



HM INSPECTORATE OF PRISONS

HMP PETERHEAD

INSPECTION: 30-31 MARCH 2005

LAST INSPECTION 21-22 JANUARY 2004



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

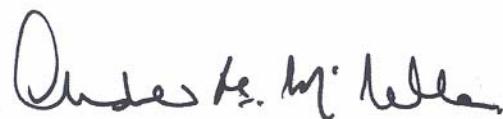
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The visit to HMP Peterhead was made as part of a programme to visit every prison each year in which a full inspection is not being made. In the course of such visits the purpose is to follow up points of note from previous inspections, to examine any significant changes, and to explore issues arising from the establishment's own assessment of itself. It should not be seen as an attempt to inspect the whole life of the establishment.

1.2 The Inspection Team comprised:

| | |
|------------------|--------|
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May 2005

ANDREW R C MCLELLAN
HM CHIEF INSPECTOR OF PRISONS

2. PREAMBLE

2.1 The installation of electric power in all the cells at Peterhead is now complete. This marks a significant improvement in the conditions for prisoners. They now have access to kettles and to television sets. This installation has been long awaited and it is welcome. There is now no prison in Scotland with no electric power in any cell.

2.2 Slopping out, however, remains. Every report on Peterhead criticizes slopping out: but still it remains. Slopping out can never be anything other than disgraceful: it is, however, less bad this year in Peterhead than it has been. No longer are prisoners sharing cells in Peterhead: and this does make slopping out less disgraceful than before. But the conditions in which prisoners live in Peterhead will never be decent while slopping out continues.

2.3 There is now a very small number of prisoners in Peterhead who live in very good conditions. The re-opening of the old Peterhead Unit in the form of a local ‘top-end’ provides for 10 prisoners to have access to proper toilet facilities, to live in well-appointed cells, and to have a measure of freedom and responsibility within the unit. In terms of preparation for release for long-term prisoners this development marks real improvement. It is still, however, a very long way short of the opportunities for preparation for release which may be available to prisoners in other prisons.

2.4 Real improvement can also be seen in another crucial aspect of preparation for release. The last two reports have expressed dismay at the small number of prisoners doing the STOP programme, the programme for sex offenders which is at the centre of the strategy seeking to reduce re-offending. This report indicates that the numbers have increased considerably, and that the overall target for programme completions has been exceeded. Nevertheless, in the course of this short inspection the Inspectorate was still concerned that some prisoners might not be given the opportunity to address their offending behaviour in a timely manner, at a relevant point in their sentence.

2.5 Peterhead therefore deserves recognition for some progress. However, there is a new concern about the amount of time which prisoners are spending locked up in their cells. The uncertainty over the future of the prison is also as great as ever. It is not simply that

managers and staff and prisoners are no more clear now than they were one year ago about what will happen: it is also that the uncertainty itself has had one more year to have its effect.

3. KEY ISSUES AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Reducing Re-offending

3.1 There has been a marked improvement in the number of completions of the STOP programme in the last year. In 2003-04 there were 14 completions of the core programme and no adapted or extended programmes were run. In 2004-05 there were 17 completions of the core programme; and an adapted and extended programme along with a rolling programme were also run. In total there were 42 completions of STOP in 2004-05. This increase is to be welcomed. Site accreditation for the Core 2000 programme was achieved during the year. Site accreditation for the adapted and extended programmes has now been sought.

3.2 Other programmes run during the year were as follows:

| | Completions |
|---------------------|-------------|
| • Cognitive Skills | 24 |
| • Anger Management | 13 |
| • Relationships | 36 |
| • Sensible Drinking | 20 |

3.3 The overall target for programme completions was exceeded in 2004-05.

3.4 It is also very encouraging to note that a “Motivation to Change” project has started. A working group of psychologists and programmes staff has been established to identify areas which inhibit involvement in STOP and improve processes and interventions. Focus groups have been held; a questionnaire has been issued examining communication and approach styles; and literature reviews have been carried out.

3.5 Despite all of these encouraging moves, the Inspectorate was still concerned that some prisoners might not be given the opportunity to address their offending behaviour in a timely manner, at a relevant point in their sentence.

Physical Conditions

3.6 The most striking difference since the last inspection is the physical conditions in which prisoners live: there is now no cell sharing. This has improved conditions considerably. So too has the completion of the Electric Power in Cell project. This means that all prisoners now have a range of additional facilities including television.

3.7 Apart from the former Peterhead Unit (now serving as an enhanced ‘top-end’ regime for Peterhead) all prisoners still live in cells without toilet facilities. Uniquely in the Scottish Prison Estate, chemical porta-potties are in use. This is extremely unsatisfactory. Plans to allow access to toilet facilities during lock up periods were submitted, but SPS decided that prisoners will not be allowed access to toilets during lock-up periods. The ‘top-end’ facility now provides very good living conditions for 10 prisoners.

3.8 At the time of the last inspection, plans were also being made to give prisoners in ‘E’ Hall (the former cells area) access to toilets during lock-up. At the time of this inspection these plans had not reached a conclusion.

3.9 Plans to improve the visiting arrangements have also been unsuccessful in attracting funding from SPS, and visitors occasionally still require to wait in a bus outside the prison.

3.10 The Gymnasium has not been replaced or upgraded.

Access to Work and Regime Opportunities

3.11 Problems remain in terms of prisoners’ access to purposeful activities. All prisoners who are assessed as suitable are allocated a job during induction. However, the quality of some of these jobs is variable; the workshops are sometimes closed due to staffing difficulties; and in some areas there is little to do when they are open. If workshops are closed, most prisoners are locked in their cells, with little alternative activity available. This still needs to be addressed.

Prisoner Management

3.12 The development of an enhanced regime for Peterhead by developing the former ‘Peterhead Unit’ into a 10 cell ‘top end’ facility is showing some progress. Careful plans are also being made to develop opportunities for prisoners to begin to prepare for release by creating limited and closely managed opportunities for some work in the community.

3.13 Prisoners who do not wish to take part in the STOP programme are no longer held together in ‘B’ Hall. This has removed the stigma of ‘B’ Hall being a ‘downgrade’ hall. The move appears to have been handled very well with few problems emerging.

3.14 Arrangements for induction have been improved by the creation of a designated Induction Unit in ‘B’ Hall Annexe and by the introduction of the local model of the SPS National Induction programme. Induction is well structured and very well documented.

3.15 National targets for Sentence Management are still not being met. The prison has an appropriate structure in place, which involves one manager in each hall responsible for Sentence Management, two full time Risk and Needs Assessment Officers and 20 Officers who also do Risk and Needs Assessments. A sample of folders was examined and these were kept to a reasonable standard. However, a common complaint from prisoners was that they had little routine contact with Personal Officers. Some claimed that a lack of contact with a personal officer meant that that officer does not have the skills or knowledge to make assessments. The Sentence Management Scheme does not require regular contact between the prisoner and the Personal Officer to be recorded, consequently the annual Action Plan may be the only evidence of contact.

3.16 There had been no escapes in the twelve months prior to the inspection.

Health

3.17 Healthcare was criticized by prisoners. However, the nurse triage system is well developed, and despite the criticism, only two formal complaints had been made to the Health Centre during the year. The Health Centre aims to prioritize cases and ensure that all prisoners can see the doctor within three sessions. Issues over the late delivery of some medicines have been resolved by one nurse taking on a pharmacy liaison role and meeting

fortnightly with the pharmacy supplier. It is welcome to note that a Mental Health Team has now been established. The issue of over-the-counter medication has not been resolved.

ACT

3.18 Ninety per cent of staff have received the appropriate level of ACT training. Social work provision is to be increased, which will allow the social work unit to be more involved in ACT.

Education and Learning

3.19 The Education Contract had just been awarded at the time of inspection to a supplier new to Peterhead. This had led to some anxiety about what this would mean for education and learning. Accreditation of the practical elements of SVQ courses has been addressed by switching from the SQA to City and Guilds courses. This is however a short term solution which the new provider will need to address.

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