



HMP and YOI Portland

INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR TO
31 MARCH 2016

SECTION 1

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 the local community.

It is the duty of each IMB:

- to satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its establishment and (for prisons and YOIs) the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release;
- to inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom s/he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate, any concern it has;
- to report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the establishment 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 a 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

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

- 3.1 HMP/YOI Portland is for Category C adult prisoners with sentences of 1-4 years, with a home address in CPA 13 - Avon, Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire: and is a national resource for Young Offenders (between 18 and 21 years) with sentences under 10 years.
- 3.2 It has a designated role as a Resettlement prison.
- 3.3 Whilst Portland is for Category C prisoners it is run with many of the attributes of a Category B institution.
- 3.4 Operational capacity is 530 prisoners. Certified normal accommodation (the number of prisoners possible if all cells were single) is 463. At the time of writing 54 cells are doubled up.
- 3.5 As of the last census the breakdown in terms of age was:- under 21: 26.7%; 21-29: 39.1%; 30-39: 21.4%; 40-49: 8.8%; 50-59: 3.5%; 60-69: 0.4%.
- 3.6 Accommodation consists of seven wings and a free standing Care and Separation Unit. Collingwood Wing is the first night centre and undertakes the induction of newly arrived prisoners. Nelson and Grenville Wings are largely populated by Young Offenders.
- 3.7 Education, including some vocational training, is contracted to Weston College and the prison operates some workshops directly.
- 3.8 Charitable organisations working within the prison include The Samaritans, The Airborne Initiative, The Shannon Trust, Turning Point, PACT and The Shaw Trust.
- 3.9 Healthcare was for most of the reporting period operated by NHS Dorset Community Healthcare Services.

SECTION 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 4.1 This Report is compiled according to the policy of the Board, which is not to include any item or issue which has not first been recorded in a weekly Rota Report, periodic Wing Report or departmental report, as compiled whilst performing the regular monitoring which forms our role and responsibility at Portland.
- 4.2 Over the period covered by this Report, Portland has, according to members' observations, had a troubled time struggling with a number of difficulties. The staff and Senior Management Team are to be commended for their determination, despite these difficulties and challenges, to run a safe, decent and humane regime.
- 4.3 **The Board commends the prison in a number of areas:**
 - 4.3.1 We welcome the fact that Portland is a safe prison against comparators in the South West, according to PRS data; second only to HMP Leyhill - and the safest YOI.

- 4.3.2 The regular staff on the CSU are committed and experienced and have run the unit well this year as in previous years, sometimes under some very trying circumstances. [5.7.1]
- 4.3.3 We find the carrying out of adjudications and reviews in the CSU to be overwhelmingly fair, compassionate and appropriate. [5.7.2]
- 4.3.4 We commend the staff of Collingwood Wing for their continued conscientiousness in running the induction system and the housing of some of Portland's most disturbed prisoners.
- 4.3.5 We find the Reception staff to be efficient and humane in their treatment of new arrivals, a particular example recorded in Rota Report (RR) 15-21/2/16.
- 4.3.6 We commend the Safer Custody team: that with high levels of difficult prisoners, self-harm, prisoners with mental health difficulties, open ACCTs and attempted ligatures, and difficulties with availability of staff, they have kept prisoners safe and may very well have prevented fatal outcomes. They achieved "green" in operational status this year. [5.6.1, 5.6.4]
- 4.3.7 We welcome the evidence that the SMT's commitment to adequate fresh air and exercise seems to be leading to improved use of the exercise yards. That access to the gym has improved can perhaps be extrapolated from the fact that the IMB no longer receives any complaints about it; late in the reporting period we were told they had more spaces than they could fill due to lack of interest [Wing Report (WR) 2/2016]
- 4.3.8 We welcome the improvements in the provision of working perimeter cameras and the increasing use of body worn cameras by staff. [5.9.4]
- 4.3.9 We are glad the CSCS issue is resolved as far as it can be. [5.2.1]

4.4 However, the Board reports the following problems:

- 4.4.1 Staffing. The Board has observed, or had reported to it by prisoners and staff, innumerable examples over the year of short staffing which causes serious difficulties with the running of the establishment. These are exacerbated on the occasions when relatively inexperienced staff predominate on a wing. When there is the slightest extra demand for staff, e.g. an emergency hospital escort, maintaining Activities and a normal regime/routine is regularly jeopardised. Staffing ratios do not reflect the complexity and difficulty of the Portland population. An additional complication is the fact that the majority of staff are most experienced in dealing with young men aged 18-25 and though those still make up approximately two thirds of the prison population, the increase in prisoners in older age groups has an impact.

The following are examples of the effects of short staffing taken from rota reports:-

- There have had to be a number of temporary regime changes to try to cope with staff shortages, but complaints they could not be upheld with consistency [RR 18-25/1/2016; WR 2/2016]
- Staff non-availability has frequently caused education, activities and library visits to be curtailed or prisoners to be unable to attend [5.2.3]
- Use of non-regular staff in the CSU has been observed to impact on the management of prisoners there [5.7.3]
- Staff sickness or staff needing to escort prisoners to hospital or be deployed during an incident necessitating lockdowns of wings and leading to too many prisoners being behind doors [5.2.3]
- Healthcare reported as "snowed under" [RR 27/4-1/5 2015], understaffed and failing a hygiene audit [5.3.5]

- Management during serious incidents having to spend inordinate time and energy freeing up negotiators and enabling free flow and distribution of meds [RR 20-26/7 2015]
- A struggle at times to free up trained ACCT assessors when needed, or release staff for ACCT assessor training [5.6.1]
- The traffic in the downstairs section of Raleigh being unsupervised leading to activity causing an increase in adjudications (SIRs on Raleigh 43 in September 2015, 58 in October) [WR 10-11/2015]
- Back ups in remanded adjudications. On approximately 20 occasions this has led to a dismissal because of the length of time [5.7.6]
- Prisoners reporting staff not having time for them, to listen, or to respond to requests [5.6.1]
- Related to the above a perception that prisoners are committing actions to get themselves placed on an ACCT in order to get things sorted out - which leads to hours of work for Safer Custody staff [5.6.1]
- Non-regular staff filling in on wings means that there are staff who don't know the prisoners, which has an impact on communication, ACCT recording and information gathering [RR 8-14/2/2016; WR 2/2016]
- An ongoing, significant and apparently intractably high OASys backlog, which prevents prisoners from making progress during their sentence. This is exacerbated by the high number of prisoners arriving without paperwork in Portland from other prisons [5.5.4]
- RR 13-20/4/2015 mentions a particular day when there were "22 officers for 505 prisoners" (this was partly due to emergency escorts).

4.4.2 There have been high levels of disturbance, damage, violence, serious incidents and indiscipline through the year. Staff have reported feeling unsafe. There has been an increase in the deployment of C&R teams and national support forces, which reflects the situation nationally through the prison estate (though Portland is considered best in the South West for *managing* violent incidents). For reference, from a selection of Rota and Wing reports:-

- "Another difficult week for prisoners and staff... on the wings there was a restless atmosphere" [6-13/4/15]
- "[not] many wings escaped the trouble and incidents... of which there were many... including arson, obs panel and cell smashes, floods, barricades and assaults on prisoners and staff" [27/4-3/5/15]
- "The atmosphere had a menacing feel to it. It was a week of different outbreaks and problems" [w/c 11/5/15]
- "Thursday [30/7/15] was described by an officer as 'the worst day he had experienced in 11 years'"
- Concerted indiscipline on Benbow wing, difficult prisoners causing a lot of trouble and damage in the CSU, forced removal of a number of prisoners during July and August 2015: "The atmosphere in the prison on Monday [23/8] was the worst I have experienced since joining the Board"
- Concerted indiscipline across a number of wings, March 2016, leading to the ship-out of 32 prisoners.

4.4.3 A number of costly initiatives have had to be abandoned after delays and difficulties, e.g.:-

- The relocation of the barber shop to the ground floor of Raleigh, which cost £38,000 but had to be closed because its presence caused an increase in illegitimate prisoner activity in the environs [WR 10-11/2015]
- The x-ray machine and the training of staff to operate it, when it remains unused after 2 years [RR 29/2-6/3/16]
- Problems with dryers on Nelson and Drake associated with the cost of the installation of the outflow pipes

- The meds hatch in Beaufort which was an ongoing promise for much of the year (delays mentioned in several rota reports and Beaufort wing report) but which could not become operational because of difficulties in staffing it and is apparently abandoned (though the SMT would still like to see it happen)
- 4.4.4 NPS/Spice/“legal highs” have continued to be a huge problem over the year (mentioned in many rota reports) with healthcare staff having to respond to 56 incidents in November alone, and a corresponding fear that their other commitments suffer and that someone may not be reached in time. These substances present a very significant danger to health and life, with urgent and extreme life-saving actions needing to be taken by staff at all levels on many occasions, as well as the ongoing problems associated with trading, debt and bullying and the effects on the regime of staff having to be deployed as escorts or to attend incidents; kitchen workers being sent back to the wing under the influence, with the potential for threatening meal provision, etc. An impressive number of finds during cell and perimeter wall searches have limited and reduced but have not stemmed the flow into the prison of these extremely destabilising substances. [5.9.1]
- 4.4.5 Though some progress had been made the Board remains disappointed with the numbers getting out to education and purposeful activity, and the amount of time prisoners spend behind their doors. [5.2.3]
- 4.4.6 There is still a high amount of self harm with attempted ligaturing featuring prominently this last year. 307 ACCT books were opened during 2015, a significant increase on the previous year with the first few months of 2016 continuing to see an increase. We are very worried about the potential for a fatality and a number of reported “near misses”. [5.6.4, 5.6.6]
- 4.4.7 There are still far too many people in Portland who have recognised mental health conditions who should not be in prison but in a more suitable environment. The Board is also concerned about the expectation placed on the prison to deal with what seems to be a growing number of prisoners who are described as having “behavioural problems”, who present staff with some extreme and intractable challenges such as repeated staff assaults, dirty protests and cell destruction. [5.3.8, 5.3.9]
- 4.4.8 Communication within the prison: efficient and timely communication within the prison has been uneven in the reporting year, in a number of ways:
- The frequency of unplanned timetabling changes; not always relayed to Wing or Activity staff in good time.
 - A restricted regime introduced in the course of the year to deal with the reduced number of officers available had its negative effects exacerbated by the confusion and irritation caused by some difficulty with communication from the SMT (despite the holding of full staff meetings).
 - An observed example on a wing was when afternoon free flow was suddenly brought forward by an hour with only an hour’s notice, with the result that Training, Association and Domestic all had to be curtailed and rearranged. This was apparently due to a hospital escort.
 - When this occurs frequently, due to such unpredictable events as an emergency hospital escorts, it creates a tense and untrusting atmosphere.
 - Officers’ morale is affected by this, with inevitable knock-on effects on prisoners.
 - There have been a number of prisoner applications to the IMB mentioning prison applications “disappearing.”

- The IMB has found it difficult to consistently acquire meaningful data during this reporting year, to the detriment of its monitoring role. SMT reports, traditionally provided prior to the monthly Board meeting, became less regular and diminished in content and although this started to improve at the end of the reporting year, full, useful and reliable data was hard to come by in several departments with only the Safer Custody team consistently providing detailed reports.
- The IMB has not always received timely information when the Command Suite has been opened during a Serious Incident [RRs 6-12/7/2015, 27/2-6/3/2016]

4.4.9 During the reporting year the IMB received an increasing number of health related applications: 50 in the first three months of 2016 alone, compared to 47 in the whole of 2015. They are second only to property on transfer related applications [5.3.12].

4.5 Policy matters for ministers

4.5.1 In the observation of the Board, Portland has had a challenging, troubled year, with some spells of unrest and very difficult incidents. This seems to be caused by a toxic mix of a particularly difficult prisoner population, with high numbers of Score 3 and short term prisoners (including 50% due to be released in six months or less); low staffing ratios, high staff sickness in some months, high staff churn, and uneven staffing numbers due to these factors; regime changes and curtailment; inconsistency in availability of purposeful activity, education or opportunities for rehabilitation; an increased rate of churn or turnover of prisoners at some points, including the arrival of numbers of prisoners from other establishments with security issues; and a prevalence of NPS and associated levels of debt, bullying, self-isolation and self-harm. [See 4.2.2. above and section reports for detail.]

4.5.2 Education, vocational training and purposeful activity still fall well short of supporting “the adequacy of programs preparing [prisoners] for their release” or the “rehabilitation revolution” which the Government adopted as policy [cf last year’s report] [5.3.2]

4.5.3 Similarly, and also with impact on the “rehabilitation revolution”, interventions to help those with mental health and/or behavioural difficulties are not adequate - not due to the delivery by staff but due to the lack of commissioning.

4.5.4 Again we would therefore warn against any more financial cuts - indeed we feel that a tipping point was reached this year and now there needs to be either reinvestment in staffing, and/or moves to reduce prisoner numbers, in order to put the staff-prisoner ratio back on a level conducive to providing a safe, decent, humane and rehabilitative regime. [cf last year’s report]

4.5.5 The Board would like to urge, again, attention to alternative provision for offenders with recognised mental health problems. Both those with these problems and the prisoners without them are being failed by the status quo and change should be a national priority. [cf last year’s report]

4.5.6 There has been no change in the baffling policy of allocating Dorset resettlement prisoners out of the immediate area [cf last year’s report]

4.6 Matters for the Prison Service

4.6.1 In last year’s report we welcomed the lower roll. However, very disappointingly, it turns out that, given the number of incidents over the year and the lack of staffing flexibility in cases of emergencies/sickness etc, this was still too high for the staffing level in a complex prison with large numbers of unstable prisoners.

- 4.6.2 The Board has to report again that frequent lockdowns and cancellations due to staff shortages cause unacceptably high numbers of prisoners to be regularly behind their doors. As stated in last year's report "this... is incompatible with the Government's proposed 'rehabilitation revolution'". In addition, the November 2015 survey "Measuring the Quality of Prison Life" reported: "Prisoner perceptions at Portland were notably more negative than typical to the statement 'prisoners spend too long locked in their cells'... During discussions participants commonly referred to the cancellation of various activities, predominantly association and domestic time which leads to prolonged periods of time spent in your cell, ... frequently cited as one of the most negative aspects of life at HMYOI Portland".
- 4.6.3 There is no let up in the influx of NPS into the prison with all the problems this is creating. Difficulty remains in testing for or detecting these new substances.
- 4.6.4 In last year's report we highlighted our concern at the number of highly vulnerable prisoners with recognised mental health problems who arrive at Portland. We still consider and that the Prison Service is warehousing the mentally fragile in totally unsuitable accommodation.
- 4.6.5 The population profile of Portland is a cause for considerable concern:-
- Portland has a very high level (20%) of Score 3 prisoners for a prison of its kind, with staff complaining of "too many difficult prisoners on the wings, who need to be in the CSU or re-catted and shipped out" [RR 23-30/8/2015]
 - There are a very high number of prisoners (50%) with less than 6 months to serve of their sentences, 30% with 1-3 months, which militates against fulfilling any interventions or educational courses, or allocating these prisoners purposeful activity [5.4.2]
 - In many cases prisoners do not have adequate access to their Offender Supervisors (due to the restricted numbers of vocationally trained staff, frequent changes of personnel etc.) [5.5.4]
 - There is still a very alarming backlog in OASys scoring, especially for prisoners transferring from other prisons [5.5.4]
 - Problems with the mix of adults and YO's are mentioned in rota and wing reports
 - A high number of prisoners who are very damaged, have had exposure to "care" (63 at time of writing), and/or have ADHD related difficulties and behavioural problems which they are unable to control - making it unrealistic to expect them to be compliant with the regime, therefore causing a management problem for staff

4.7 Previous year's concerns (last year's comments in italics)

- 4.7.1 *2/1 The widespread and apparently uncheckable presence of so-called "legal highs" or "spice" on the wings. This is leading to trading, debt, bullying of more vulnerable prisoners and their families, criminal and networking activity, violence and self harm.*
- There was no discernable improvement for most of the reporting period, in spite of initiatives by Healthcare to educate prisoners about the dangers, and significant numbers of interceptions of material; though in the first few months of 2016 there were fewer hospital escorts. NPS-related incidents are a regular feature of rota reports.
- 4.7.2 *2/2 The limitations and frequent curtailment of regime due to staffing numbers*
- If anything the situation has worsened. It culminated in a "temporary" restricted regime implemented in February 2016 which was anyway frequently not kept to. There have been frequent lockdowns and cancellations of Activity etc.
- 4.7.3 *2/3 The number of prisoners with serious mental health problems being held at Portland*
- This does not seem to have improved but is difficult to quantify [5.3.10]

- 4.7.4 *2/4 The unsafe and unhygienic physical conditions of the Healthcare building and the impact of “no shows” on Healthcare’s efficiency*
 - There has been no improvement on the former; an infection control assessment was undertaken during the year, which was failed (RR w/c 11/5/15, 27/7-2/8/15, 31/8-6/9/15, 7-13/9/15, 21-27/9/15, 7-14/2/16). A slight improvement in the latter is recorded.
- 4.7.5 *2/5 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. Typically up to half the men and YO’s at Portland remain in their cells almost all day.*
 - This has improved [5.2.1]. Weston College are also keeping better records, although data does not appear to be cumulatively collected and shared, so the relationship between allocated places and attendance is still unclear. The prison does not keep records of numbers of men left on the wings.
- 4.7.6 *2/6 OMU is significantly behind in the vital task of completing OASys forms, without which prisoners can make no progress, significant numbers are arriving without a completed OASys, and the Board receives regular complaints about Offender Managers being unavailable to their clients*
 - This situation has worsened over the reporting year though the problem is more with the availability of Offender Supervisors.
- 4.7.7 *2/7 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*
 - Almost all have been reverted though 54 are still used in double capacity. Lack of privacy curtains remained an issue during the year.
- 4.7.8 *2/8 The problem of the non-provision of CSCS qualification for trained prisoners remains live.*
 - This has been resolved in as far as possible.
- 4.7.9 *2/9 The paucity of working cameras for use in and around the prison remains a dangerous restriction to evidence gathering for proper recording of incidents.*
 - This has improved with body worn video cameras now in frequent use: 144 staff are trained in their use. There is a new camera system throughout the establishment.
- 4.7.10 *2/10 The Board regrets the decline of ROTL to a minimal level, following the Government’s change of qualification criteria.*
 - The situation in Portland is as poor, if not worse, with only 19 placements over the whole of the reporting period and only 2 currently.

SECTION 5

5.1 Equality and Diversity

- 5.1.1 During the reporting year there were only 10 applications from prisoners which raised issues of race - the majority as an issue tangential to employment - they were promptly dealt with and non-recurring. Those relating to violence had roots more in neighbourhood / gang relationships rather than ethnicity.
- 5.1.2 The risk assessment related to self-declared racist prisoners in terms of cell-sharing is effective.

5.1.3 There is a small number of prisoners over the age of 55. They can experience difficulties in their day to day interaction with the majority population and support with age-related conditions. Only two wings have ground floor accommodation, and they have specific roles, so there have been issues related to mobility and location for those unable to use stairs. They are housed together on Drake wing with an officer who has a brief to advocate for them, but no allocated time is given to this work.

5.2 Education, Learning and Skills

5.2.1 Successes:

- Portland has the highest success rate in the South West for Maths and English level 1 & 2
- The vocational team won an award for outstanding performance
- Learners' celebration events, where the prisoners receive their certificates in the presence of their families, now take place quarterly. Certificates are also being delivered on the wings by the education staff
- The Virtual Campus is up and running
- An outreach worker has been appointed to help those who cannot cope in a classroom due to Asperger's Syndrome.

5.2.2 Class cancellations continue to be of concern. The figures from beginning of August to end of March are as follows:

Provider failures - learner hours 8202; teacher hours 960.25 (Weston)

Prison failures - learner hours 10011; teacher hours 1374.5 (Portland)

5.2.3 Lockdowns have affected learning in several ways:

- The breaks in delivery result in loss of motivation as well as the likelihood of not completing
- The next courses have to be put back leaving those allocated to them with nothing to do
- Functional Skills courses are 4 weeks long and are timetabled at the start of the academic year with exams in the 5th week. Staff have expressed concern that if these are delayed too long, prisoners cannot sit the exam as they run out of time, and also, if one wing fails to unlock that wing can't sit the exam - however there is no evidence of exams being missed so far.
- Whenever there are changes there are time-consuming forms to fill in.

5.2.4 Some adults do not wish to mix with YO's in classes, but they are required to attend together. Most adults don't want to do Maths and English, which are now compulsory.

5.3 Healthcare and Mental Health

5.3.1 Staff shortages are a significant and recurring problem. In a meeting in August 2015, healthcare reported having 2 staff when they should have 9. We commend Healthcare staff for their positive attitude in the face of these shortages.

5.3.2 There has been an increase in the number of incidents involving NPS, which short-staffed Healthcare have to attend and which also leads to an increase in hospital visits.

5.3.3 Over the year drug rehabilitation was moved to Beaufort wing, and work was done on establishing a hatch there for the dispensing of medicines - after some delays, the hatch was built; however, due to concerns about staffing, the project was eventually abandoned (the SMT would still like it to go ahead).

- 5.3.4 There were problems between July and October with a lack of dentistry services due to a change of contract. Even when the new contractor started (when the waiting list was 140) rota reports for several weeks mentioned that no treatment could be performed because the chair was not working. In September a RR quoted the head of Healthcare as saying "There is no dental treatment, none". The waiting list has been high through most of the reporting year and at the time of writing has 136 on it.
- 5.3.5 Working conditions in healthcare are poor and unhygienic:-
- A deteriorating roof has remained in a state of disrepair through the year, leading to leakages
 - There are concerns about achieving the cleanliness required to prevent or reduce infection. An infection audit performed during the year was failed on environmental grounds
 - Staff report that prisoners say they do not like attending appointments because of the condition of the holding cells
- 5.3.6 An increasing number of ACCTs has an impact on staff time.
- 5.3.7 The DNA rate at Portland is the worst in the South West area: 50% over the year with times when it was only 3 in 20. The prison and the contractor need to agree how to improve this.
- 5.3.8 The number of referrals to the Secondary Care Mental Health Team, who deal with patients with serious mental health problems, is comparable to last year's.
- 5.3.9 8 people were sectioned and the time from assessment to transfer to hospital was: 3 in less than 2 weeks, 3 in 3-4 weeks, 1 in 9-12 weeks, 1 in 13-20 weeks. The guidance is that it should be 14 days but fulfilment of this guidance is hampered by the extreme shortage of beds and the vagaries of different private providers.
- 5.3.10 Substance Misuse:-
- Average number of referrals per month is 40, of which 75% refuse to engage
 - Average caseload is 180-200. Currently 181 (144 drugs, 37 alcohol); compared with April 2015 when total was 124 (83 drugs, 39 alcohol).
 - Delivered 9 Spice groups (70 attended); 22 Reiki sessions (102 participants); 34 First Steps sessions, 30 Smart groups (315 attended), plus running Spice awareness sessions for staff.
- 5.3.11 It is notable that among applications to the IMB in the reporting year, those pertaining to health related matters have numbered 50 in the first three months of 2016 alone, compared to 47 in the whole of 2015. They are second only to property on transfer related applications.

5.4 Purposeful Activities, including work

- 5.4.1 There has been an improvement in the number of activity spaces, but the regularity of lockdowns means that there are still too many prisoners left behind their doors.
- 5.4.2 It takes 3-4 weeks for a new inmate to get placed on an activity, which is too long when 30% of prisoners have between 1 and 3 months left to serve.
- 5.4.3 The new Industries are of a good quality and provide good work experience, with contracts for the MOD producing crates, jacks and nets. Recycling also works well.
- 5.4.4 There are issues with prisoners not getting to the workshops on time, as free flow can take up to an hour.

5.4.5 Not all those allocated to activities attend. However the prison does not keep accumulated data on this so it is not possible to ascertain the extent of the problem.

5.5 Resettlement

5.5.1 Resettlement in Portland is delivered by Catch 22. The contract is held by Working Links. The Service has just completed the first year of its contract.

5.5.2 Staffing Resources: the team of 3 operate a resettlement service originally provided by 11 paid members of staff and a range of charitable/voluntary organisations when managed in house. They achieve 94% of their targets of touching base and establishing a release plan with every prisoner in the last 12 weeks of sentence.

5.5.3 The effect on prisoners in HMP/YOI Portland of being a Resettlement prison for areas which are not, in reality, local is detrimental. In addition, prisoners preparing for release also come from outside the designated areas. Accommodation is a particular issue. Between October 2015 and March 2016, 342 prisoners were released to 21 local authority areas only 61% of which came from the catchment area for Portland. The team's experience is that prisoners facing release, especially those with undiagnosed mental health and/or substance misuse issues, are not considered a priority for Housing Depts. Accommodation problems on release, therefore, can mitigate against work done to reduce re-offending during sentence. Problems with the resettlement of prisoners from outside of the CPA are also exacerbated when, as can happen, they arrive with considerably less than 12 weeks left to serve, and no resettlement plan.

5.5.4 Offender Management: Band 4 officers are often deployed at short notice outside of OMU as a consequence of staff shortages or other operational necessity. This is an area of concern as the unit continues to struggle with a backlog of sentence planning reviews and a number of prisoners who arrive in this designated resettlement prison with out of date or unopened OASys.

5.6 Safer Custody

5.6.1 The difficulties presented by short staffing on managing and administering ACCTs seems worse this year, and is also compounded by the inexperience of some staff. Difficulties with freeing up case managers, staff for assessment and review and new staff for ACCT training remain. In addition a perception is conveyed to the IMB that the increasing numbers of ACCT books being opened is due in part to wing staff not having enough time to deal with prisoners' worries and concerns. A high proportion of routine management falls on the SCT, who have ensured that no ACCT-related deadlines have been missed.

5.6.2 There is still a consistent churn of prisoners going on and off a self-restricted regime for their own protection (due to NPS and associated debt and bullying, often short term). SC assess these prisoners and put support in place, and attempt to tackle it by listing OP prisoners for discussion in the Complex Offenders Forum, but the situation is so fluid that lists are rapidly out of date. This remains an intractable situation, with high numbers reporting levels of fear around the drug culture including fearing for their physical safety: from the MQPL survey November 2015: "more concern than average... about the level of drug use in the prison... a culture of needing to buy and sell things in order to get by... feeling tense, fearing for their physical safety".

5.6.3 The completion of ACCT documents has improved somewhat and achieved "green" on operational status, but according to IMB spot checks of books this remains a concern, yielding mixed results.

- 5.6.4 That there has not been a death in custody during the reporting year is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the Safer Custody Team in the face of a shortage of supporting staff, increasing numbers of ACCT books, increasing self harm including a spate of dangerous ligature attempts, large numbers of prisoners with ADHD, behavioural difficulties and other challenges, and periods of unrest and indiscipline when cell fires and riots have put vulnerable prisoners at risk. It is also notable that this is against a backdrop of increasing deaths in custody, and within that number an increase in suicides, in the prison estate as a whole.
- 5.6.5 The Complex Offenders Forum, which meets weekly, continues to be a very useful mechanism for managing the needs of some of the most challenging prisoners.
- 5.6.6 The number of “safer cells” was reduced this year. The safer cell in the CSU has been temporarily reverted to normal accommodation after being destroyed by a prisoner; the delay is due to the cost and logistics of renewing its “safer cell” status. The safer cells on Nelson and Grenville wings were redesignated as normal accommodation as they did not meet the criteria.
- 5.6.7 There is still no PSI for Violence Reduction, though the Safer Custody team keep very thorough statistics; and according to some wing staff there is not much anti-bullying activity in evidence.
- 5.6.8 There have been undesirable statistical increases as follows:-
- 307 active ACCTs in 2015, up 37 on the previous year, not counting re-opened books or those transferred from other establishments; in 2016 to the end of the reporting period, 75 more
 - Use of Force incidents up from 271 in 2014 to 309 in 2015. This increase is partly due to better reporting
 - Violence on the increase with assaults on staff and assaults on prisoners both rising: however “serious” assaults on staff were more sporadic with most counted as “technical” e.g. spitting, pushing past; and there are examples of numbers of incidents being attributable to one prisoner. However there was a distressing spate of “potting” of staff (throwing urine/faeces), often we understand commissioned by other prisoners than the actual perpetrators, in lieu of debt payments. The prison found it difficult to persuade the courts to take this as seriously as it merited.

5.7 Segregation; Care and Separation Unit

- 5.7.1 The Board continues to regard the CSU as well and humanely run, with dedicated staff: it is one of the best elements of the prison.
- 5.7.2 The Board finds (as expressed in many rota reports) that Adjudications and Reviews are overwhelmingly carefully, fairly and correctly carried out.
- 5.7.3 However, sometimes less well trained or experienced staff are placed on duty there (because there is so much flux and inconsistency with staff deployment generally, due in turn to what the IMB regards as inadequate staff numbers in the prison overall). An impact on the regime of the unit and the management of prisoners has been observed on occasions as a result of this [eg RR15-21/2/2016]

- 5.7.4 We consider it broadly wrong that prisoners with mental health problems or severely challenging behaviours should be in the CSU for long periods - e.g. a prisoner on a dirty protest, who was supposed to be there for 28 days, was eventually moved after over 40 days. However this is in the context of our general disapproval of keeping people with severe mental health problems in prison - we recognise that the staff and prison authorities had/have positive intentions with regard to this and other cases as in some ways the CSU can be the safest place with the most experienced care for some prisoners of this kind. This should not however be the case.
- 5.7.5 The Unit has struggled this year with challenges to the fabric of the building: whether this was cells out of action after smashes, biohazard or the failure of the heating system.
- 5.7.6 Staff shortages and the high number of incidents and adjudications over the year led to a serious backlog in remanded adjudications.

5.8 Residential Services

- 5.8.1 The Board is concerned at the deterioration of the fabric of the buildings, and about how slow repairs and refurbishments can be:-
- The continuing unacceptable state of the Healthcare building, particularly the roof
 - The floors in Beaufort Wing - the association room has been unusable for much of the year (see above)
 - The delay in restoring phone lines to Nelson Wing where prisoners only have one phone in use as at the end of the reporting period
 - A period in winter when it took over 10 days for heating to be restored to the CSU after a breakdown
 - Rota reports refer regularly to the often filthy state of some yards and exercise areas
 - There have been leaks and flooding in some areas during adverse weather
 - The situation has been exacerbated by high levels of cell smashes, floods, fires, observation panel smashes, dirty protests and subsequent periods of cells being out of action which has been particularly challenging in the CSU (where on one occasion 7 of the 9 cells were out of action including the “safer” cell which had been taken apart by its inhabitant). The Board notes the concern expressed by staff about the outsourcing of repairs to Carillion and the added delay and layer of bureaucracy caused by this.
- 5.8.2 Although in last year’s report the division of wings to YO/Adult was applauded, it can be compromised due to the need to move prisoners around the wings
- 5.8.3 There have been periods when the IMB has received a lot of complaints about the food, most commonly to do with inadequate portions of rice or potatoes arriving at the wings and said to be to do with the new policy of allotted pre-orders of these items and interpretation of portion sizes; also a few complaints about prisoners on special diets not being given appropriate foods. There is praise for how the kitchens cope with events such as Ramadan.
- 5.8.4 Portland is of course a prison with a mixed population and its scores in the MQPL survey (November 2015) reflected this and therefore fell in the average range. However, in relation to decency we note that it reports that “perceptions at Portland were notably more negative than the typical training prison... regarding their ability to keep themselves and their living areas clean and decent, as well as the living conditions in the prison being poor... Prisoners... on Beaufort.. appreciated the modern living conditions and in-cell shower facilities”.

- 5.8.5 The survey also cited “difficulty in accessing visits... a consequence of living a considerable distance from home. Perceptions regarding telephone access... and being able to stay on the phone long enough (Family Contact) were notably more positive in November 2015 than in January 2013”.
- 5.8.6 Periods of non-functioning of dryers have led to long spells when drying clothes were draped over railings on the wings - staff reported that they considered this a decency matter
- 5.8.7 Staff have reported, at various times of the year, difficulties in providing “the basics” - basic equipment on wings e.g. kettles, TVs, bedding. Kettles are particularly vulnerable to being damaged and there was also a spate of adjudications on this with not guilty pleas suggesting there should be a cell audit signed by the prisoner.
- 5.8.8 There has been an improvement in the handling of prisoners’ property within Portland, with fewer applications to the IMB on this matter, to the credit of Reception staff. However applications concerning property transferring between prisons remains high, the highest cause of applications to the IMB in the reporting period.

5.9 Security

- 5.9.1 Prison security has been constantly challenged by the ingress of non-permitted items: substances, mobile phones, chargers, SIM cards. They have been introduced into the prison in increasing quantities and value. Finds are frequent: during the reporting period there were 26 finds of drugs and associated paraphernalia (down from 37 last year); 62 finds of mobile phones, SIM cards etc (up from 27 last year); 11 finds of “hooch” (no comparator) and 3 finds of weapons (no comparator). In addition there were 10 finds of parcels that had come over the prison walls, all of which contained a combination of substances and mobile phone equipment. Intelligence confirms, however, these figures by no means represent the sum total of what comes in. Peaks were reported in December 2015 which coincided with a rise in “hooch” production. This is all extremely destabilising to the establishment.
- 5.9.2 The use of non-permitted substances produced a rise in the incidences of unpredictable or uncharacteristic violence and for the need for outside medical treatment (either by paramedic attendance or trips to hospital, sometimes with overnight stays).
- 5.9.3 There was a review of arrangements to safeguard key integrity after a security breach necessitated costly replacements.
- 5.9.4 Towards the end of the reporting period the hitherto failing and inadequate surveillance camera system received a partial overhaul. A further bid is being compiled for further improvements.
- 5.9.5 Threats to the regime and good order by emerging or known “complex” prisoners are now discussed in Security and in the Complex Offenders Forum. Disruption of detrimental practices is put in place. Recategorisation to B is rare but 32 prisoners were recategorised and transferred to other prisons as a result of serious incidents of concerted disorder at the end of the reporting year.
- 5.9.6 The MQPL survey notes that in respect of security, on average prisoners had notably more negative perceptions than in January 2013.

SECTION 6

6.1 Board Statistics:

During the reporting period 4 members left the IMB board, and 3 joined. The board has 12 members currently, of an allowed 17.

Individual members visited the prison on 278 occasions, not including board meetings.

6.2 Applications statistics

Code	Subject	2013	2014	2015	2016
A	Accommodation	1	6	14	19
B	Adjudications	5	4	6	5
C	Equality & Diversity (inc religion)	0	3	15	6
D	Education/employment/training inc IEP	31	24	43	14
E 1	Family/visits inc mail & phone	5	28	19	13
E 2	Finance/pay	2	11	15	11
F	Food/kitchen related	1	6	19	16
G	Health related	9	36	47	50
H 1	Property (within current establishment)	10	14	47	27
H 2	Property (during transfer/in another establishment)	7	39	61	60
H 3	Canteen, facilities, Catalogue shopping, Argos	1	3	17	13
I	Sentence related (inc. HDC, ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc)	14	33	66	44
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee concerns inc bullying	9	24	33	19
K	Transfers	28	42	50	27
L	Miscellaneous	32	22	37	23
	Total number of IMB applications	155	277	489	347
	Of total: Confidential Access	25		6	

GLOSSARY

ACCT	Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
B&ME	Black and Minority Ethnic
C&R	Control & Restraint
CSCS	Construction Skills Certificate Scheme
CSU	Control and Segregation Unit
DNA	Did Not Attend
GRT	Gypsy Romany Traveller
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
IEP	Incentives and Earned Privileges (Basic, Standard or Enhanced)
IMB	Independent Monitoring Board
IRC	Immigration Removal Centre
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MQPL	Monitoring the Quality of Prison Life (Survey carried out 11/2015)
NPS	New Psychoactive Substances
OASys	Offender Assessment System
OMU	Offender Management Unit
OP	Own Protection
PACT	Prison Advice and Care Trust
ROTL	Release on Temporary Licence
RR	Rota Report
SC	Safer Custody
SCT	Safer Custody Team
SMT	Senior Management Team
YO	Young Offender
YOI	Young Offender Institution