, uncontrolled, peculiarly strong and difficult to subdue.

5.6.9 It is unfortunate that so many prisoners arrive at Portland with no OASys report (almost 90 in one batch of new arrivals). Safer Custody staff, aware of a study by Author Jonathan Kenyon 2013-048 which proved that prisoners who cause problems in custody are high on the OVP measure, ideally would like all offenders to be screened on arrival to assess the likelihood of them displaying institutional aggression.

## **5.7 Segregation, Care and Separation Unit**

5.7.1 The Board continues to be impressed by the work of the officers in the Care and Separation Unit (CSU). They deal with some extremely complex people with cheerfulness and care, frequently under extreme provocation, for example repeated cell smashing and insulting language.

5.7.2 The Board is still concerned that too many prisoners in the unit have serious mental health problems, including prisoners who have been or will be sectioned. On one occasion during the year, there were two sectioned individuals effectively awaiting places elsewhere This is inappropriate and dangerous for the individuals who cannot get the treatment they need. It is also wrong that staff who are not trained in extreme mental health issues should be responsible for these individuals.

5.7.3 It is noticeable from Rota reports, which comment on adjudications and reviews attended, that Board members regard those observed as nearly always carried out with due process but also with a constructive and humane attitude.

5.7.4 Latterly during the reporting period, some staff who are not specifically CSU-trained have been working on the unit. The Board thinks this should not happen.

## **5.8 Residential Services**

5.8.1 The Board welcomes the separation of adults and YOs into different wings, as this had been a cause of considerable discontent.

5.8.2 The Board has been pleased to see the current reduction in the roll.

5.8.3 We are often impressed by how well the staff manage but also regularly observe how they are constrained in terms of what they can offer of support to prisoners, particularly the less robust who are less likely to call attention to themselves but who a) need the support more and b) may be more likely to be rehabilitated if given a chance and encouragement. We observe that wing staff are under great pressure due to the lack of activities.

5.8.4 The Board regards the Reception and Induction process at Portland as excellent, with the staff of Reception and Collingwood (induction) wing being efficient and humane with an alert and generally positive attitude to new arrivals, which definitely helps prisoners settle in. The use of the orderlies in Collingwood is creative and effective.

5.8.5 The Board regrets the continued loss of Activities on Friday, as that means that there is even less chance for prisoners to get more than the statutory minimum of fresh air and exercise.

5.8.6 The Board very concerned that another year has gone by and yet again, provision of privacy screening and curtains to maintain basic decency, particularly in double cells, appears not to be the absolute priority we believe it should be.

5.8.7 The effect of Spice on the Wings is of great concern. Apart from the health of prisoners and the safety implications for all on the Wings, including officers, the trade in these 'legal highs' is leading to pressure on the vulnerable, bullying and debt, the re-growth of a gang culture and therefore to violence.

5.8.8 Due to the variable composition and effect of the batches of Spice, we have heard that more vulnerable prisoners are used as guinea pigs to see how dangerous a given batch is. It is totally unacceptable that this should happen and while we understand how difficult it is for staff to manage this plague, we urge the prison service to give it very serious resources.

5.8.9 Beaufort Wing – It is three years since we first pointed out that the floor of the pool table room was rotting away. This year, the room has had to be closed as it is so dangerous. We urge that this be given priority.

5.8.10 After a varied year, things in the kitchen were looking up at the end of the reporting period, with a new Head who has already implemented plans for fresher food made in the kitchen from fresh produce. This is to be highly commended. The question of what time the hot food trolleys leave the kitchen, however, is live, as they are tending to arrive too early and mean that some meals are being delivered too early, before those on Activities have returned.

## **5.9 Security**

5.9.1 There has been long term concern over the state of the CCTV coverage across the prison. Cameras are obsolete, failing and wrongly located for the job they now have to do, leaving certain areas of the perimeter and free flow areas without surveillance. There are three different incompatible systems and cabling is frequently having to be excavated at great cost to repair damage caused by rats. Definition of images is poor. A number of bids to NOMS in the reporting and previous years for upgrading or renewal of the entire system had received no response.

So, we welcome news, which arrived after the reporting period, that monies have been received to help remedy this situation, which we regard as important for us all, prisoners and residents near the prison.

5.9.2 A considerable risk to the integrity of the prison is the ingress of unauthorised articles. A monthly meeting monitors the scale and nature of such breaches and strategies to contain them are constantly under review and being implemented. "Spice" has, at times and depending on the types of substance contained in it, caused an increase in call-outs to the emergency services and hospital admissions and has caused an increase in violence. It has also increased the level of indebtedness incurred by some prisoners to a level which impacts on their future lives and the safety of their families. Because under law these substances are described as "legal highs", the police service is unwilling or unable to assist in prosecuting for the trafficking of them.

5.9.3 For the Gate area there are plans in place for modification so that staff passing through at shift changes can be monitored better and so that visitors have a more direct visual encounter with the Gate staff. This improvement will bring about a better experience in terms of reception but also help to address the risk identified recently of unauthorised ingress or exit during a planned covert test which failed. Prisoners, especially adult prisoners, will increasingly be wearing their own clothes and vigilance in awareness and challenging is a priority.

5.9.4 Searching at the Gate and elsewhere has been reasonably good, despite the difficulty of outdated facilities and technology. Movement of staff through the area is now more quickly effected through the introduction of the Traka system, but there have been some reliability issues. The use of the Area dog team has brought success both on visiting days and on landings for cell searches. A search dog handler has just been appointed and will source new dogs for training up.

5.9.5 The pared down level of staffing under New Ways of Working has resulted in curtailment of regime at times of indiscipline by one or more prisoners. Staff needed for negotiating or planned removal from cell cannot be available on wings for normal regime. So far prisoner discontent, whilst palpable, has been mild but limiting measures affecting association and domestic activities, gym and library entitlements are likely to be tolerated for only so long.

Elisabeth Sacher (on behalf of the Board)  
Chair IMB Portland

25<sup>th</sup> June 2015

## SECTION 7

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### 7.1 Board Statistics

Recommended Complement of Board Members	17 (max)
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	13
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	13
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	1
Number of members leaving within reporting period	1
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	347 (excl. Bd mtgs)
Total number of segregation reviews held	<i>The prison does not keep this statistic</i>
Total number of segregation reviews attended	*
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	March 2014

\* Segregation reviews were attended as often as possible – especially when held at pre-arranged times. However, with (usually) only a small number of inmates in the CCU, reviews were often carried out at short notice at times better suited to Governors, CCU staff, Healthcare, etc., so there was not always an IMB presence in those cases. It would be unreasonable for us to criticise the prison's understandable practice in this regard.

## 7.2 Applications Statistics

Code	Subject	Change			
		2013	2014	2015	% over 2014
A	Accommodation	1	6	14	133
B	Adjudications	5	4	6	50
C	Equality & Diversity (inc religion)	0	3	15	400
D	Education/employment/training inc IEP	31	24	43	79
E 1	Family/visits inc mail & phone	5	28	19	-32
E 2	Finance/pay	2	11	15	36
F	Food/kitchen related	1	6	19	217
G	Health related	9	36	47	31
H 1	Property (within current establishment)	10	14	47	236
H 2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)	7	39	61	56
H 3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	1	3	17	467
I	Sentence related (inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	14	33	66	100
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc bullying	9	24	33	38
K	Transfers	28	42	50	19
L	Miscellaneous	32	22	37	68
	<b>Total number of IMB applications</b>	155	277	489	77
	Of total: Confidential Access	25		6	

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## GLOSSARY

ACCT	Assessment, Care in Custody & Teamwork
ARV	Alcohol Related Violence
B&ME	Black & Minority Ethnic
CARATS	Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice & Through-Care Services relating to drugs
CSU	Control and Segregation Unit
CSCS	Construction Skills Certificate Scheme
E List	Prisoners with attempted escape history
GOOD	Good Order and Discipline
GRT	Gipsy Romany Traveller
HDC	Home Detention Curfew
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
IDTS	Integrated Drug Treatment Strategy in prisons
IEP	Incentives and Earned Privileges – Prisoners can be on Basic, Standard or Enhanced
IMB	Independent Monitoring Board
IRC	Immigration Removal Centre
KPT	Key performance target
MDT	Mandatory Drugs Testing
OASys	Offender Assessment System
OLASS	Offender Learning and Skills Service
OMU	Offender Management Unit
OVP	OASys Violence Predictor
ROTL	Release On Temporary Licence
SC	Safer Custody
SCG	Safer Custody Group
SMT	Senior Management Team
TSP	Thinking Skills Programme
YOI	Young Offender Institution