****

**Current Urgent Issues Raised with IPRT by Prisoners and Others  
[Issues for possible Dáil Questions or Motions]**

1. **Prisoner Privacy**

In light of a recent court case, where prisoner correspondence was found to have been leaked to a national newspaper, what steps have been taken to investigate breaches of prisoner privacy and to ensure against future breaches?

1. **Protection Prisoners**

* How many prisoners are on protection in each prison? How many of these prisoners are locked up for 23 hours or more; for 22 to 23 hours; for 20 to 22 hours; for 18 to 20 hours in a normal day?
* For how long are prisoners being held on 23-hour lock up regime? (What is the longest period; what limits, if any, are there on the period for which a prisoner can be held on 23-hour lock up?)

1. **Slopping Out**

* How many prisoners are still slopping out; and how many of these prisoners are in shared cells? How many prisoners have to use the toilet in the presence of other prisoners?

1. **Prisoner Healthcare**

* What number of children and adults (and duration of time) were held in special observation cells in 2011? What was the maximum length of time a child/adult was held in a special observation cell?
* What policies are in place with regard to prescription drugs in each prison? What number of prisoners are being prescribed benzodiazepines per prison? Are some medicines not available to prisoner patients under the current model for delivery of medical service?
* How many prisoners are on waiting lists for drug treatment services (counselling services) in each prison? How does the prison service ensure continuity of care for drug-using prisoners?
* What is the number of prisoners with long-term illnesses in prison?
* Are qualified medical staff available in all prisons at all times?
* With regard to dental care, where a prisoner requires treatment beyond the cost limit set by the HSE, what options are available to that patient?
* What policies are in place to ensure that the needs of prisoners with special dietary requirements (e.g. diabetics) are met?

1. **Prisoner Deaths**

How many deaths in custody occurred in 2011; in the first six months of 2012? What is the breakdown of the types of deaths in custody in each prison.

1. **Women Prisoners**

* How many women are currently in prison custody? How many of those women are: on remand; serving a sentence of less than one year?
* What plans are in place for developing alternatives to prison for women offenders?

1. **Transfers**

* How many transfers were effected within the prison system last year? How many of these were involuntary, and in what circumstances can involuntary transfer take place?
* What was the highest number of transfers for an individual prisoner during sentence or in a year? How many prisoners were transferred more than five times; more than ten times?
* Are seat belts routinely provided to prisoners during transfers? What safety measures are in place to ensure prisoner safety during transport?

1. **Imprisonment for Fine Default**

* How many people were imprisoned for fine default in 2011; in the first six months of 2012?
* Can the Minister give any commitment on the date by which the Courts ICT system will be in place to allow the full commencement of the Fines Act?

1. **Prisoner Gratuity**

Given the proposed reduction in the standard prisoner gratuity, what steps are being put in place to ensure that no prisoner is exposed to undue hardship, particularly when that prisoner does not have family or other external financial support?

1. **Visits**

* How many prisoners had family visits withdrawn as punishment in 2011?
* How many visitors were excluded from visits or offered a screened visit in 2011? What current procedures are in place for families to make a complaint about visits and/or to challenge the refusal of a visit?
* Do officers receive any specialist training with regard to family visits?

1. **Prisoner Complaints**

* How many complaints were made by prisoners in each prison last year? How many were upheld? How many were appealed? What was the subject matter of those complaints?
* What training is provided to staff in how to support prisoners making a complaint?

1. **Minority Prisoners**

* Foreign national prisoners have complained that they are not allowed to write or telephone family members in languages other than English. How can such a policy be reconciled with the right to respect for family life of those prisoners?
* What level of access to religious services is provided in each prison?

1. **Children and Families of Prisoners**

* The number of children who have a parent in prison? What policies are in place to facilitate the child-parent relationship? Are parenting courses available in every prison? How many avail of these courses in each prison?
* What procedures are in place to ensure that families are informed of the transfer of their family member?