

IRISH PRISONS INSPECTORATE

CORK PRISON

**CORK PRISON INSPECTION:
13TH - 17TH SEPTEMBER 2004**

Role of the Irish Inspector of

Prisons and Places of Detention

The Office of the Inspector was established by an order signed by the Minister for Justice Equality and Law Reform on the 21st February 2002. There is a statutory provision in the forthcoming Prisons Authority Bill for the establishment of a Prisons Inspectorate. The following are the terms of reference for the Inspector of Prisons and Places of Detention.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

To -

- (a) Inspect and report, as the Inspector considers appropriate, to the Minister on prisons and places of detention under the aegis of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.
- (b) Report in particular on conditions in those institutions and on the regimes in place for prisoners and detainees.
- (c) Investigate and report on any specific issue referred to the Inspectorate by the Minister.
- (d) Submit to the Minister an Annual Report on the activities of the Inspectorate.

GUIDELINES:

In carrying out an inspection of any prison or place of detention the Inspector will, in general terms, have regard to such matters as:

- (a) the quality of the regime;
- (b) the attitude of staff and inmates
- (c) health, safety and well-being of prisoners
- (d) the conditions of the buildings
- (e) questions of humanity and propriety;
- (f) any general pattern which may indicate possible inadequacies in the management of the prison

As the terms of reference provide, the Minister may also request the Inspector to investigate and report on specific issues or incidents connected with the running of any prison or place of detention. Furthermore, the Inspector may raise issues of concern, arising out of an investigation or an inspection, either with local

management, the Director General of the Prisons or the Minister. To facilitate the Inspector in carrying out his functions, he may consider complaints from prisoners but only to the extent that such complaints are relevant to the functions of the Inspector. The Inspector will, not later than four months following the end of each calendar year, submit a written report to the Minister on his activities during the year.

It is intended that the annual report will be published. The Inspector will also furnish the Minister with such information relating to his activities as the Minister may require from time to time.

The functions outlined above will also apply to any child detention centres and remand centres designated by the Minister under Section 150 of the Children Act, 2001.

These terms of reference may be further refined in the forthcoming Prisons Bill in the light of the experience gained in the interim. The Inspector will also be entitled to report and make recommendations, in the light of experience gained, on the contents of the legislation which will eventually make statutory provision for the Prisons Inspectorate.

Any enquires or comments about the inspectorate should be directed in the first instance to:

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REPORT ON VISIT TO CORK PRISON

COMMENCING THE 13th SEPTEMBER TO 19th SEPTEMBER 2004

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 On the 13th September 2004 to the 17th September 2004 an inspection of Cork Prison was carried out by the Inspectorate Team which consisted of:

Mr. Justice Dermot Kinlen	Inspector of Prisons and Places of Detention
James Woods	Special Advisor to the Inspector
Dr. Jim Ledwith	Consultant
Prof. Caroline Fennell	Consultant

1.2 The purpose of inspection is to identify issues and take note of any areas of concern or good practice which may pertain.

Date: Mr. Justice Dermot Kinlen
Inspector of Prisons and Places of
Detention

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 A new military barracks for Cork City which included a prison was built by the British and opened in 1806. It is located on Rathmore Road. The detention barracks or prison was a standard type of military prison as built by the British Government during the course of the 19th century. It remained as a British army barracks and prison until May 1922 when it was taken over by the Irish Government of the day. It was renamed Collins Barracks. The Irish Army occupied the barracks and prison until the control of the prison was transferred to the Department of Justice in 1972. It then became a civil prison.

The prison had fallen into a bad state of repair and when it became a civilian prison a lot of refurbishment work had to be carried out to it to bring it up to an acceptable level of accommodation for prisoners. Some of this work was carried out by work parties of prisoners transferred from other prisons under the supervision of prison trades officers. Outside contractors were also used for some of the refurbishment work. It opened as a committal prison in 1983. It took prisoners from courts in counties Cork, Kerry and Waterford. It also took prisoners on transfer from other prisons.

A further cell block known as "C" wing comprising of three floors was added to the prison which was opened in 1987. The two upper floors of this cell block are used for protection prisoners at present while the ground floor accommodates ordinary prisoners.

Another separate cell block known as "D" unit was added and it comprises of two floor levels. It is separate from the other sections of the prison and is used to accommodate disruptive prisoners most of whom are transferred there from other prisons. It was opened in 1990.

The design capacity of the prison was to accommodate 150 prisoners in mostly single cells. However, with the introduction of bunk beds into single cells and turning single cells into multiples by removing the adjoining wall to the next cell, the capacity increased dramatically with the average number of prisoners in custody during 2003 being 268.

3. GOVERNORS BRIEFING

3.1 The Governor welcomed the inspectorate team consisting of the Inspector and his special advisor Jim Woods. The Governor invited all the "heads of service" /his management team working within the prison to the office where each identified themselves and gave a brief outline of work they were involved in within the prison.

The Inspector then spoke to the entire group outlining the role of the inspector, history of the office of inspector, brief report on his work to date, his prison experiences, his reports on individual prisons inspected and his annual reports to the Minister. The inspector concluded with the group by outlining that he would be meeting them individually during the course of the week as part of his inspection.

3.2 The Governor stated that he had 253 in custody on that day with 26 on temporary release and 2 were in-patients in an outside hospital which was an overall total of 281 prisoners. He outlined that overcrowding in the prison was a big problem and there was no in-cell sanitation except in the "D" unit. But, despite the poor conditions for prisoners, very few were seeking transfers as they were mostly from the Munster Region and wished to stay there for the sake of their visits. They were near to their families and wished to keep that contact.

He outlined that they intend to drop the overall numbers by reducing the 6 person cells to 2 x 2 person cells for humane and security reasons. Their daily average at present in custody is 269 and the courts have not yet begun after the summer recess. It is the committal prison for courts situated in counties Cork, Kerry and Waterford.

3.3 A big problem he has is in the prevention of illegal drugs getting into the prison. They have netting placed over the large exercise yard which has been damaged over the years so a second netting is now in place over same. The exercise yard is very accessible to the public as the boundary wall is also part of the exercise yard wall. So if articles are thrown over the wall they land directly into the yard thus the need for netting. They have also experienced members of the public driving up to the wall in a vehicle, taking out a ladder, placing it against the wall and then throwing articles from the ladder into the yard.

The prison operates a drug free policy as far as it is physically possible and they claim that it is 95% successful in this regard. There is very strict supervision of visits and the table top in the visiting area is extended wider than the norm in other prisons. There is a policy of no contact between visitors and prisoners. However, despite their best efforts, they continuously find drugs concealed in clothing being left in for prisoners, in paper bags with parcels, in magazines and newspapers.

3.4 The lack of additional exercise yards was another problem highlighted as the yard intended for use solely for remand prisoners is now being used to exercise the protection prisoners. The large yard has now to cater for all the ordinary sentenced plus remand prisoners which means there could be up to 230 prisoners in the yard at any one time. This is a very large number from a security viewpoint and is a cause of concern to management.

3.5 The Governor outlined that he had not got sufficient work for all the prison population resulting in prisoners having to go out to the exercise yard each day. They were in the process of setting up two new workshops, a printing shop and an industrial cleaning shop. The shops that are working are performing very well. They also do charity work within them for special schools outside the prison. A different charity is selected each year.

3.6 He said that he had some difficulties with gaining accommodation for prisoners on release, however the situation is improving and with the support of the probation and welfare service and the teachers they have now secured several links

into community schemes and projects which will improve the situation for the released prisoners.

3.7 Regarding staff training he said that 95% of staff received full refresher training in breathing apparatus equipment but that no other training has taken place. He praised the medical services being provided by the doctor and the psychiatrist. He said he was fortunate to have a full time psychologist attached to the prison who gave a great service to the prisoners.

3.8 The Inspector asked about future plans for the prison and the Governor outlined that the Minister announced that the prison is to close and its to be replaced with a new one on Spike Island. The new prison is to accommodate 800 and have facilities for juveniles, female and adult male prisoners. He was then asked re the present prison and the wall which has been built around the open space area to which the Governor replied that it may be sold but was not informed. The plans, the drawings and the new boundary wall has already cost approx 5.5 million but he stressed that figure included "Consultants fees".

3.9 Business Plans for Cork Prison for years 2001 to 2003

The Inspectorate then proceeded to go through a summary of the business plans for the prison for 2001 to 2003 with the Deputy Governor and herewith are the findings of the summary

Summary of the business plans for Cork Prison 2001 to 2003.

2. Ensure safe custody of prisoners.

2:1. Devise standard arrangements for recording assaults in the prisoner population.

1. Review report of the National working party within 2 months of delivery.

Result; Completed

3. Adopt a manual system of recording assaults until a recognised national data base is in place within 2 months of delivery of report.

Result: Completed

4. Communicate system to staff & train users the system.

Result: Not done. Outside of prison's control. Matter for Headquarters.

5. Implement the system by end 2003.

Result: Not done. Outside of prison's control. Matter for Headquarters.

2:2. Conduct annual audits of prisoner assaults w.e.from 2003 & implement whatever action is appropriate to address the situation.

1.& 2. Agree terms of audit & record info according to new standard arrangements w.e.f. 3 months from delivery of national report.

Result: Not done dependent on 2:1 4 & 5 from Headquarters.

3,4,5, Review info gathered, conduct annual audit by DEC 2003.

Result: Not done as above

6.& 7. Review recommendations & implement appropriate recommendations by February 2004.

Result: Not done

3. Provide appropriately secure custody for prisoners.

3:1. Review of security.

1.Convene 6 security meetings throughout the year of 2003.

Result: Yes done

3. Review security of prison, make recommendations & implement same by December 2003.

Result: Yes done

- 3:3. Review all C.C.T.V installations in the prison by the end of 2003.

1,2,3,4. Place c.c.t.v. In visiting area, review system in place, identify requirements, obtain sanction & approval by May 2003.

Result. Done

5 & 6. Appoint a contractor to carry out work & retrain the staff by the end of 2003.

Result: Done

- 3:4. Use the prisoner record information system to generate a prisoner profile in respect of each prisoner due to be escorted outside the prison during 2003.

1,2. Review profile module of PRIS, agree guidelines for generation of profile and provide training for users.

Result: Yes Done

3,&4.Arrange resources to input info & update records as required with info provided by staff on returned profiles by end 2003.

Result: Yes Done

4. Manage the custodial function so that it supports positive prison regimes.

4. Make provision in business plan for the maximum take-up of places in training and employment facilities of the prison.

4.1.1. 1,2,Head teacher to review rate of participation in educ each quarter & identify initiatives / actions to improve take up.

Result: Complete

3,4,5,6, Provide educ for those on protection,for those in the D-unit, encourage self study, provide material for cell work and acknowledge & encourage participation by accreditation & acclamation.

Result: Complete

4. 1.2. Manage the custodial function so that it supports positive prison regime.

4;1.2.1. Establish present rate of offender participation in work & training in relation to number of places available by Jan 2003.

Result: Complete as far as possible. All of the workshops are not work/training

2,Interview each offender on committal & assign to appropriate work areas by Ind Manager.

Result: Being done by Industrial Manager if work available.

3,4,Review manufacturing activities & make appropriate recommendations to Gov. to implement change if necessary.

Result: Complete

5,&6.Implement any change necessary & provide reports of offenders progress and behaviour as required by Sept 2003.

Result:Yes if required reports on request only.

5. Plan to meet emergency situation.(Fire, hostage-taking, riot.)

5:1. Business plans (Dec2003) to provide for maintaining an adequate standard of preparedness in relation to emergency planning at the prison.

1. Conduct review of existing fire plan, riot plan, hostage taking plan plus fire, riot, hostage equipment by July 2003.

Result: Done

2,3, Produce a report and recommendations to Gov and implement recommendations as approved by Gov by Nov 2003.

Result: Complete

4,5,6. Review staff's training needs, produce report on same with recommendations to Gov, implement approved training needs by end of 2003.

Result: Yes. Completed a number of training courses but not all.

5.2. Review arrangements with fire authorities by the end of 2003.

1.&2. Meet with local Chief Fire Officer re liaison arrangements with the fire authority and convene post meeting review by April 2003.

Result: Yes done and fire personnel in prison for familiarisation purposes.

3. Confirm procedures with Ch Fire Officer by July 2003.

Result: Yes done

5.3. Prepare a detailed video record of each prison by December 2003 for use in the management of an emergency situation.

1,2,3. The Dept of Justice to select team to do the filming, agree brief for filming of prison & content and on site by October 2003.

Result: Not complete. Not done by Department but done locally

4 & 5. Edit video & storage secure on site by Dec 2003.

Result: Not done by department but local one done

6. Provide for the personal well-being of prisoners.

6:1. Ensure Cork Prison continues to be relatively drug free.

1. Retain the full time drug & alcohol counsellors.

Result: Yes retained

2, Provide medical treatment & care to all offenders suffering addiction.

Result: Yes as far as possible

3,4, Maintain the netting over the yards, ensure c.c.t.v. cameras in visiting area and throughout the prison provide high quality recordings.

Result: Yes Done

5,6,7, Continue policy of no contact on visits, continue to launder prisoners' personal clothing in prison and ensure that staff are vigilant on visits, at courts, on escorts and at reception.

Result: Yes being done

8 & 9. Staff report all offenders endeavouring to procure or use prohibited substance and Governor to deal with all reported misconduct in accordance with the rules.

Result: Yes continuing

6:2. Multidisciplinary suicide prevention group at prison to meet quarterly to implement suicide prevention measures and a representative to participate in an annual forum re info sharing.

1,2,Continue to convene quarterly multidisciplinary meetings to review current & new suicide prevention measures & implement recommendations as appropriate of the National suicide steering group.

Result: Done

3,4. Convene special meeting of committee in the event of a suicide or serious attempt, and implement recommendations when approved.

Result: Done

5.Ensure representative from local suicide awareness committee attend the national suicide awareness forum.

Result: None held by Headquarters

7. Help prisoners maintain their relationship with family & the community.

7:4. Ensure all prisoners keep in touch with the wider community through improved access to the written and spoken media.

1,2,Review procedures in place that allow offenders to keep in touch with the wider community & make recommendations if necessary.

Result: Yes reviewed

5. Provide all offenders with phone card not later than 24 hours after committal to the prison.

Result: Being done

6,7, Facilitate offenders who wish to purchase t.v.s & radios and provide battery charges free of charge to all offenders.

Result: Complete but not relevant now

8,9. Facilitate offenders who wish to purchase daily newspapers & periodicals and provide radios to offenders who are not in a position to procure radios for themselves.

Result: Yes done

8. Ensure medical & psychiatric care for prisoners is to a standard consistent with that which applies in the community generally.

8.1. Implement all accepted recommendations, subject to resources, contained in the report of the Prisoner Health Care Review Group by end of 2003.

1,2,3. Health Care Committee to remain in place, refresh review of report, & review recommendations that may be implemented in Cork Prison.

Result: Done

- 4,5. Approve appropriate recommendations and implement the recommendations by the end of June 2003.

Result: Done

- 8:4. Improve the necessary links with the wider community to ensure continuation of medical treatment for prisoners at the times of committal and discharge.

1.Review current links with the wider community in respect of medical treatment for prisoners at times of committal & discharge.

Result: Complete

2,3, Continue present procedure for prisoners with medical problems at committal & discharge stages and identify particular offenders in this category & tag the offenders file accordingly.

Result: Still operating

4,5.Notify the medical staff 2 weeks prior to discharge of any prisoner so identified & obtain the co-operation and consent of the particular offenders concerned.

Result: Yes being done

11. Elaborate positive sentence management.

11.3 Maintain the prisoner participation rate in education at 50% against the background of increases in the prisoner population

1,2,3.Establish current levels of attendance, keep attendance records and continue with the procedure of filling educ places.

Result: Yes completely by head teacher

4.&5.Check school enrolment against prison releases and interview all new committals for educ programme.

Result: Completed and ongoing by head teacher

6 & 7.Continue with evening educ classes and enlist assistance of all other service providers within the prison in marketing education.

Result:Complete and ongoing

8.Annual report incl. exams entries to Co-ordinator of Education, V.E.C. And to the Governor.

Result: Done

11:5. Extend parenting courses, which currently run in about half of the prisons, to all prisons where they are appropriate.

1. Provide parenting classes to meet current & future demand and present certificates on completion.

Result: Yes done

2 &3. Review course & implement appropriate changes.

Result: Yes done

11:6. Implement the recommendations of the report of the physical education development group.

1 & 2. The gym committee to remain in place & produce physical development /sport education plan for Cork prison for 2003 within the guidelines of the report of the physical educ group.

Result: Yes complete

3 &4. Approval of Governor, and Implementation of physical development / sport educ plan by March 2003.

Result: Yes done

11:8. Implement accepted recommendations of the prison based drug treatment review group by the end of 2003.

1,2. Local drug action team to continue, and to review and to access the recommendations of the National Drug Treatment review group.

Result: No report issued

3,4,5, Make recommendations on actions for the prison, review & approve appropriate recommendations and implement approved actions by end of December 2003.

Result: Not applicable as above

12. Develop and maintain activity programmes for prisoners.

12:1. Review and upgrade library services by end of 2003.

1,2,3, Library committee to review library services in the prison and make recommendations for change if necessary.

Result: Done

4,&5, Review & approve recommendations & implement same.

Result: Done

12:2. Make provision in the business plans for a programme of interaction with the wider community.

1,2,3,4,Continue to facilitate all outside agencies who are presently visiting / working / facilitating the prison such as Samaritan Yes No. The St Vincent de Paul Yes No Gamblers anonymous Yes No. Dillons Cross project Yes No . Northside Community Enterprises Yes No The Bridge Co-op Yes No. The Intensive Supervision Scheme Yes No. Churchfield Youth Community Trust. Yes No.

7. Identify any other potential interaction with the wider community by the end of March 2003.

Result: Yes got local community welfare officer as result

13. Address offending behaviour.

13:1. The prison to deliver at least one multidisciplinary prisoner programme per year addressing offending behaviour relevant to its own prisoner population with effect from 2003 onwards.

1.&2. Maintain current level of thinking skills course, delivering programmes in the prison twice per year by multidisciplinary team, and review same by the end of 2003.

Result: Done

Agree programme for year 2004.

Result: Done

14. Evaluate effectiveness of prisoner programmes. (WORK / Training)

14:1. Evaluate the effectiveness of all prisoner programmes by end of 2003.

1&2. Establish evaluation criteria and review the current work & training programmes so that offenders can be purposefully employed during their sentences and make appropriate recommendations.

Result: Done as far as possible and in the process of setting up two work training workshops

3 & 4. Approval of recommendations & implementation of same by the end of 2003.

Result: Partly done some being carried over 2004/5

14.1. Evaluate the effectiveness of all prisoner programmes. (EDUCATION)

1,2.Outline courses & programmes on offer and establish criteria to measure effectiveness of the programmes by Feb. 2003.

Result: Done by Head Teacher

3,4,5,Assess effectiveness of all programmes, review & approve appropriate recommendations and implement same by April 2003.

Result: Done by education staff

6,7,8. Ensure accreditation at all levels where feasible, monitor provisions to enable course change if necessary and evaluate the effectiveness of all the programmes by end of DEC 2003.

Result: Done by education unit staff

14:2. Evaluate effectiveness of prisoner programmes.

14:2. Ensure that at least 50% of work training courses are pursued to recognised certification levels by the end of 2003.

1. Establish the current work / training programmes that can be certified by the end of January 2003.

Result: Done but starting from zero base as no such training was ever conducted in Cork Prison.

2. Train 7 prisoners to E.C.D.L. Standard by DEC 2003.

Result: Done

3. Train 20 prisoners to equal skills standard by DEC 2003.

Result: Done

28. Implement the strategic Management Initiative in the Prison Service.

28:1. Prepare by Feb. 2003, business plans for prison & for headquarters directorate.

Result: Done and being implemented

Specific to Cork Prison

C.P1 Chaplain.

Provide religious services, sacraments and spiritual counselling to all denominations .

Result: Done, two masses on Saturdays and one on Sundays

C.P.2. Recreation.

Provide outdoor recreation during reserve period throughout the winter months.

Result: Yes done (choice of yard or recreation hall)

C.P.3. Work/Local Community

Complete one external project in the local community each year

Result: Yes Local school - new kitchen fitted

C.P.4. Information/Entitlement

Issue information booklet to all committals at reception

Result: Yes done

C.P.5 Maintenance (painting)

Paint the main cell block each year

Result: Yes done and ongoing

C.P.6. Catering

Ensure all kitchen staff/offenders are certified in the handling and safe use of chemicals

Result: Yes done and has accreditation for same

C.P.7 Addiction Counsellors

Provide full time qualified Addiction Counsellors

Result: Yes two attend weekly

C.P.8 Probation and Welfare

Interview all prisoners promptly and act as a link between them, their families and the wider community

Result: Yes being done

C.P.9 Crime Prevention

Divert young people away from criminal activity by facilitating the Prison Encounter Scheme

Result: Yes visiting group visit the prison regularly

C.P.10 Services to prisoners

Provide a post release services co-ordinator

Result: Yes done and work on going

C.P11 Transitional housing

Provide temporary housing for homeless prisoners on discharge

Result: Yes 3 flats secured in Cork City.

4. **STATISTICS** *as of the 3rd August 2004 (prior to date of inspection)*

4.1 *Age Groups*

0 - 20 year olds:	36
21 - 30	128
31 - 40	61
41 - 50	23
51 - 60	11
61 - 70	<u>1</u>
	260

4.2 Sentences:

Up to 6 months	40
7 to 11	28
1 to 2 years	67
2+ to 5 years	70
5+ to 8 years	22
8+ to 10 years	2
10+	5
Lifers	6
For trial/remands	<u>20</u>
	260

4.3 Offences:

Crimes against the person (Assault, Robbery etc)	80
Crimes against property (Criminal Damage, Car Theft etc)	46
Drug Offences	41
Sex Offences	15
Larceny/Theft	15
Road Traffic Offences	15
Burglary	11
Arson	9
Murder	8
Manslaughter	5
Fraud	4
Handle stolen property	4

Public Order Offences	3
Breach of Court Orders	2
Family Law	1
Escape Lawful Custody	<u>1</u>
	260

4.4 *Non Nationals*

England	4
Romania	3
South Africa	3
Scotland	3
Lithuania	2
Northern Ireland	2
Wales	1
Estonia	1
Sierra Leone	1

4.5 *Staffing (By grade)*

Governor	-	1
Deputy Governor	-	1
Assistant Governor	-	2
Clerk 1	-	2
Clerk 2	-	7
Chief Officer 1	-	1

Chief Officer 2	-	2
Assistant Chief Officer	-	17
Assistant Chief Officer (Detail)	-	2
Assistant Chief Officer (Liaison)	-	1
Industrial Manager	-	1
Industrial Supervisors	-	3
Assistant Industrial Supervisors (incl. 4 temporary A.I.S)	-	13
Chief Trades Officer	-	1
Trades Officers	-	6
Basis Grade Prison Officers (16 of which are job-sharing)	-	<u>212</u>
Total	-	272 (<i>which includes 47 staff on temp transfer from Fort Mitchel</i>)

5. TOUR OF INSPECTION

5.1 Cellular Accommodation

The cell accommodation consists of 3 wings know as A. B and C that contains 3 landings within each wing plus a separation unit know as "D" unit that contains two landings. The "A" and "B" wings are directly opposite each other and are joined in the middle by an area known as the circle the "C" wing is an annex to the A & B wings. The lay out of the cells, toilets, wash and "slop out" areas of both "A" & "B" wings are identical to each other. The cells are quite small and all of them have a double (bunk) bed fitted with some others having the dividing wall between the cells removed and fitted with 2 or 3 bunk beds. The cells that are doubled are quite small for two persons and are unsuitable

for double occupancy. The cells with 4 or 6 persons in them are also too small for such numbers. There is insufficient cell furniture such as tables and chairs for all of the occupiers of the large cells, resulting in some of them having to sit on their bed and eat their meals off a tray. The lack of in-cell sanitation is another major problem. The fact that they have to use a chamber pot in the presence of the other cell occupiers without any type of screen or viewing barrier is most degrading. The ventilation within the cells is provided by a small window of which only a small section can open that leads to further discomfort when the chamber pots are used.

5.2 A1

This landing has 12 single cells which are doubled and a bunk bed fitted to all of them plus one cell with 3 bunk beds fitted and 6 prisoners occupying it. The cells were reasonably clean and tidy and all had a t.v installed. Some had other accessories such as playstations. Poster attached to the walls and flags attached to the ceilings and walls were a common feature in a lot of them. A lot of the cells had the windows covered resulting in the cells being quite dark.

The toilet and area just off the landing was tiled and contained 3 urinals, 2 toilets, 2 wash hand basins and no hand drying facility. Some of the tiles on the wall were stained. There is a "slop out" area at the end of the landing which contains 2 large bowls and a slop hopper. This area is tiled and was clean.

There is a class officers office at the end of the landing which contains a computer. This office is used by both the A1 and B1 class officers. The

records contained on computer consist of class role and names of the prisoners occupying the particular cells, release dates of the prisoners, photograph of the prisoners, cell numbers, etc.

There is a mop, bucket, cleansing material, etc stored in a small area just off the landing.

5.3 A2

There are 12 single cells doubled and one six persons cell on this landing.

The lay out is similar to A1 with the class office being shared by both A2 and B2 class officers. There was a toilet seat missing from one of the toilets. The cells were again reasonably clean and tidy.

5.4 A3

This landing contained 14 single cells doubled and one six person cell. Again lay out the same as described on A1. Class officers office shared with the B3 class officer. The cells were acceptably clean and reasonably tidy. The slop out area was clean and tidy but the toilet/ wash area was shabby with some tiles cracked and paint flaking on the walls.

5.5 B1

This landing holds mostly remand prisoners. It consists 2 x 6 persons cells, 7 x 2 persons cells, 1 "committal" 6 person cell and 2 single "holding" cells.

One of the "holding cells" had a forum type seat attached to the wall and floor and was used for placing prisoner there awaiting going out to court. It is used

on occasions (if empty) for placing prisoners there who were fighting and for them to "cool off". The window is covered with steel mesh and there are no table or chairs in it. This cell does not have a t.v.

The 2nd holding cell is fitted with a steel framed bed attached to the floor and mattress. It is used for someone on special observation or for a sex offender awaiting to go to court. The window is covered with a steel mesh sheeting and there is no table, t.v or chair provided.

The 6 person "committal" cell consisted of 3 bunk beds. There were no tables or chairs provided. I was informed that the prisoners held there are only there overnight and moved the next morning. They are newly into the prison and are kept on special observations, it being their first night in prison.

The other 2 person cells were fairly clean and reasonably tidy.

The landing was laid out like A division as already described with tiled area off it, in which toilets, wash hand basins, urinals were located and tiled slop out area at other end. These were hygienically clean and tidy.

5.6 *Tuck Shop*

The tuck shop is located in converted cell on B1 landing with storage facilities on an upstairs landings. It is very small with counter across just at the entrance. It has a computer installed which displays the cash and gratuity accounts of the prisoners. The officer in charge also gets a print out of their accounts from the general office each morning. This appears to be duplication of work. The shop stocks cigarettes, tobacco, sweets, biscuits, cereals, multi vitamins, birthday cards, tuna tins, toiletries, batteries, newspapers and magazines if ordered. They can also send flowers through

interflora by arrangement with the officer in charge. The prices are at the recommended retail price by the wholesaler but purchases outside of the wholesaler are at the cost purchased. The officer stated that the prices are better than the normal corner shop or small supermarket and equal to a large supermarket. This is strongly disputed by prisoners. [The Governor presented us with receipts from two local small supermarkets of the sample price of some of the most popular items sold in the tuck shop as of 8th November 2004. The similar items were sold much cheaper in the tuck shop.]

5.7 *B2*

This landing contained 12 single cells doubled with bunk beds fitted to each plus 3 x 4 person cells with 2 bunk beds in each. It is the same lay out as A division with tiled wash/toilet area off landing and tiled "slop out" area at the end of landing. The toilet seats were missing off the toilet bowls. The areas were clean and tidy with the usual posters and flags being prominently displayed. There was an officer with a number of prisoners painting the landing at the time of the inspection.

5.8 *Detail office*

The detail office is situated off B2 landing and had 3 staff working in it, one of whom stated he was "on loan" from Fort Mitchel. They told me they were quite satisfied with the computers and with the programmes within them. However, I feel the computers could be programmed to a greater extent so that they would produce warnings relating to sick leave, calculate annual and special leave, etc. The recording of clocking in /out of staff coming and going

off duty is another area that the computers could play a vital role. An office off the main detail office contains the C.P.U units and the gate recording systems.

5.9 *B3*

There are 14 single cells doubled and one six person cell on this landings. It is the same lay out as A division with slop out area at the end which is tiled and was clean. The toilets had no seats on the bowls and the frame holding the wash hand basins was damaged. Some of the tiles on the wall were broken. The overall hygiene of the toilet/wash area could be improved. The cells were reasonably clean and tidy.

5.10 *Office/Interview room off circle*

This is an all-purpose room where the Governor, the Probation and Welfare officer, the chaplain, meet prisoners as well as it being used as a professional visiting room for solicitors. It is quite small and can only be used by one person at a time. It is quite drab and could be improved with fresh bright coloured paint and modern furniture. It has a small well worn desk and a well worn chair within it.

Just off this room is located the night guard's room which has control panels on the wall displaying alarm system. It has a desk and chairs and like the adjacent room, could be improved by painting it with bright coloured paint.

5.11 *ACO's Office*

This office is operational 24 hours per day and contains prisoners' records on computer as well as record of prisoners' visits, etc. It also has a night property safe as well as other safes to hold the security equipment and articles of a security nature for the prison.

5.12 *C1*

The cells in the "C" wing are bigger, newer and fresher than those on "A" or "B" divisions. C1 contains 16 single cells doubled with bunk beds in each. It is divided off from C2 by a steel screed mesh and ordinary sentenced prisoners are held there. C2 and C3 hold "protection prisoners". There is a telephone for prisoners use at the end of each of the 3 landings.

The C1 landing is also used as a recreation area for the prisoners on that landing. The slop out areas and the toilets/wash hand basins are situated off the landing at the end of the wing. There are some toilet seats missing off the toilet bowls and the areas are partly tiled. They were clean as were the cells.

5.13 *C2*

This landing had a total of 29 prisoners. One of the cells was converted into a class office which was fitted out with a computer that recorded names of those prisoners on the landings as well as their discharge dates, etc. The slop out area and toilets were at the end of the landing and one of the toilet seats was missing off the toilet bowl. The areas were partly tiled. There are 3 showers on this landing which are tiled and clean with non slip mats fitted. The cells were clean and tidy with the usual posters on display on the walls.

5.14 C3

There are 16 cells all with bunk beds on this landing with one cell converted into a class officer's office. The landing is also used as a gym area and when not in use the gym equipment is stored away just off the landing. The rest of the landing is also used for recreation. So space for recreation and gym work is very sparse. The toilet areas are partly tiled and were clean and tidy.

There are 3 showers which had white rock covering the walls and non slip matting on the floor, which were clean as were the cells also clean and tidy.

5.15 *D unit*

This unit is used to accommodate disrupted prisoners and all prisoners held there had been on disciplinary reports (P19) before a Governor. There were 5 prisoners held there on the day of inspection and most of them had been transferred from other prisons.

It is a stand alone unit, two storey high with its own small exercise yard which is covered by netting.

5.16 *D1*

The ground floor landing has 3 single cells and 2 cladded cells. There is a shower, toilet, 2 w.h.b and a "slop out" area on the corridor outside the cell doors. The cladded cells have a timber base bed attached to the floor and is covered in veel stone cladding as are the walls covered in the same cladding. There are no sanitary facilities within them except a chamber pot. There is a french toilet off the corridor to the cladded cells which is covered with a strong wire mesh and has not been used for a considerable time. There are

push button alarms bells fitted to the inside of the cells and there are also water sprinklers fitted in the event of a fire.

The 3 single cells are fitted with a stainless steel framed bed attached to the floor, but raised up off the floor and a stainless steel sheeting fitted around the wall where the bed is located. There is a small corner steel table attached to the wall and a steel stool seat attached to the floor adjacent to the corner at the table. The cells are fitted with a stainless steel toilet and wash hand basin. The windows are covered with stainless steel mesh which don't prevent air flow into the cells. The cells, toilets, corridor, were clean, tidy, and brightly painted. A small room near to the entrance to the unit is used as gym. It is fitted with a weights machine plus two upper and lower body exercise machines. Although small it is sufficient for the number of prisoners using it (max of 8 at any time)

Just off the gym is the entrance to a small exercise yard which is covered by netting. There were two prisoners in the yard at the time of inspection who did not engage in conversation except to establish as to who the inspectorate were.

5.17 D2

The 1st floor landing has five single cells which are fitted out exactly like the single cells on D1 [as already described]. There is a shower, toilet and 2 wash hand basins on the corridor outside of the cell doors. The office of the class officer has a CCTV monitor which observes the movements in the

exercise yard and the entrance to the unit. Library plus other books are held in a small press on the landing. The cells, corridors, etc, were clean and well kept.

5.18 *Laundry*

The laundry provides all the washing and drying requirements for the prison which includes both the prison and prisoner's private clothing. It was fully operational at time of inspection and had 12 prisoners working there. The officer in charge stated that he normally has 15 to 24 prisoners working with him but that some of them would attend education while others attend computer class and some may be off on visits. It appeared quite busy with each one carrying out their individual tasks. Each prisoner is provided with a netted bag in which he places the laundry he requires washed. The bag is collected, checked and recorded at entrance to the laundry, so that the same articles of laundry are returned when washed and dried. The items of clothing are all stamped with a number at reception into the prison, so each item can be traced to the individual prisoner.

The laundry is not recognised as a work/training centre and I recommend that it should be looked at in order for it to achieve accreditation status. If so recognised, those working there may have a much better opportunity to gain employment in an outside laundry on release.

5.19 *Computer work/training shop*

The work training workshop is situated directly over the laundry and is managed by an officer who had 15 prisoners in his charge at the time of inspection. The officer outlined that he operated the equal skills computer course as well as the E.C.D.L course and the area is a recognised examination centre. Another officer and himself are accredited exam testers. The officer showed us some of the E.C.D.L examination results which were very high marks, some few of them securing 100%. From the present group of prisoners, 6 of them are training for the next E.C.D.L exams. The computers operate as a stand alone and are not connected to the prison computer system. There is simulated access into the web and Internet facilities.

The officer displayed great enthusiasm towards his work and he even runs classes in his own time during lunch break for staff members who have also gone on and sat the E.C.D.L exams.

5.20 *Reception*

The reception receives in all new committals, records and stores the prisoners clothing, as well as recording the prisoners' personal particulars such as height, weight, marks scars, and mugshot photograph. The reception officer also issues the prisoner with prison clothing, towels sheets, toiletries etc, on arrival. The reception processes all prisoners leaving the prison, either on release, discharge, transfer, etc. The same procedure is followed as at committal but in reverse. The officer had 3 prisoners working in the area at

the time of our visit. Both computer and paper chase records are maintained. The property both personal and prison is stamped with a number for identification purpose re laundry or exchange. The area has two holding cells which had a bench seat fitted along the wall and no other furniture. The showers, toilet and wash hand basin were clean and tidy at time of inspection. The officer showed us the locker room where all the prisoners' property/clothing is stored as well as a store area for prison clothing, shoes, etc. He said that he had sufficient lockers plus storage facilities for the number of prisoners in custody. These areas were clean and presentable.

5.21 *Shower room area*

The shower area is situated on the ground floor of the reception building and contains 12 cubicle showers. There is also a photograph and finger print room within the area. A bathroom is located at the end of the row of shower cubicles, the ceiling of which directly over the bath requires repainting. The dividing walls between each shower as well as the shower area are covered in white rock material which were clean and well maintained. However, the floor covering at the edge of a lot of the showers is separating from the other material and will soon need attention.

5.22 *Library*

The library is situated in a fairly small room just off the large recreation hall and is operated by two library officers. The officer stated that he works on opposite shift to the other library officer and therefore the library is open constantly. Both officers have City and Guilds library qualification and they

work closely (re purchasing books) with Cork City library who provide 50% towards the cost of the books. They stock 8000 books as well as up to 75 law books plus magazines, CDs, tapes and two and half thousand cassettes. They have begun to stock books for non nationals in five different languages and place a note in their reception kit bag outlining that such books are available in the library for non nationals. They don't stock any daily newspapers. There is a good literacy section and they operate it in conjunction with the education unit. The videos shown to the prisoners during recreation is operated from the library. There is a multidisciplinary library committee in existence but it appears not to have been active of late times. The space is small for the amount of books available and there is almost no facilities for prisoners to sit down and browse through books within the area. The officer was asked as to the amount of prisoners who use the library and was informed that about 60% of the population use it. He stated that about 20% drop occurred in the library use with the introduction of televisions into their cells. The officer was very knowledgeable about the library requirements and showed a great interest in his work.

5.23 *Recreation Hall*

The next area visited was a large wooden floor recreation hall which has multi purposes use. The R.C. Chaplain uses it for celebrating mass and when not in use for religious purpose, wooden doors are pulled across the end of the hall which blocks off the altar area. It is also used by the education staff (P.E) for badminton, basket ball, etc as well as being the indoor recreation area for the prisoners during evening recreation period. There are two toilets and a

wash hand basin just off the main hall. The sanitary facilities and the hall were clean and tidy but the hall appeared to be sparsely stocked of chairs for a large number of prisoners on recreation.

5.24 *Censor Office*

We then visited the censor office where the officer in charge outlined the various ways and means which illegal drugs were being attempted to be sent by post into the prison. They received letters, newspapers, magazines, tapes, books etc for prisoners and all of these from time to time have had drugs concealed within them. He gave examples of various discoveries. Regarding solicitors letters being opened he outlined that they are opened but not read and if a prisoner is writing a letter to a solicitor and he places it in a sealed envelope then it is not opened. However letters sent by legal representatives under cover of ordinary post are only discovered to be legal correspondence after being opened. They are then delivered to the prisoner uncensored. The office stated that he would receive an average of 50 letters per day and approx 40 letters per day would be posted out.

5.25 *Exercise Yards*

The smaller of the two yards is used to exercise the segregated/protection prisoners and when first built it was intended for use for the remand/trial prisoners. There were no prisoners in it at the time of inspection and it has high netting fixed to the top of its walls. Two of the urinals were blocked off with timber sheeting and it has one other toilet which had no seat attached to

the bowl. The yard is quite small and as result of cement supports being applied to the boundary wall it reduced the playing space even further.

The large exercise yard has double mesh covering it resulting in it being quite dark. There were a number of prisoners exercising in it at the time of inspection, some were walking around while others were seated on the ground. There are no seating facilities for prisoners. The officers supervising were seated in sentry boxes. The end of the yard had a toilet block consisting of 2 toilets, 3 urinals and a drinking water fountain which was in need of cleaning. Three telephones in enclosed perspex casing for prisoners' use was attached to the wall at the entrance area, one of which was not working. There were no "hoods" attached for privacy when the phones were being used.

5.26 *Kitchen*

The kitchen is operated by 3 officers (1 industrial supervisor and 2 assistant industrial supervisors) plus 13 - 14 prisoners who prepare, cook and serve the four meals per day to the prisoners. It is quite a small and narrow working space and it also has a low ceiling. The entire areas are tiled and was very clean and tidy considering it is a working kitchen and meals were being prepared at time of our visit. It won the hygiene award for the 1st time last year. The meals are prepared, cooked, plated and placed in hot trolleys which are then wheeled to the landings and served there from the trolleys. This means that prisoners don't have choices and are issued with the pre-plated hot meal. They operate both gas and electricity. In the bread storage area prisoners were working at placing 6 slices of bread in packets for issue

to each prisoner to bring to his cell along with a second packet in which was placed sachets of sugar, salt, pepper and jam. We also saw the freezer room, the cold rooms, storage area, staff changing room and toilets, all of which were well laid out, clean and tidy.

5.27 *Visiting rooms*

The visiting room consist of one fair sized room with a very wide table top dividing off the prisoners from the visitors. The table top is approx 4 feet from the floor and is closed in underneath with an officer situated on a high seat, one at each end, plus another officer at the centre. The prisoners stand throughout the duration of their visit and there are a limited number of chairs for the visitors. [In fact the prisoners whom the inspectorate met outlined that the visitors chairs were only placed there prior to our arrival but this was denied by management]. The inspectorate checked re chairs for visitors in the a.m and there were 12 available and re-checked late in the p.m and there were only 7 available. Management stated "they must have been taken off to somewhere else for use elsewhere"! The area is covered by CCTV. There are signs on the wall outlining the visiting conditions and no contact between prisoner and visitor is allowed. The room appears quite small for the numbers using it at the same time and the noise level within it is quite high when in full use.

The small visiting facility can only cater for one visit at a time and there is a barrier with clear perspex from counter-top to ceiling. It is completely closed off between prisoner and visitor and communications is conducted with each

other through a grid in the counter. It is used for those found in breach of regulations re articles being passed or attempting to pass on visits etc. It is also used at times for "family visit" in the event of marriage difficulties, death in family, first holy communion, etc but it is not suitable for such use.

5.28 *Waiting Room*

The waiting room is accessed from outside the main gate and has bench type seating fixed to the floor. There is an area outside the entrance door with form type seating to accommodate those who wish to smoke. Particulars from the visitors on arrival are taken by an officer who operates from an office within the waiting room area. The office is fitted with a computer but special visits are not recorded. There is no printer attached to the computer so the officer has to place the particulars on computer and also write out the same info on a docket which is a duplication of work. When the "docket" is processed by the supervising officer the visitor is then called by name and they then enter the prison via the main gate. In view of the resentment expressed by "ordinary" prisoner regarding having to share the visiting facilities with sex offenders it is recommended that all visitors be issued with a number on arrival at waiting room and that the number rather than the name should be announced when being called into visiting box for the visit.

5.29 *Control Room*

The control room is managed by an A.C.O and is the monitoring/security operational side of the prison. There are 10 monitors which displays the movements and actions taking place in the various locations throughout the

prison including the visiting room. It also operates the walkie talkie radios issued to staff on their various posts. The fire control and security control panels of the prison are also displayed within the office.

5.30 *Stores*

A clerk I and Clerk II manages the stores and are responsible for the purchases of items plus the tendering for supplies of requirements to the prison. They are also responsible for the purchasing of the victualling requirements, plus the trades staff's maintenance needs and that of the educational unit. There is a small storage facility attached to the office but the main storage store is located outside the prison which is inconvenient when the demand arises for articles that are stored there. The computers are not up to date and in fact the cardex system is still being applied.

5.31 *Office*

The general office and personnel office is operated by a Clerk I , 5 Clerk II's and an officer acting Clerk II. They deal with all the committals, discharges, hospital appointments, court appearances, appeals, bails, etc for prisoners as well as their private cash and gratuity accounts. One of the clerks is also responsible for the photograph and fingerprinting of prisoners.

The personnel office deals with all staff personnel matters as well as the prison accounts system. The staff state that the computers are working well and that they have no problem with the programme within them. It was a normal working office setting at time of visit.

5.32 *Woodwork Workshop*

This is a production workshop which employs 9-10 prisoners with an officer in charge. They manufacture furniture for use within Cork prison as well as for other prisons. They also make furniture for a charitable organisation/or special needs centre each year and this year they made presses for a special school in Cork City. They make cell bedside lockers, picnic benches, seats, etc for the various prisons. The officer in charge stated that he had more work on order than he can cope with, but his working space is quite small and just about big enough to cope with the work he is doing at present.

5.33 *Hurley repair Shop*

This is another production workshop which employs 15 - 20 prisoners with two officers in charge but there were 8 prisoners in it at the time of inspection. The officer explained that they receive broken hurleys from G.A.A. Clubs throughout Cork, Limerick, Waterford and repair between 100 to 150 hurleys per day. The demand for their work is easing off a little of late as the hurling season is beginning to come to a close. However, he still has a considerable number of orders on the books to be completed. The officer in charge said that as a result of a radio show/interview last year his work has increased 100 fold as clubs throughout Munster got to hear of the work being done and made contact immediately placing orders. It appears to be a well run workshop with each prisoner assigned a task at their individual work benches.

5.34 *Toilets for workshop area*

Just off the workshops there is a tiled toilet block with 3 urinals, 2 toilets and 2 wash hand basins. They were reasonably clean but neither of the toilets were fitted with seats.

5.35 Main Gym/Recreation Hall

There were 27 prisoners and 3 officers fully engaged in gym work when we visited. The officers stated that they normally have between 25 - 30 prisoners at each session. All the equipment has to be removed each evening and returned each morning as the gym is also used as a recreation area during the evening recreation period and weekends. This means none of it can be fixed to the floor or walls as well as being a nuisance having to move it each day into and out of a store just off the gym. There is a PE teacher attached to the prison who also teaches other subjects and therefore is not full time in the gym. The officer stated that all prisoners partaking of gym work must be passed fit by the doctor prior to commencing the gym exercises.

There are five showers, 3 urinals and a toilet just off the gym hall. The showers and urinals were hygienically clean but the toilet was in need of cleaning.

6. MEETING WITH VARIOUS GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS

6.1 Cork Visiting Committee

The Inspector met three members of the visiting committee attached to Cork Prison. He also read some of their annual reports. They were very impressive.

Firstly they were concerned about the failure of the Department and Minister to appoint new members to the Committee. They were not up to full strength. They asked me what was the Minister's plans. I said I didn't know that communications between the Department and the Prison Service and myself were minimalist - unfortunately. However, I assured them that I was all in favour of visiting committees but I wanted them given back their original powers and to have them implemented. I told them that I was increasingly concerned about prisoners rights. There should be a full time ombudsman who should be a trained lawyer and who should not be a civil servant at the time of his/her appointment. They raised the many concerns which are reflected in their annual reports.

They are very concerned about the overcrowding and the slopping out and the lack of work or activity leaving about 50% of the prisoners idle.

The Inspector also told the visiting committee that he had received a letter from a prisoner in the "D" wing and that he was very concerned about the prisoner and indeed other prisoners in "D" wing. One man claimed bitterly that he had been assaulted in a previous prison and then had been dumped in Cork. The prisoner in question showed Prof. Fennell and myself his wounds and maintains there should be medical records of his condition. The Inspector felt that if there was a suspicion of him being assaulted then the

Gardai should be called in to investigate it. The visiting committee members undertook to look into the matter.

6.2 Meeting with Heads of Service (senior members of Management)

The inspectorate met the heads of service which included deputy and assistant governors, chief officers, clerks grade one, chief trades officer, industrial manager.

Each of them gave an account of their areas of responsibilities and number of staff/prisoners whom they manage in their day to day work. The main points discussed were as follows:-

The ongoing national negotiations concerning overtime controls, new roster, cut backs, etc and the effects such uncertainty is causing staff on the floor.

The transfer of staff from Fort Mitchell to Cork on the closure of Fort Mitchell prison and the effect this had regarding the reduction in overtime earnings at Cork Prison by about 50%. There was unease among staff regarding the future of both Fort Mitchell and Cork Prison and the impact such may have on those staff who have purchased houses in either Cork or Spike Island region.

Closure of fabric workshop and the proposed new workshops i.e industrial cleaning and computer printing. The awards the kitchen staff achieved in the last year.

* The compensation claims re lack of sanitary facilities for prisoners. Claims in general and costs involved. Health and Safety plus stock control/budgetary issues.

Lack of office and maintenance workshop space. The extreme overcrowding and operating and managing the prison in such a confined area.

Pride in the fact that the prison has operated without any serious disturbances despite the overcrowding situation and the prison is almost drug free. The prison also holds very disruptive prisoners from other prisons in the "D" unit and has done so successfully for a long number of years.

The question of sniffer dogs being used as is the practice in Northern Ireland and the Inspector gave an account of some of the difficulties involved there with same. The availability of chairs for visitors in the visiting room was also raised and the Inspector said that at his morning inspection of the area there were 12 chairs and when he returned late in the p.m there were only 7 chairs available. The prisoners told the Inspector that the chairs were only put there for his visit. This was denied by the staff. They also stated that the chairs may have been required elsewhere in the p.m and that was the reason that only 7 chairs were available. The Inspector spoke of a prisoner whom he had met on his tour of inspection who complained of having been assaulted and showed him marks and bruising on his body. The Inspector said that he did not know if he received the injuries at this prison or prior to his transfer here or if they were self imposed injuries. However, he raised the matter with the visiting committee and felt that the gardai should investigate same if the injuries were not self imposed.

The Inspectorate thanked the group for coming to the meeting and for discussing the matters raised openly and frankly.

6.3 Meeting Head Teacher and Educational Staff

The Inspector and Professor Fennell met the Head Teacher at the Education Facilities in Cork Prison. He explained how that he and the other teachers at the prison were VEC employed, and that the organisation and administration of the service provided in Cork Prison was under the auspices of the VEC.

He explained that the view taken by those involved in the education services supplied at Cork Prison, was that anything an adult learns comprises education, and so the courses offered at Cork Prison vary from those involving literacy skills to pre-tenancy courses prior to release. A very important dimension to the services provided and the educational approach taken in Cork Prison is that of social inclusion, and he placed a strong emphasis on the importance of co-operation and partnerships between those involved in education in the prison, and agencies such as the Drugs Task Force, FÁS, etc.

Literacy is a major issue among the prison population. He estimated that on a conservative guess fifty per cent of the inmates of Cork Prison were functionally illiterate, in the sense that they were unable, for example, to get through the daily newspaper sports section. On committal to the Prison everyone is interviewed by either the Head or Assistant Head teacher. It is at

that stage, that if they require literacy provision if they request it. From January to December 2003 in terms of literacy, two teachers were involved in delivering numeric and literacy courses to around seventy prisoners. The range of courses in this area provided by the educational service goes up to FETAC Levels 1 and 2 and Junior Cert in terms of communication skills, etc. The prisoners on committal have to identify themselves what their educational priorities would be, but on occasion, if literacy is an issue, this will also emerge in other classes. The view expressed by the head teacher is that the literacy issue is getting worse in general, and was worse in younger people than in older people.

In the head teacher's view, education is a very useful service provided in prison, as it provides an alternative, as there is very little work available in the prison. The service offers therefore an eleven month school year and three evening classes a week. The school is operational all year except for August, so that in July and June there is an educational presence. Those involved in education in Cork Prison have been very successful in terms of their access of funding through various European social inclusion structures such as Integra and Horizon programmes, and they have utilised such funding to integrate their services with the outside, to ease what they regard as the very important and vital transition between the period spent inside the prison and the return to the community. An example of one such initiative is the Dillons Cross project, where women, who are adult female family members of those in the prison, engaging in group work and have courses provided for them. This involves the provision of classes in literacy, health care, childcare, etc.

for four or five mornings a week. It has been established for five years now and is operating very successfully. Another successful initiative secured through co-operation with outside agencies is the presence in the education facility of two dedicated addiction counsellors, secured through the Drugs Task Force.

An issue of concern to the head teacher is the post-release services sector and the co-ordination of same, when the remit of the probation service ceases. A particular problem is that those involved, for instance, in drugs, violence, or sex offences get no temporary release, and so go out into a situation where there is nothing in terms of any after care structure. Hence they encounter difficulties with regard to access to a general practitioner, etc.

In terms of the library provision, it was described as a good library, with three daily newspapers being provided by the Governor which are used in English classes. A request was made by the Inspector that the newspaper sports section could be pinned up in the circle and this was taken on board by the Head Teacher. With regard to waiting lists for classes, the head teacher pointed out that if people are interested they are put on a waiting list, but the rule is seven or eight students to one teacher, one doesn't always immediately get the class one wants. In relation to the question as to whether they do drama anymore, he replied that the popularity of various classes appear to vary from time to time. Currently, the music teacher, for instance, provides quite a popular service and has a concert every year. It was also pointed out the prisoners recently made a CD.

Professor Fennell's visit to the art room where she met the art teacher and ceramics teacher, showed that this was a good and very busy space, with a lot of impressive work being carried out.

There are no particular difficulties as far as the teacher was concerned with regard to relations between non-nationals who come to class, and Irish prisoners. This might be a part of the fact that there are few enough non-Irish nationals in Cork prison, and certainly, very few non-Caucasian non-nationals. There was also no particular evidence of bullying.

There was felt to be adequate staffing in the educational service in Cork Prison, additional or an adjusted employee situation having resulted from the Part-Time Employee Acts legislation and the implications thereof. In terms of space, there is no problem with rooms or space or facilities.

The strongest plea put forward on the part of the teachers, seemed to be a necessity for planning for release, pre-tenancy courses, and the involvement of FÁS in liaison with the prison and other services, in terms of easing the transition of prisoners into the community. Sophia Housing are involved currently in delivering the pre-tenancy course in the prison, but a greater co-operative measure whereby community employment schemes are more readily available, and FÁS more involved with help in training for the labour market would be beneficial, and secure greater social inclusion. The commitment of those in the educational service in Cork Prison to follow up on social inclusion was further evident from a publication which the head teacher gave to the

Inspector and Professor Fennell: 'Out the Gap' is a practical guide for former prisoners in the Cork/Kerry/Waterford region, was published by the Post Release Education Service of Cork Prison in 2004, funded by the Cork Local Drugs Task Force through the Cork Vocational Education Committee. It contains invaluable information about various services from addiction services to accommodation matters, educational matters, training, employment and food. This particular template could be used with profit in every area to again give an indication to individuals as to what services are out there when they are released from the prison. Of course it also does pre-suppose literacy and the high rate of functional illiteracy has to be a problem in that regard.

In sum, the educational facilities seem to be working well, although there might be concern with regard to the small number or proportion of prisoners who actually engage with the education services. On the particular day of this visit of the Inspector, there were forty to fifty people present in the educational facility, while around two hundred and eighty are generally in the prison. Hence only a limited proportion of the prison population access the service.

6.4 Meeting with Chaplains

Professor Fennell and the Inspector met the very Rev Fr. Kidney Salesian, the Roman Catholic Chaplain and the Rev. Brian O'Rourke of the Church of Ireland who is attached to the famous nearby Shandon Bells Church. They were both gravely concerned about the mental health of the prisoners and that some people should not be put into prison. A difficulty they pointed to was the absence of work in Cork Prison, leading to a great deal of depression on

the part of those prisoners who were neither working, nor engaging in education, and so fell into a state of depression. They suggested a more holistic approach in which they should be involved. They regarded it as essential. There was a feeling that greater awareness on the part of the public with regard to the realities of prison life was necessary. They stated that there was no booklet or policy document relating to bullying or racism. I pointed out that in Cloverhill Prison they produced a very colourful little booklet for all the prisoners on those topics and suggested something similar might be used in Cork. As regards the visiting conditions they both criticised the lack of human dignity identified with that room and drew my attention to the sad picture of very young children waiting for ages to see an incarcerated father or brother. While the Roman Catholic Chaplains do have meetings to discuss matters of mutual concern and indeed produce an annual report, this is not so with the chaplains of other denominations. The Inspector suggested that chaplains of all denominations might meet at least once a year and possibly use an agreed statement on problems that they all agree need attention. The chaplains themselves were committed to supporting each other, and, particularly the Anglican Chaplain, to initiating stronger links with fellow chaplains in other institutions.

6.5 Meeting with Probation and Welfare service

Professor Fennell met with the Head of Probation and Welfare as well as members of the Probation and Welfare Team at Cork Prison. The main concern expressed was in relation to their accommodation. Currently they are

involved with addiction counsellors, community group Cork Alliance, and Narcotics Anonymous and yet they have only one room in which to do group work. Fifteen to twenty people cannot be accommodated in that room, as it is not adequate. Their facilities for interviewing prisoners individually comprise two small boxes, where they see most of the offenders. These are private but not ideal. Moreover, these boxes are a shared facility with solicitors, etc. and Probation & Welfare do not have priority. In particular, in relation to C Wing, a difficulty was expressed that at the discretion of the officer on the Wing they can have access to an office, but if there is another professional visitor there at the time there is no access, and hence no facility to work.

The Probation & Welfare Service ensures that within three days of committal that they see all prisoners. They have provided anger management courses, which they were originally planned to run with the psychologist, but due to her illness and unavailability ultimately ran them themselves. They had twelve sessions with seven prisoners who started the course. Five finished. Two did not continue because they were not comfortable with group work, but are now back, and will do it on a one-to-one basis. The Probation & Welfare service currently comprises three staff and a clerical officer, which is adequate. It is since the closure of Fort Mitchell Prison that they number three. However, it would be hard to plan forward if one member of the three were to be transferred. Normally they would have two, which is too few on the staff.

When probation see those who have been committed to Cork Prison in the morning, their needs are accessed and they are then referred to appropriate agencies within the prison, surgery, school, suitable employment. They see

their approach as a multidisciplinary one, and this works well, in so far as they are located close to other services in the prison, and so aware of what is provided and what is available at the time.

Another important dimension to their work, which they identified, is with those who are about to be released which commences three months prior to their release, focussing in on their particular needs. They again emphasise the importance in this work, of liaising with agencies such as FÁS. In relation to those serving life sentences, for example, currently two of those are out at the moment, and one is spending three days out working with FÁS. The focus on the releases in the last three months they see as essential in terms of planning for appropriate and effective transition into the community.

In terms of the programmes that are available within the prison they are limited to the extent that they have no group workroom. One of the members of staff who had previously worked in Mountjoy, pointed that there was a group workroom in Mountjoy where it was easier to carry out such programmes. They have the ability and the expertise to carry out programmes in Cork Prison, but no facilities.

Hence in terms of priorities expressed by the Probation & Welfare service in Cork Prison, the following were identified in the discussion:

- * Appropriate accommodation for group work and/or individual work, staffing: three as a minimum to continue; and

enhancement of their work with prisoners in the last three months, liaising with outside agencies, etc. In relation to the latter and sex offenders in particular, it was pointed out that in relation to these individuals, they are currently released into the community, where locally difficulty arises, given their relative lack of anonymity in Cork. Hence accessing housing and accommodation needs pose real problems for them. The view was expressed that if there were some sort of temporary release or procedure whereby there was a statutory obligation in relation to such prisoners in the aftermath of release, it would be easier to help them in relation to their reintegration into society. Post-release statutory orders would aid them in working with sex offenders once released. All of the members of staff emphasised that they can do what they wish and like with those inside, but if they don't follow up they will go back to the same situation. In transition, it is so hard for those released, to access food, medical, welfare and accommodation needs, all of which have been met while they have been inside. A strong view was expressed that it is only an integrated approach to services (as seen for example in the Intense Probation Service project in Cork) which works to combat those kind of challenges.

6 6. Meeting local branch representatives of the Prison Officers Association

The Inspector and Professor Fennell met the local branch officers of the P.O.A. The main concerns of the Prison Officers Association were expressed in the documents which were handed to the Inspector, both at the commencement of the visit, and also in the course of this particular interview. Supplemental to that, it might be worth mentioning that they, in particular,

rejecting the practise of 'slopping out', and felt that the extent to which there had been refurbishment and painting of the prison prior to our arrival indicated the extent to which it was below requisite standards prior to that. This they felt was unacceptable in terms of their working conditions. They produced statistics with regard to the capacity of the prison, showing that on average throughout the previous nine months, numbers had been at 280-290 capacity, whereas just recently at 254, demonstrating in their view that 40 prisoners had been shed some time prior the Inspector's visit.

In terms of education and training, they expressed some concern of a return to a limited view of their role as purely as custodial, and that abilities on the part of some prison officers were being under utilised in terms of facilities offering training and trades for those prisoners, who wished to have access to these while in Cork Prison.

There was further representations as to the implications of budgetary cutbacks, lack of training & refresher courses, bad morale, and a deteriorating IR situation, further detailed in their documentation presented to the Inspector. They also outlined that as a result of management's failure to respond to their concerns and failure to reply to letters, that the local members have voted by 95% in favour of industrial action.

The Inspector provided the Governor with a copy of the written information supplied by the P.O.A and asked him to respond to it in writing. He undertook to do same the following week after our inspection. The Governor supplied my office with his written response. He has refuted the allegations outlined by the

P.O.A and has produced records to the contrary of what the P.O.A state e.g refurbishment/painting party in operation the year round and not just for my visit. The average prisoner numbers for period 1/10/04 to 12/9/04 was 270.8 not 280 - 290. The temporary release records shown the average number on daily t.r for the previous nine months was 34 and had not been changed for the inspector's visit plus there was a reduction in the number of committals as the courts were in recess at that particular time. He also outlined that he responds to all matters raised by the branch and are documented in the minutes of their meetings. Regarding the vote for industrial action. The Governor outlines that he understands that it was on health and safety issues, although he has not been officially informed of any proposed action or of the issues concerning them. He has been attempting to carry out training as per minutes of meetings with the local branch states that the local union were unable to co-operate with training even though he had supernumerary staff on duty on Sundays.

When the matters outlined by the P.O.A were raised at the time of inspection with the Governor he refuted them and raised counter arguments to them. He wanted the Inspector to decide on the merits of the case having heard both sides. After mature reflection I have decided it would not be appropriate at this time.

Governors have to live within their budgets. The union has to protect the income of its members as well as their welfare. The present impasse undoubtedly exists. I have been specifically told (orally naturally) that it is not

within my remit to get involved in trade union matters . It has also been suggested to me that the POA are trying to avoid the mediation and other structures which exist for industrial disputes resolution. Accordingly, I am not going to set out here the various arguments advanced by both sides. However, I am alerting all who read this report that there are industrial relation problems simmering away, not merely in Cork but else where in the Prison Service. It is essential that they be addressed and resolved. It may be the personalities involved. If so, they should be addressed and an independent assessment made.

MEDICAL

6.7 *Meeting with Dr. Murphy G.P for the Prison*

The Inspector and Dr. Ledwith met the doctor attached to the prison who informed us that he had been in the post since October 1988.

Dr. Murphy informed us that he visits the prison from 7.30am to 8.20 daily and when he enters into a new contract his hours will be 7.30am to 9.30am.

He takes all the bloods himself and performs all minor surgical procedures himself. There is no waiting list Dr. Murphy informed us. The names of those who want to see him were put down the night before.

He usually sees between 10 and 20 prisoners per day.

There is no HIV in the prison.

At least 10 prisoners have Hepatitis B and these are seen at the Hepatitis B Clinic in the University Hospital.

He has a prison officer with him at all times who is a medical orderly.

There have been no suicides since he took on the post. He has ex prisoners on his general practice list. Dr. Murphy has informed us that he has been threatened by the prisoners and assaulted by ex-prisoners outside the prison but he feels he gets on with the prisoners generally.

Prisoners can be sent to the casualty department in UCH if necessary. Dr. Murphy informed us that he has good psychiatric backup.

He feels however that the surgery is small and "pokey". There is no portable defibrillator. He would like to have a new set of weighing scales.

He visits C & D block for security reasons on a daily basis as the prisoners held in those blocks may be attacked by other prisoners if they were to be brought to his surgery.

He expressed concern lest he be assaulted while in prison.

Prisoners are placed in the cladded cells if they want to go there after been seen by the GP (the medical orderly said that he could ring up Dr. Murphy and request that some of them be placed there and that normally Dr. Murphy would agree) They are seen there by him if they are remaining in the cladded cell.

The prisoners' GP are contacted if necessary on discharge, for example, diabetics but this is done by the nursing staff and not by Dr. Murphy.

Homeless prisoners go to St. Vincent's hostel where there is a GP in attendance. Dr. Murphy does not prescribe methadone but it is given to those who are on methadone on arrival for three months max.

There is not a problem with drug addiction in Cork and there is no "heroin" but Dr. Morgan the psychiatrist was not of this opinion. Dr. Murphy informed us

that he has had no medical legal cases taken against him by prisoners over the last sixteen years.

Dr. Murphy was asked by the Inspector about reading his newspapers in front of prisoners. He denied doing this. He has confirmed in writing that when he interviews prisoners he is in the company of medical orderlies at all times. He said an allegation or assumption that he was reading papers during medical rounds is an unwarranted and unsubstantiated attack on his character made by prisoners who are aggrieved when they do not get what they demand in the line of medications or hospital examinations.

However as Inspector I am presenting a photograph of what I and my team found during our inspection. I am not making any judgment whatsoever on the matter. However it is a matter for the Director of Medical Services to investigate this further. I am certainly not condemning the doctor who impressed me and my fellow inspector. I have merely set out the complaints and his response.

6.8 Meeting with Dr. E Morgan, Psychiatrist

Dr. Morgan was seen with the Inspector on September 13th 2004 in Cork Prison.

Dr. Morgan informed us that he had three sessions a week, each lasting about two and a half hours. All new prisoners can be seen right away he informed us.

Alcohol withdrawal is a problem as is heroin withdrawal.

Librium is used for alcohol withdrawal and it should be noticed that 9,500 10mg capsules were used in Cork Prison from the 1st July 2003 to 30th June 2004.

Dr. Morgan was highly critical of the service provided by the Central Mental Hospital. He had, he informed us, great difficulty in making contact with the consultants and he said that a junior doctor was sent down to assess the prisoners that he had recommended to the Central Mental Hospital. He informed us it could take up to one month to get a psychiatric patient taken into the Central Mental Hospital.

He has treated prisoners in the cladded cell who are psychiatrically ill.

He spoke of one prisoner who was discovered with a ligature around his neck almost dead. He said that in the past thirty years there has been only three suicides.

Dr. Morgan was critical of the fact that he had to treat prisoners with a psychiatric conditions in the cladded cells.

His consulting room is not ideal as people are constantly passing through it while he was seeing them.

Dr. Morgan informed us that he had no problem getting medication for prisoners.

6.9 Meeting with Dr. E. Kennelly the Dentist.

Dr. Kennelly was seen by the Inspector and Dr. Ledwith in Cork Prison on September 15th.

Dr. Kennelly informed us that he attends the prison from 9.15am to 1.00pm one day per week. There is no waiting list he informed us. The equipment

he told us was excellent as was the dental room. However, he is disappointed that he doesn't have a store room as his surgery is overcrowded.

Prisoners who require treatment for wisdom teeth are referred to the local dental hospital.

There is no machine for x-rays and he feels he would need one. This would cost about €6,000.

Crowning is not allowed if a prisoner smokes. He objects to this policy. He also sees prisoners on a Friday if requested.

6.10 Meeting with Medical Orderlies

There are eight medical orderlies only one has general and psychiatric qualifications.

There are four on each roster, one on night duty and two on day duty while the other person is off. But due to the rostering system there are times when the third person is on day duty and when this happens, the third person is involved in other duties other than medical orderlies role. The two day posts are still filled but third person is supernumerary to requirements within the medical area.

The medical facilities is small and overcrowded and is essentially three cells with the walls knocked out.

Room for files is very restricted and there is room to hold four or five years files within the surgery area but files of prisoners prior to this are stored in a warehouse and can not be accessed until the next day if a prisoner comes in

late in the day. The examining couch is not satisfactory as it is up against a wall. Prisoners can only be seen from one side.

Medication is now dispensed "dry" for the last three or four months. Staff are there to ensure prisoners swallow the medications. Prisoners can hoard oral medication.

There is no problem ordering medication. An order placed before 11.00am is delivered before 5.00pm that same day and at weekends medication can be obtained from the local pharmacy.

I was informed that a medical centre on the ground floor was needed for easy access by all prisoners especially those who have difficulty climbing stairs. They need more space for files and a proper filing room is needed.

A modern examination room with a modern examination couch in keeping with the modern day doctors surgery is also required.

I visited two cladded cells and these are needed in dealing with prisoners who have psychiatric illnesses and for securing their own safety. I was informed that prisoners have requested to go in.

Prisoners who are disturbed are also admitted to the cladded cells and if in the opinion of the medical orderlies that they need to go in, with only a phone call to Dr. Murphy and with his approval, they are placed there.

The prisoners state that they don't value the medical orderlies opinion.

Prisoners, I was informed are in the cladded cell for two to three days maximum.

Cladded cells are not used for punishment.

Prisoners are seen daily in the cladded cell by the doctor and are checked out every half hour at least.

In the cladded cell there is a mattress and some secure blankets and a chamber pot.

6.11 Meeting with the Psychologist

The Inspector Dr. J Ledwith and Professor Fennell met the psychologist attached to the prison. She came in specially to meet the inspectorate as she is currently on sick leave and hopes to resume her duties in the near future. The inspectorate very much appreciated her attendance and wishes her a speedy recovery to good health.

She assured us that there would be a full time psychologist in Cork Prison.

She provides a lecturing service to prison officers throughout the country on an interim basis. She has provided staff in a thinking skills course and has done ten courses in all since 1998 and feels these are very successful. She no longer does court reports.

She has supervised anger management courses for the staff.

She sees prisoners with specific problems such as panic attacks and anxiety attacks as quickly as possible.

She does have an office but does not have a room of her own at present for individual consulting and has to use a room from one of the teachers. This is not satisfactory as she needs both a group room with camera facilities and a

personal consulting room. She does not feel one psychologist is enough and that three would be necessary.

She sees every prisoner admitted to prison that requires to be seen to access their needs.

Prisoners who wish to partake in the sex offenders programme must apply for same to Arbour Hill Prison which is the only prison at present that conducts such programmes. Sixteen sex offenders from Cork Prison have participated in programmes in Arbour Hill over the past number of years.

She is of the opinion that the anger control course is excellent and is very necessary. The personal skills course also she felt was very helpful.

6.12 Meeting with Group of Prisoners

[The Inspectorate met three different groups of prisoners during the inspections]

In the course of the discussions with the group of prisoners, the following were the most noteworthy of the issues that they raised.

(a). *Phones*: The prisoners complained about the number of phones which were available in the yard [There are also 3 phones in the recreation hall].

Subsequently, on visiting the yard, it was noted that four phone slots were available, although these were not adequately hooded or covered, and hence both vulnerable to weather damage & offering no privacy to users. Of the four slots available, one did not have any phone, one phone was out of operation, and only two phones were apparently operational. According to the prisoners,

in the evening when there are one hundred prisoners in the yard wishing to make calls to family members, who may only be home in the evening, the situation is completely inadequate.

(b). Communication with Solicitor: The prisoners stated that there was no problem telephoning or writing to the Samaritans which was free. In terms of communications with solicitors, concern was also expressed that one had to use up the designated telephone call to one's lawyer as one of the three people whom one can call. It was felt the call to the lawyer should be supplementary to calls to other nominated people, and should be accessible in similar manner to the Samaritans. It was also felt that communications sent out to solicitors and received therefrom, were not confidential.

(c) Visitors: With regard to facilities for visitors, it was felt that these were inappropriate and it was pointed out that chairs had only been put out in the visiting room prior to the visit of the Inspector. It was a common cause of complaint that individual's family members who came for a visit were left waiting an hour to an hour-and-a-half, even if they had travelled long distances, before the prisoner was called, so that by the time the individual was called for the visit there was only ten minutes remaining. It was also stated that the level of noise in the visiting room was far too high caused by the number of people and the shouting to communicate over the high counter. The prohibition on physical contact with visitors was unacceptable and hampered and damaged relationships particularly with children. The fact that there was no separate visiting arrangements for sex offenders was a cause of great distress to prisoners, in terms of the presence of their wives and children.

(d) Services: In terms of the services offered by the doctor, the chaplain, psychiatrist, psychologist, visiting committee, probation and welfare and education, there was an awareness on the part of the prisoners of these services, as well as of their rights to write to the court, and see the Governor. However, the prisoners expressed dissatisfaction with the service offered by the doctor, and there was some concern expressed about the psychiatrist. The visiting committee seemed also to have a low level of support and involvement in terms of the prisoners' welfare.

(e) Drugs/Alcohol: In terms of the availability of drugs and alcohol in the prison, this group of prisoners were of the view that although there was a small amount of cannabis available, there was no great availability of drugs within Cork Prison, which they described as the "black hole of Calcutta". In terms of the availability of counselling for alcohol addiction and narcotics addiction, the great complaint was the absence of a suitable room in which people could meet. There was only one meeting on a Monday and Wednesday, when only a limited number of people could fit in the room. After that, anyone coming would have to go away because of the lack of space.

(f) Bullying/Racism: In terms of bullying and racism, there was no real feeling that there was a strong presence of either bullying or racism in Cork Prison. The exception to this was that there was complaint that some members of the staff, the Prison Officers, would treat some of the prisoners with particular racism, especially travellers, addressing them in language that was racist.

In terms of the priorities in summary of this Group:

* they wished something to be done in relation to the doctor who did not

provide an adequate service;

- * the approach generally to visitors on the part of staff in terms of their overall treatment by the staff at the prison, and the facilities available to them, and the non-segregation of sex offenders from the general population.
- the inadequate availability of and access to phones within the prison,
the lack of provision of water in the yard in the evenings when the prisoners play soccer and have no facility to wash or drink.

6.13 Meeting with another Group of Prisoners

It was confirmed that all of these prisoners were there voluntarily. In terms of their concerns, the various issues discussed again followed in broad outline the issues raised with the other group of prisoners.

(a) Phones: The main issues that arose were the issues regarding the inadequacy of phone provision, the limited amount of time in terms of inability to stay on the phone, the loss of one's place if an answering machine answered, and the lack of privacy in conversation. The lack of privacy in relation to communications with lawyers was also raised.

(b) Visitors: The issue with regard to the visiting facilities was raised, where again it was mentioned that chairs has been put out before our arrival, but had been unavailable beforehand. The noise level during visits was said to be offensive and rendered conversation impossible. There was also objections that sex offenders were side by side with the other offenders during visits, and the implications of that for visitors. The waiting time visitors had to spend prior to seeing the prisoner who then only had fifteen minutes with

them was objected to. They expressed the view that they never get the half an hour visit and the fact that there was no ability to hug or kiss one's kids, or that if one did, one was put on report and spent two months in the block was unacceptable.

(c) Lock Up: Strong views were expressed by the group about the hours in which prisoners were unlocked. It was suggested that the unlock at 8.00 a.m. did not take place until 8.15 a.m. and that all of the locks were later, in terms of prisoners being unlocked; and that 'bang-up' time was earlier than it should be in the evening. For instance, 'bang up' time would be 7.10 p.m. instead of 7.30 p.m. This reduced the amount of time that the prisoners had out of the cells. There were also difficulties in terms of access to the toilet after hours, in terms of contacting or getting out of the cells to have access to the toilets during lock-up time.

(d) Drugs/Alcohol: In terms of availability of drugs and alcohol, this group said that there were drugs in the Cork Prison, but mostly cannabis.

(e) Racism/Bullying: In terms of bullying and racism, it was felt that the only racism was from Prison Officers who were prejudiced towards travellers.

(f) Food: In terms of the food in the prison, the quality was OK but there was not sufficient of it. The dinner was good, the breakfast however was always the same with cornflakes only being served, with never any real choice in terms of the amount of the alternative cereal, Weetabix being available. The evening meal 'tea' was served far too early, and of a poor quality. It was felt it would be more sensible, since prisoners were locked up about 7.20 p.m., to have dinner in the evening. The quality of the food presented for the evening meal was the subject of much complaint.

(g) Services: -In terms of health care, the doctor again was not felt to be offering a service that was acceptable. The dentist was felt to offer a very good service as did the psychologist, although there was one particular complaint from one prisoner with regard to the psychologist. There was no privacy with regard to discussions with the psychiatrist which was felt to be an issue. The medical orderlies also came in for criticism.

(h) Staff: In terms of the relationship between the prison officers and staff and the prisoners, this group was particularly vocal, and expressed the view that the attitude of the prison officers towards the prisoners was not a good one, and was not as good as in other institutions in which the prisoners had spend periods of time. In terms of the overall priorities expressed by this group of prisoners, they were as follows:

- * More contact with their family during visits;
- * their visitors to be treated better during visits;
- * better contact by telephone with their families and lawyers;
- * toilets to be available in their cells. It was pointed out that one had to go to D cell block in order to have in-cell sanitation;
- * better shower facilities, in particular after playing soccer in the evenings;
- * improvement in the doctor's service, which was felt to be unacceptable;
- * improvement in the attitude of staff towards the prisoners;
- * an improvement in the general condition of toilets within the prison;

6.14 Meeting with Another Group of prisoners

The Inspector and his special advisor met a group of 7 prisoners who had requested to see the inspectorate.

The matters raised were very much in line with the other two groups of prisoners.

"D" Block: They stated that no educational classes takes place there and that the Head Teachers does not come there to access their educational needs.

Medical Services: They complained that the doctor (G.P) does not examine them when they present themselves in his surgery. The doctor's manner was terrible and he may continue reading his newspaper when you walk into his surgery. He responds to you from behind the newspaper without even looking at you. If a prisoner is on medication prior to coming into prison, he will not be issued with the same medication in the prison or continued on it. The other medical personnel were reasonably good but that the medics were always present with the doctor and could never see him on your own. One prisoner praised the medical services provided and stated that he would be dead if he hadn't got into prison to avail of the G.P's expert handling of his medical condition.

Transfer requests: Complained that they never get a reply to their applications and that even applications to the courts are not responded to in writing.

Toilet facilities after lock up: They stated that they cannot get out to go to the toilet after 7.30pm especially in "C" wing. Some may get out in A & B wings. They felt this was terrible as they were sharing cells with others and had no alternative but to use their chamber pot.

Food: It was outlined that they did not get any buns at 7.30pm like in other prisons. There were no hot breakfasts and got cornflakes every morning without any other selection. They complained that no kettles were issued to their cells like other prisons and the amount of food served at the meals were of small portions.

Drugs within the Prison:- They stated that there were drugs in the prison but not to the same extent as some other prisons. They wanted a drug free section of the prison but none was available in Cork as the management state it is drug free. They outlined that drugs are available in prisons throughout the world and that this prison is no different.

Facilities in exercise Yards:- They complained that they never see any sunshine as with the double netting over the yard it is permanently dark. It is the most depressing exercise yard in the entire prison system and there are no seating not even benches supplied. The toilets are a disgrace but were cleaned prior to our visit. The drinking fountain is filthy and no facilities to wash after a game of soccer.

Visits/visitors: They complained about the lack of contact with family members especially their children resulting in family break-up in a lot of the

prisoners' cases. The attitude of staff to their visitors as well as having their family members to share side by side with sex offenders during the course of their visit was vehemently expressed.

Regarding their overall concerns for improvements at the prison they outlined

- * Better medical services (especially the G.P's manner)
- * Toilet facilities generally but especially after lock up at 7.30 pm each evening
- * Dull, drab exercise yard with no facilities for washing or seating
- * Better visiting facilities and better attitude of staff towards prisoners and visitors
- * To receive written replies to their applications
- * Improvement in the choice of food and amount served
- * A drug free area within the prison
- * Educational facilities for those held in "D" block

6.15 Meeting with two individual prison officers

The inspector met two officers separately who had wished to see him. He outlined that he was inhibited in taking up individual cases as per his appointment.

Both officer's concerns related to sick leave pay during periods of sick leave absence, no recognition by prison authorities of accident on duty and of "genuine" injuries plus findings of the criminal injuries tribunal. The stopping of wages during periods of sick absence and the lack of support and assistance to those in need of same. The termination of their services was a big worry for them.

The Inspector advised that they attend the specialist services available to them within the Prison Service. He also mentioned the employment assistance programme and the role the union may have in such matters.

6.16 Meeting with individual prisoner

The inspector met a prisoner who had requested to see him in the presence of his special advisor. The inspector outlined to the prisoner that his terms of reference did not allow for the inspector to take up individual cases and therefore there was very little that he could do for him unless his concerns were of a general nature.

The prisoner complained about ordinary prisoners having to share the visiting box with sex offenders. He also went on to complain about him not getting the same drug in prison as he was receiving outside (diazepam 3 times per day). He said the court ordered that he gets it but nothing in writing came

from the court. The psychiatrist gives him Librium here instead of diazepam. He said that he was taking the matter to the High Court by way of order of mandamus. The Inspector told him that it is now a matter for the courts in view of his application.

6.17 *D WING*

The Inspector & Professor Fennell visited D wing and viewed the facilities there.

One prisoner who was there requested to speak and to deliver a letter to the Inspector which he did. He had complaints about access to the Chaplain in D wing, and complained of beatings, displaying several marks and abrasions on his body to the Inspector & Prof Fennell. These occurred, he alleges in another prison. The Inspector is very concerned about this prisoner's complaint and raised it with the visiting committee members and the Governor. [The visiting committee have confirmed since our inspection that the gardai have been invited to investigate the complaint a second letter from the visiting committee has confirmed that the prisoner declined to talk to the gardai.] He was on methadone treatment in Cork Prison, having been transferred to Cork Prison while already on methadone elsewhere. The doctor in Cork has decided to continue treatment in such cases. The prisoner felt forcefully that what was available in other prisons should be available in Cork.

There were 5 prisoners present in D wing on the occasion of the visit, one having been moved to hospital. There had been a dirty protest, the cause of which was not clear, and so an amount of painting & cleaning had been

recently carried out in the wing. The two 'padded' (cladded) cells/ 'medical observation units' are only used on medical instruction. The diaries of such use of the special cells were not immediately available on request, but presented the next day to the Inspector. These two cells were claustrophobic, and might be prone to being either very hot or very cold. There was only the option of florescent light or no light at all in them. At least a 'blue' light facility should be installed and made available to those already vulnerable prisoners. Ironically D wing is the only part of Cork prison with in cell sanitation.

7. Health & Safety (especially fire aspect)

- 7.1 The two senior grade staff responsible for health and safety met the inspectorate as well as the staff's health and safety representative who supplied a copy of two audits carried out in the prison. One of the audits was a risk assessment carried out by Mr. Sean Warde, the health and safety officer for the Prison Service in February 2004. The other was a safety audit carried out by D. Devereux and J Kelleher of the firm McAllister, Devereux Keating Ltd in October 2001.
- 7.2 The senior staff outlined that the prison had both a domestic and fire mains water supply. There are 15 fire hydrants at various locations throughout the prison with 3 dry risers in the circle to cover A & B Divisions, 6 dry risers in "C" Division and 2 in "D" unit. There are hose reels on all landings, of sufficient length to reach the furthest point required. Massive water storage tanks are installed with jockey pumps (electric and diesel) fitted and when the water pressure on the hydrant decrease the jockey pumps automatically come into

operation to increase the pressure. They have 132 (hand held) fire extinguishers placed throughout the prison, offices, education unit, stores, workshops, etc and emergency lightings installed throughout the premises. The "A & B" and "C" wings are fitted with the roof "colt system" which have smoke detectors installed within them and when they detect smoke the roof flaps automatically open to allow it out. The cells in the D Unit have a smoke detection sampling system installed as well as a fan extraction system. The two padded cells also have water sprinklers fitted. All of the other areas such as offices, stores, education, workshops, etc, are fitted with smoke detectors which are wired into the central control panel in the control room, as well as repeater panels which display smoke detection within the particular areas. Push button emergency alarm system is also installed at various locations throughout the prison for security alert purposes.

- 7.3 The inspectorate was shown the records regarding checks and services that have been carried out on equipment and fittings by both outside contracts and local trades staff which were as follows:-

Emergency lighting (ELCB) fault loop impedance test - once per month by Automation Gillin and Buckley. Fire extinguishers once per year by Apex fire controls and also by trades staff if extinguishers have been used within the year. Break glass emergency fire alarms serviced by outside contractor every 3 months and security alarms by trades staff monthly. Jockey pumps checked weekly by trades staff as well as the smoke detectors and water sprinklers. Canopies over the cooking areas of the kitchen checked once per

year plus dismantled, washed checked and cleaned regularly by local staff.

Emergency exits checked once per month. Colt roof smoke extraction systems once per month.

The signages re hydrant locations, which have the covers painted yellow and also indication marks on walls, plus exits signs and assembly points arrows are well displayed but the assembly points at location are not displayed.

There are two means of entry and exits from each of the cellular landings as well as the other buildings where required.

- 7.4 The last record of a fire evacuation having taken place was in 2000 and none since then. 195 staff have received refresher training in B.A. No refresher training has taken place in C & R or fire hose/hydrant fire extinguisher familiarisation courses. No instructions or fire drill exercises have been undertaken with the prisoners. The staff training, evacuation drills plus the instructions to prisoners are areas in need of serious attention and should be rectified.

The Cork City fire brigade personnel have been in the prison in February 2004 and July 2003 with three different staff watches for familiarisation tours. They have also brought the brigade which can only enter the prison via the back gate and even when in, its movements are restricted as it cannot drive entirely around the cell accommodation block. However, with the length of hoses available, it can reach all areas of the buildings.

The staffs safety representative's documents relates very much to risk assessment with the removal of posts and the impact such has on staffs' safety. The audit conducted in 2001 was to measure the safety standards

within the prison at the time and highlight areas where improvements were necessary or desirable. Some of the recommendations of this audit has been implemented while others were dependant on a National prison policy. (e.g appointment of local contractors, storage of chemical substance, etc). The question of medical assessment of wearers of breathing apparatus (B.A) has not been solved to my knowledge and again it requires a National prison policy directive. Both reports highlight the lack of fire evacuation drill as well as the lack of staff training which is already highlighted in our inspection report. Guidelines in relation to the management of prisoners dirty protests and staffs' health and safety regarding same was another of the items raised by the staff's representative.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Fire drill evacuation exercises and staff refresher training in fire prevention should be undertaken as a matter of urgency. (7.4 pg 84)
2. Staff refresher and developmental training should recommence (7.4 pg 84)
3. The laundry work to be evaluated regarding the workshop being considered as a work/training centre and aim for its work to achieve accreditation status (5.18 pg 38)
4. That each visitor be issued with a number on arrival for their visit and when the visitor is being called to enter the prison for the visit, that the number be

announced in the waiting area rather than the name as is the present practice
(5.28 pg 45)

5. The seats that are missing off the toilet bowls and the other general maintenance highlighted in report be replaced/repared by trades staff.
(A2,A3,B2,B3,C1,C2, workshops small exercise yard, shower area pg 31, 33, 34, 35, 40, 42, 47,48)
6. Individual offices and large room for use by the Probation and Welfare staff and the psychologist should be provided (6.5 pg 58 + 6.11 pg 69)
7. The surgery and other medical accommodation facilities should be relocated to the ground floor if possible and separate consulting rooms made available. A modern examination room with modern examination couch be provided.
(6.10 pg 67 + pg 68)
8. That a portable defibrillator and a weighting seals be provided for the doctor's surgery (6.7 pg 64)
9. The dentistry surgery should have an x-ray machine facility (6.9 pg 66)
10. The head of medical services in IPS Headquarters should discuss with the prison doctor the GP's alleged attitude to prisoners and the alleged non examination of prisoners (6.14 Pg 76)

11. A "blue" light facility should be installed in the cells in D unit. (6.17 pg 82)

9.

CONCLUSION

The space and physical resources are at a premium within Cork Prison and it is the most overcrowded prison in the system. The cells in A & B sections are smaller than the average size cells and despite this fact, each one is doubled while others have 4 to 6 in them. The facilities for some services are very poor and the practice of "slopping out" continues in all cells except the D wing. This is unacceptable. Planning seems to be ad hoc as apparently approx 5.5 million has been spent on drawing up plans for a new prison building and extending the large boundary wall to accommodate a juvenile centre which now appears not to be going ahead. A new prison to replace Cork is to be built on Spike Island. However, the money spent on Cork may not be totally wasted as consideration could be given to retaining Cork as a remand/trial prison plus a female prison. It would be unnecessary to retain it at its present size and it would be more economical to have remands /trial prisoners close to the City courts to avoid the cost of escorts and to facilitate family/solicitors visits to those who are deemed innocent.

In terms of the food, the kitchen won the hygiene award for the first time last year. The meals were adequate but there appears to be limits as to choice and especially at breakfast serving. The fact that the dinners are pre-plated in the kitchen prior to serving further limited the choice. The serving of the main meal at evening time rather than mid-day could also be considered as there

were complaints from prisoners regarding being hungry at night time and having to purchase items from the tuck shop to overcome their hunger.

Both the probation and welfare staff and the psychologist would benefit from both individual consultation offices and a group room which would accommodate up to approx 20 prisoners. It is essential for their work to have the necessary facilities to carry it out.

The educational facilities seem to be adequate in terms of personnel and facilities, but in terms of access, there were complaints from prisoners that they could not always access the education service, in that they may not always be called by the prison officers even if their name was down for class. There also appears to be a difficulty for a large proportion of the prisoners to access education, there are 7 or 8 max to a class and most prisoners do not involve themselves with the education facilities at all, despite the fact that they may well have either functional literacy problems, or indeed, have left education at an early age and so have need in terms of education and training for future reintegration and employment. This is a concern which must be met by the prison authorities generally who should take a more pro-active approach towards involving as many as possible in education.

The medical services being provided has been praised by the Governor but there were severe criticisms by the prisoners of the attitude and attention the G.P provides, although one prisoner spoke highly of him. I am concerned about the allegations made against the G.P and I feel that the head of the medical services in the IPS should discuss his alleged attitude to prisoners with him. The accommodation and facilities in which the medical personnel

operate needs to be upgraded as well as being relocated to the ground floor area.

The attitude of staff and prisoners appeared quite good although there were complaints by prisoners of the attitude of some staff especially towards their visitors. The regime was quite strict and again the prisoners raised issues such as early lock up, late unlocks, difficulties in being allowed out of cell to use the toilet, no written replies to applications, being placed on misconduct report for trivial offences, although the number of misconduct reports (ninety one in the past 3 months) does not support this argument. However, the matters raised merits attention from local management.

Bullying and racism does not appear to be a problem, however a booklet on these issues which is produced in Cloverhill Prison should be available to all prisons.

The visiting facilities are inadequate. The room is too small for the numbers who have to use it and not sufficient seating for the visitors or indeed none at all for the prisoners. The length of time from arrival of the visitor at waiting room until called in for the visit is far too long and the process should be speeded up. There is practically no facilities for a "family type" visit whereby delicate discussions can take place where there are family problems, bereavements, etc.

The lack of workshops or work/training areas is a problem which needs addressing. The fact that some prisoners spend their day in an exercise yard

doing nothing is soul destroying, while others spend their time in cells watching tv or playing tv games is not good. It should be the aim of the Prison Service to have all prisoners engaged during out of cell time, either at work, training, education, or prison programmes.

There is an undercurrent of industrial relations problems which is not solely confined to Cork Prison. It is a worrying trend that needs attention which could effect the regime of the prison and prisoners' welfare.

Staff refresher training is almost non existent except for B.A in which a considerable number of staff have been trained. Fire evacuation drills have not taken place and no fire hose/hydrant/reel extinguish familiarisation courses have taken place. This is alarming and needs attention. Indeed staff developmental training is sadly lacking throughout the system.

The controller and auditor general's report for 2002 outlines that the sick leave record per staff member in Cork Prison was 40 days per year which is more than twice the national average for the Irish Prison Service. The daily average number on sick leave at time of inspection was 15:3 with four staff on continuous sick leave for more than six months. The overall level of staff sick leave at the prison is high and needs attention.

The overall hygiene and general maintenance of the prison was reasonably good considering most of the buildings are very old. In some areas the hygiene could be improved and additional painting in brighter colours would help but overall it is acceptable.

I wish to thank all those involved in our inspection for their help and co-operation. The Governor and staff for providing a room and refreshments plus the liaison officer and the other staff who looked after our needs. It was much appreciated.