

**Criminal Justice Inspection
Northern Ireland**
a better justice system for all



TOM McGONIGLE

CORRECTIONAL OVERSIGHT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

NORTHERN IRELAND PRISON SERVICE

- Three prisons:
 - Maghaberry: 841 places
 - Magilligan: 457 places
 - Hydebank Wood (male and female): 192 places
- Budget: £136m
- Cost per prisoner place: £86k (E&W = £37k; RoI = £72k)
- Personnel: 2,100



KEY PRISONER DATA

- N Ireland rate of imprisonment = 84 / 100k
- Population at 10 September 2008 = 1,546
 - 58 female
 - 8% foreign nationals
 - 180 Lifers
 - 60% increase since 2001
 - 63 separated prisoners
 - 20 Juveniles
- 2007 – 08: 5,769 receptions, 47% remands, 29% fine defaulters and 24% sentenced



CRIMINAL JUSTICE INSPECTION NORTHERN IRELAND

- Established in 2003 following the Criminal Justice Review
- ‘Unified’ Inspectorate, independent with statutory powers
- Employs other Inspectorates, including HM Inspectorate of Prisons
- Must inspect 20 organisations
- Must not investigate individual cases



STAFFING

- Chief Inspector
- Deputy Chief Inspector
- Five Inspectors
- Eight Support staff
- Cost: £1.4m / 0.1% of Criminal Justice budget



PHILOSOPHY

- Inspecting for improvement rather than for compliance
- Inspecting *with* the Agencies
- ‘Grown-up’ approach inspection, assuming positive motivation
- Interactive process, agreed at each stage
- Not inspecting for blame
- Not taking sides



PRISON INSPECTIONS METHODOLOGY – WITH HMIP

- Announced and Unannounced Inspections
- ‘Expectations’
- Healthy Prisons Agenda – Safety, Respect, Purposeful activity and Resettlement
- **HMIP emphasis on outcomes for prisoners, but CJl also inspects the Prison Service**



METHODOLOGY contd...

- Preliminary visits - prisoner questionnaires and self-assessment, other views
- Team of 10 – 12 inspectors, including specialists spend one week in the prison
- Hot debrief on findings / recommendations
- Share draft Report – three months
- Publish – six months
- Action Plan



OUTCOMES

- Published Reports:
 - Ash House: 154 recommendations (November 2007 / June 2008)
 - Hydebank Wood YOC: 182 recommendations (November 2007 / July 2008)
 - Magilligan: 130 recommendations (May 2006 / December 2006)
 - Maghaberry: 178 recommendations (October 2005 / May 2006)
- NIPS reaction
- Public reaction



THEMATIC CUSTODIAL INSPECTIONS

- Prisoner resettlement strategy
- Sex offender management
- 'Approved Premises' (offender hostels)
- Lifer management review
- Police custody



OTHER CJ CUSTODIAL OVERSIGHT

- Juvenile Justice Centre:
Small modern custodial unit for children, run by social workers
- Police and Court cells
- Immigration Removal facilities



OTHER CUSTODY OVERSIGHT BODIES

- Prisoner Ombudsman
- Independent Monitoring Boards
- Mental Health Commission
- Audit Office
- Children's Commissioner
- Surveillance Commissioner
- Human Rights Commission
- Equality Commission



Organisational & Political Issues

- Liberal sentencing, but small society and media interest = risk aversion
- NIPS culture
- Post-conflict legacy
- Increasing size and diversity of population
- Devolution of criminal justice – 2008..??



Organisational & Political Issues contd

- Appointment of Chief Inspector & staff
- Seconded staff – conflicts?
- Adequacy of budget
- Refreshment of the staff pool



Organisational & Political Issues contd

- Legislative remit – independence, powers of access, publication rights?
- Philosophy – “A critical friend” or “Inspecting for blame?”
- Value of process v outcome?
- Choice of inspection topics – who determines?
- Healthy tension in professional relationships?
- Inspecting for the public or for a professional audience?



How cj organisations manage their inspectors:

- Welcome and collaborate
- Avoid and exclude
- Promise, but do nothing
- Prevaricate
- Overload with literature and documentation
- Complain - “We are the most inspected in the world...”
- Compare with previous inspection regimes



Organisational & Political Issues contd

Unrealistic expectations that CJI will:

- Praise your agency and criticise the others
- Mediate with other agencies and inspectorates who we commission
- Deal with individual complaints

- Level of public awareness/interest?
- How much media coverage do we want?



CONTACT DETAILS

TOM McGONIGLE

Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
14 Great Victoria Street
Belfast BT2 7BA

Telephone: (028) 9025 8000

www.cjini.org

Criminal Justice Inspection
Northern Ireland
a better justice system for all

