

Northern Ireland Prison Service Mistaken Prisoner Releases

A report on the Northern Ireland Prison Service enquiry
into the erroneous releases of two prisoners on
29 September 2010 and 1 October 2010

November 2010





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**Criminal Justice Inspection
Northern Ireland**
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List of abbreviations

CJA	Criminal Justice Agencies
CJI	Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CJO	Criminal Justice Organisation
COCD	Code of Conduct and Discipline
ICOS	Integrated Court Operation System
IT	Information Technology
NFR	Not For Release
NICTS	Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service
NIPS	Northern Ireland Prison Service
PCO	Prison Custody Officer
PE	Preliminary Enquiry
PECCS	Prisoner Escort and Court Custody Service
PPS	Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland
PRISM	Prisoner Records Information System Management
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
SPCO	Senior Prison Custody Officer
SOPO	Sexual Offences Prevention Order
ToR	Terms of Reference
URN	Unique Reference Number





Executive Summary

In September and October 2010 the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) released two prisoners in error – Mr Devidas Paliutis from Maghaberry Prison and Mr Connelly Cummins from Downpatrick Court. The Minister of Justice, David Ford MLA, initiated an enquiry to be conducted by the NIPS on 4 October and asked the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland to provide independent assurance on the enquiry and its findings. This report sets out Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland's (CJI's) oversight of the NIPS enquiry.

It was agreed that the purpose of the enquiry was to establish:

- what should have happened;
- what actually happened; and
- to consider what learning could be applied both immediately and in the mid to long-term.

The NIPS Enquiry Team developed a series of actions to discharge their responsibilities including interviews with all parties involved in the process of the releases, examination of procedures and examination of the systematic issues arising from the releases in error.

In order to discharge their role in providing an independent view on the NIPS enquiry, CJI Inspectors attended all core NIPS Enquiry Team meetings and communicated regularly with the team leader outside these meetings. At these meetings CJI Inspectors were invited to comment on all aspects of the enquiry and provided oversight, challenge and comment on all deliberations considered appropriate by the Inspectors.

Among the specific issues raised by the Inspectors during the process was the need to ensure that the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) appointed a liaison officer for the enquiry, and that additional sampling checks be carried out to ensure that errors had not been repeated in other cases. Inspectors also raised issues around the need to ensure that the system errors uncovered from initial enquiries were learned across the NIPS and pointed to procedures in Magilligan and Hydebank Wood. Inspectors also spoke with staff within Maghaberry General Office and were briefed on and observed the process of advanced checking for court appointments and the management of prisoner files in advance of these appointments. All suggestions for further work were accepted by the NIPS Enquiry Team.

The factors that led to the release of the two prisoners were different and a series of recommendations have been developed by the Enquiry Team to address both sets of circumstances. Overall, Inspectors are content that the NIPS enquiry delivered what was required to meet the Terms of Reference (ToR) provided to it, and identified or instituted fitting remedial actions to moderate the risk of occurrence of any erroneous releases in the short term.



The NIPS enquiry has made a number of recommendations which were agreed by Inspectors and are outlined at Appendix 2. Otherwise, they are not repeated in this report except to say that Inspectors were encouraged by the freshness in approach to these recommendations by the Enquiry Team. In particular, Inspectors feel the ‘general’ recommendations made by the NIPS are capable of delivering a more appropriate and robust system. It is hoped that these recommendations will be implemented and sustained over the medium to long-term.

A remaining area of concern relates to the failure of the NIPS to undertake a disciplinary investigation relating to the release of Mr Cummins from Downpatrick Court, bearing in mind the NIPS’s own Code of Conduct and Discipline (COCD), which states that an investigation which may lead to a discipline hearing involving a member of staff must be initiated as soon as possible or within four days of any alleged or suspected misconduct. They should normally be completed within 14 days but can take longer where the case is complicated. The need to give early consideration to a discipline hearing was raised by Inspectors at the first meeting of the Enquiry Team on 5 October and on subsequent occasions. To our understanding there has been no disciplinary investigation raised in relation to this matter. Inspectors make no judgement as to the outcome of any such enquiry but believe a more rapid and effective response by the NIPS could have been initiated in order to address public concerns over the handling of the erroneous releases. While the ToR of the Enquiry Team were silent on the subject of a disciplinary investigation, CJI recommends that such action is taken by the NIPS management.

Finally, the release of Mr Devidas Paliutis from Maghaberry raises issues concerning management arrangements within the prison. More specifically the NIPS Enquiry Team state: *“Existing practices highlight several control weaknesses and support the view that there is not a culture in the NIPS of carrying out independent checks or applying adequately robust governance arrangements.”*

Recommendations to address these issues must be implemented. CJI recommend that a follow-up inspection is carried out in six–12 months to monitor and review the implementation process.



Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for this enquiry were silent on the issues of potential discipline and how this was to be addressed. These should specifically have addressed the possibility for discipline and the action to be taken, where appropriate by the NIPS Enquiry Team. Managers in the NIPS should be cognisant of the prospect for discipline matters to arise in their daily work and move swiftly to address the need for formal discipline. Senior managers should move equally swiftly in making decisions to appoint discipline Investigating Officers and follow proper procedure for regulation and control in this regard.

Recommendation 2:

Inspectors would recommend a further follow-up inspection by CJI in six-12 months. The purpose of this follow-up inspection should be to assess the implementation of the urgent action taken, assess progress and implementation of the NIPS internal recommendations and provide further assurance that the risks of erroneous releases remain acceptable.

Section



Inspection Report

Introduction and background



- 1.1 This report describes Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland's (CJI's) oversight of the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) enquiry into the incorrect release of two prisoners in their custody. These mistaken releases took place during a four-day period between 29 September 2010 and 1 October 2010. The detailed sequence of events and errors will be identified and explained in the NIPS enquiry report which has itself been subject to quality assurance by Inspectors from CJI. It is that enquiry and its conduct which is the specific focus of this short report. Thus, it is not a commentary on the chronology of what happened and the errors discovered. Those were matters for the NIPS internal enquiry.
- 1.2 On discovering that two mistaken releases had been made from the NIPS's custody the Minister of Justice, David Ford, MLA, moved quickly and instituted an internal NIPS enquiry. He asked the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland to 'review' that enquiry. This was announced to the Northern Ireland Assembly by the Minister on 4 October 2010.
- 1.3 Terms of Reference (ToR) for the enquiry were jointly commissioned by the Minister of Justice and the Director General of NIPS. The ToR are reproduced as Appendix I.
- 1.4 The NIPS established a core Enquiry Team which was led by the Deputy Director of Operations (Acting Governor I). Other core team members consisted of two Grade 'A' staff from Operations and Criminal Justice Implementation and a Grade 'B' Project Manager for the NIPS Management Information System (PRISM).
- 1.5 As part of their review of the NIPS enquiry, Inspectors attended all core NIPS enquiry team meetings as follows:
- an initial scoping meeting on 5 October 2010;
 - update and progress meeting on 8 October 2010;
 - update and progress meeting on 13 October 2010;
 - update and progress meeting on 18 October 2010; and
 - update and progress meeting on 26 October 2010.
- Inspectors also communicated regularly with the NIPS enquiry team leader outside of these meetings.
- 1.6 At these meetings, a CJI Inspector was invited to comment on all aspects of the enquiry and provided oversight, challenge and comment on all deliberations as considered appropriate.

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- 1.7 In terms of the conduct of the enquiry CJI agreed the initial approach to the enquiry, based on its ToR.

The agreed strategic approach, in summary, was to:

- interview all parties involved in the process of the releases;
- examine procedures; and
- examine systems.

The aim in this approach was two-fold:

- to establish what should have happened and what did happen; and
- to consider what learning could be applied both immediately and in the mid to long-term.

- 1.8 The prisoners released in error were Mr Devidas Paliutis, released from Maghaberry Prison on 29 September 2010 and Mr Connelly Cummins, released from Downpatrick Courthouse on 1 October 2010.

- 1.9 While Mr Cummins was subsequently returned to prison by 29 October 2010, Mr Paliutis had not been located at the time of writing this report.

Matters addressed by Inspectors



2.1 Among specific issues initially raised by Inspectors were:

- the need to give early consideration to a discipline enquiry in the incident concerning the release from Downpatrick Courthouse on 1 October 2010. Inspectors based this, firstly, on prima facie evidence of human errors which were made public in the Minister's statement to the Northern Ireland Assembly on 4 October 2010 in which he stated:

"It is my understanding, however, that he is still awaiting trial on other charges, namely theft, aggravated vehicle taking and using a vehicle without insurance. It appears that a Prison Custody Officer (PCO) failed to take those charges into account and released Mr Cummins in error."

Secondly, based on the NIPS internal initial enquiries into the release;

- the need to ensure that the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) appointed a liaison officer for the enquiry. Inspectors based this on early indications that there may have been some matters of concern regarding interpretation and transcription of court results; and

- additional sampling and checks to ensure the errors in these cases had not been repeated and other prisoners released in error, but as yet undetected by the courts, given future court (and remand) dates. The risks were initially assessed by the NIPS to be very low. However, on further pressing of this matter by Inspectors, it was agreed to conduct further such reassurance checks.

2.2 Inspectors did not attend the individual interviews, desk-top research or material reviews conducted by the NIPS Enquiry Team. However, Inspectors were kept updated on agreed progress and matters arising in the regular core team meetings described at Paragraph 1.5.

2.3 As the NIPS enquiry progressed, Inspectors provided continuing oversight by way of attendance at all core team meetings. As these meetings developed Inspectors raised or repeated the following further matters:

- the need to expedite matters of discipline in the Downpatrick case bearing in mind the NIPS's own Code of Conduct and Discipline (COCD). This was raised as a result of Inspectors knowledge of the NIPS COCD, which at Paragraph 5.2 states: *"Investigations which may lead to a*

disciplinary hearing involving a member of staff must be initiated as soon as practicable or within four days of any alleged or suspected misconduct. They should normally be completed within 14 days but where the case is particularly complicated it may take longer.”

Inspectors were conscious that in moving swiftly to appoint an Investigating Officer and serving relevant notices, that the room for any later dispute about the effect of delay could be mitigated;

- the need to ensure that the system errors uncovered from initial enquiries were learned, not just in the specific business areas concerned, but across the NIPS. Inspectors asked, for example, whether new procedures concerning the use of video-link forms had been implemented in Hydebank Wood and Magilligan. This had not initially been the case, but was swiftly rectified;
- the need to re-design forms in respect of Not For Release (NFR) prisoners to make these visually more apparent and thus reduce the risk of mistakes; and
- the scope of checks on releases initiated by, or the involvement of the video-link clerk in releases, and further checks to ensure that the risks of other prisoners having been released. Inspectors were central to driving realistic checks and in setting parameters for these risk-based assessments.

To the credit of the NIPS Enquiry Team the checks described at the latter point above were voluntarily extended and, in addition, built-in an element of

independence as described further below.

2.4 The risk-based checks requested by CJI Inspectors and described above were conducted as follows:

- a total of 100% of the prisoner releases in which the video-link clerk responsible for initiating Mr Paliutis' release was involved were examined by experienced staff from a different NIPS Department and further cross checked by a Grade 'C'.

These checks were reviewed by Inspectors who examined seven such files as a sample. All checks were verified against the custodial records on PRISM which are fed from the NICTS system through Causeway. As such, the checks are reliant on data created independently of the NIPS. This was assessed by Inspectors as important, given that the second and third level errors which led to the mistaken release from Maghaberry relied on data created internal to the NIPS. Inspectors recognise, however, and would point out that much depends on the quality and timeliness of court result information input by the NICTS and made available to others via the Causeway link. During these dip sample checks Inspectors took the opportunity to seek feedback on the nature of the information provided by NICTS and its timeliness. No issues were raised in respect of these matters. However, staff did highlight the following matters:

- NICTS and others such as the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland (PPS) use case specific details and reference numbers, whereas in dealing with an individual detainee,



NIPS use the person as the basis for references and files. This was stated by some NIPS staff to have the potential for confusion. NIPS staff reported that not all cases for which a detainee might have warrants/court appointments/fines/bail conditions outstanding will be immediately apparent or seen by NIPS staff. However, Inspectors have learned that Causeway is capable of a cross match search by name. If details are entered correctly (names, address, and date of birth) the system is capable of matching these and thus court appointments for individual prisoners. This raises concern regarding the understanding of staff regarding the abilities of the system; and

- the main difficulty is with regard to individuals who are recorded in Causeway under different names. This can be caused by, for example, spelling irregularities (for example Smyth or Smith). Inspectors understand that 'merges' in such scenarios are the responsibility of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and that the problem has been known for some time and is being addressed.

The issue of training for NIPS staff is addressed in the internal enquiry report recommendations, thus Inspectors make no further recommendation with regard to these matters.

2.5 Inspectors saw and examined the administrative process of video-link remands which were assessed to be apposite. In addition to the checks of live screens and alerts, the video-link clerk checks that video-link results

forms are received against a list of expected warrants originating from the NICTS via Causeway. Second level checks were in operation and at both stages, checks were against the Causeway system meaning (as above) that the check was against data external to the NIPS. Alerts were being processed and checked and a revised checklist was in use to ensure staff checked all the appropriate issues. In addition, the video-link report forms were retained on prisoner's files. Staff reported, on average, between 30-60 video-link remands and appearances per day. The volumes and the importance of these roles indicate the imperative of ensuring that systems, supervision and training of staff are regularly reviewed.

2.6 Inspectors spoke with the supervisor (Grade 'C') in the Maghaberry General Office. They were briefed on and observed the process of advanced checking for court appointments and the management of prisoners files in advance of these appointments. This is achieved by checking the court diary appointments on PRISM which are received electronically from the NICTS through Causeway against the information contained on hardcopy Court Lists provided by the NICTS for any discrepancy. Administrative staff then prepare the prisoners personal files by bringing these forward. As the court results sheets are received and the prisoners returned to prison, the files are updated and put away. In this way any person whose papers may not have been received (or who might have been released in error) would remain and be investigated further. This is an additional level check, which while not primarily designed to pinpoint such errors, can have that effect. Thus, scheduled court



appearances, which would ordinarily be provided to the NIPS via the NICTS on Causeway are double checked. In addition, the Grade 'C' who is responsible for second level checks of releases had access to the NICTS system Integrated Court Operation System (ICOS) to address any potential anomalies discovered. This staff member reported to Inspectors routinely being in contact with the NICTS colleagues in order to clarify and resolve any potential misunderstandings. Inspectors saw this as appropriate to ensure the risk of reputational damage to the NIPS was addressed. However, if the quality and timeliness of information received via Causeway is good and court appointments are scheduled correctly in the first instance, then the risk of error or misunderstanding will be reduced.

2.7 Inspectors spoke to the Grade 'B' responsible for overseeing the additional checks for potential mistaken releases and learned that during the period agreed for checks (four weeks prior to the first erroneous release on 29 September 2010) there were a total of 278 releases by the NIPS. Of this number, a total of 104 were selected at random for further checks. Of the latter number, 54 were video-link cases. This means that over 37% of cases in this period have been examined for the possibility of further errors. In addition, some 10% of these have been independently examined by the NICTS from a list of the 104 releases (see also Chapter 3).

2.8 None of the checks conducted highlighted any concern that further erroneous releases had been made. While this does not give absolute assurance, based on a 37% check of

discharges over a four week period, it does provide some positive reassurance that the systemic errors and other matters raised both by the NIPS enquiry and this report are unlikely to have resulted in widespread mistaken releases. There are estimated to be some 370 discharges per calendar month.

2.9 Despite Inspectors raising the issue of discipline, investigations in the case of Mr Cummins on a number of occasions, there was a slow response to it and to the appointment of a discipline Investigating Officer. Thus, notices to individual officers under the COCD had not been issued by 29 October 2010. This particular aspect of the NIPS response, while not the direct responsibility of the NIPS Enquiry Team, manifestly could have been given more credence. It is not unrealistic to say that the public concern and reputational damage not just to the NIPS, but to the wider criminal justice system was at the time quite stark. A discipline enquiry could and should, realistically, have been instituted much sooner. Inspectors would make clear that they do not make any judgement about the outcome of such discipline enquiries in general or in this specific case. However, in order to ensure that the public interest is met and the rights of individuals are protected, where there is prima facie evidence of misconduct, then a much more rapid and effective response is expected.

CHAPTER 3:

Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service checks and feedback



- 3.1 Inspectors visited and spoke with the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) staff to assess the processes involved in the secondary independent checks conducted by them. Again, these checks were considered to be appropriate. These checks were based on the complete list of 278 releases from Maghaberry Prison for the four weeks prior to 29 September 2010. NICTS staff were asked to independently conduct a 20% random check of this list.
- 3.2 Given the resourcing of these checks (a 20% sample would have taken four days), it was agreed that the NICTS would eventually complete a total of 10%. Staff highlighted a random sample of 27 and completed checks by interrogating the ICOS system for court appointments or warrants post-prisoners release date. While some queries were raised by NICTS staff these were minor in nature and did not suggest that any further erroneous releases had been made. Indeed, all checks similarly indicated no outstanding matters and hence concern regarding mistaken releases.
- 3.3 Inspectors talked through with NICTS staff the processes involved and the possibility for error. It was again apparent that the system for prisoner appointments is dependant on the quality of information input by all criminal justice organisations (CJO's). Defendant details and defendant matching are initiated predominantly by the PSNI whereas the NICTS is responsible for ensuring court orders are resulted accurately. The latter is recognised within the NICTS and has been reinforced by the publicity surrounding these mistaken releases and other recent high profile cases where the transcription of Sexual Offences Prevention Orders (SOPO's) was at issue.
- 3.4 Inspectors also raised with NICTS staff the procedures should a defendant fail to appear in court (for example, having been erroneously released by NIPS). The NICTS clarified that before a Judge would remand a defendant in his absence, the Court would query with the NIPS and any legal representative the reasons for non-appearance. In this way the NIPS would be alerted to any potential erroneous releases, but only when a prisoner was next due for remand. This could, in theory, be some months post-release as defendants may be remanded in custody for a period not normally exceeding four weeks.
- 3.5 The NICTS in discussing the above matter with Inspectors raised ongoing



difficulties with non-production of some prisoners. This was estimated to occur in one to two cases per week. This is set against a backdrop of in excess of 2,200 productions per annum over the last three years. The NICTS and NIPS staff are working together to resolve any difficulties in this area. While this does not specifically impact on the issue of erroneous releases, it does highlight a number of matters. They are:

- the complexity of dealing with large volumes of prisoners with various court appointments and productions; and
- the need for continuing supervision, control and attention to this area of business.

3.6 Two issues of clarity arise in respect of comments regarding the NICTS and should be noted by readers as applicable throughout this report. They are:

- the NICTS is solely responsible for providing accurate court result information. This is shared across CJO's electronically via the Causeway system and;
- the NICTS is responsible for providing court appointments (again via Causeway) for all matters except first appearances which are the responsibility of the PSNI and the PPS.

Section



Appendices



Appendix 1: Northern Ireland Prison Service Enquiry Terms of Reference

ENQUIRY INTO THE ERRONEOUS RELEASE OF PRISONER DEVIDAS PALIUTIS AT MAGHABERRY PRISON ON 29 SEPTEMBER AND CONNELLY CUMMINS AT DOWNPATRICK CROWN COURT ON 1 OCTOBER 2010

The purpose of this enquiry is to establish in full all the circumstances surrounding two separate incidents - the erroneous release of Devidas Paliutis (C6093) at Maghaberry Prison on 29 September and of Connelly Cummins at Downpatrick Magistrates' Court on 1 October.

Although the enquiry will principally focus on the events at Maghaberry Prison and Downpatrick Magistrates' Court, the enquiry will benefit from input from the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS), and other parts of the criminal justice system with responsibility for the transmission of information about the processing of offenders.

The enquiry will look at a range of issues, including the following in relation to:

- (a) Mr Paliutis
 - the circumstances of Mr Paliutis' hearing in Newry Magistrates Court over the video-link from Maghaberry Prison, and the subsequent transmission of information about the outcome to Maghaberry Prison;
 - the information that is held on the NIPS Prisoner Records Information System (PRISM) and on other files; and
 - the application of the processes that led to Mr Paliutis' discharge on 29 September.
- (b) Mr Cummins
 - the circumstances of Mr Cummins' release from Downpatrick Crown Court; and
 - the information that is provided to the NIPS Prisoner Escort and Court Custody Service (PECCS) staff about prisoners appearing in court; and
- (c) Other matters that may come to notice in the course of the enquiry.

Recognising that this enquiry will benefit from liaison with other Criminal Justice Agencies (CJA's), the report should be submitted to the Minister of Justice and the NIPS Director General by 29 October.

However it is also essential that steps are taken as soon as possible to prevent any possibility of a recurrence; the enquiry should therefore also identify those steps that are to be taken at Maghaberry Prison and by PECCS in the interim, and any other urgent recommendations. It would be helpful to have the interim, emerging findings on this basis by no later than 13 October 2010.



Appendix 2: Northern Ireland Prison Service Enquiry Team Recommendations

NIPS Recommendations – Prisoner Paliutis Incident

- The remedial action set out in paragraph 5.7 should be applied, where relevant, to each establishment and regularly reviewed to ensure that they remain apposite and sustainable.
- The staffing shortages in Maghaberry General Office should be addressed immediately.
- The working environment in Maghaberry General Office should be improved and should include ‘quiet’ room facilities for sentence calculation and final checks.
- A comprehensive set of ‘Know Your Job’ guides, linked to suitable training, should be provided for General Office staff, Duty Release Managers and Video-Link staff in all establishments.
- General Office staff should be ‘clustered’ in groups based on function and workflow. Staff should change group periodically to share and develop skills.
- A succession plan should be drawn up for all General Office staff to ensure business continuity.
- A means of encouraging staff retention in General Offices should be considered, for example higher rate environmental allowance for General Service grades.
- The Governor in charge of the General Office in Maghaberry should not be involved in other operational duties, for example Duty Governor or adjudications.
- The discipline staff assigned to the General Office should be placed on domestic shift to maximise their availability.
- All staff involved in discharge checks must be trained in the process and in use of live screens to facilitate pre-discharge checks. Until the training is complete adequate out-of-hours support arrangements must be in place.
- General Office staff should receive familiarisation training in the work of the NICTS to develop a common understanding of business needs. The staff who carry out management checks in the General Office should be provided with access to ICOS.
- The structure of the inmate file should be revised to align the details with the records held on PRISM.

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- A re-assessment of the duties of the General Office in Maghaberry should be carried out to ensure that the focus of the Branch is on custody, release and sentence calculation as already happens in Hydebank Wood.

NIPS Recommendations – Prisoner Connelly Cummins Incident

- The PECCS Governor must ensure that there is a reliable and robust means of communicating information on prisoners who are ‘Not For Release’ (NFR) to allow timely access of this information to court-based staff, to reduce duplication and the risk of a transcription error. The current process of the van escorting officer passing on the information should not be relied on in isolation.
- Written guidance should be issued to PECCS staff on the process to be followed in order that final checks can be made with General Offices to ensure that there are no other matters requiring a prisoner to be held in custody. Such checks need to be expedited to ensure that the release of those individuals who should not otherwise be held is not delayed unnecessarily. This guidance will need to be communicated to the Court Service, the judiciary and legal profession.
- The Senior Prison Custody Officer (SPCO)/Prison Custody Officer (PCO) in charge of the court on taking up duty must check that early notification of NFR’s has been received.
- The SPCO/PCO in charge of the court should brief Dock Officers on NFR prisoners. Where an early oral briefing is not possible the SPCO must share the information with Dock Officers as soon as it is available. Dock Officers must also check to ensure that they have a clear unambiguous direction on those prisoners NFR and that all ‘custody production’ prisoners will in any case be taken down to the cell area before release to enable final checks to be done.

NIPS General Recommendations

- The warrant summary screen on PRISM should include a facility to take the user quickly through to all system alerts for an individual inmate. The system needs to include an audit trail of alerts and a means of confirming that they have been actioned.
- The information on the warrant summary screen should be sorted so that the details for each case appear chronologically on the screen.
- The process to edit and authorise warrants on PRISM should be changed to enable the check and authorisation stages to be recorded separately. These tasks must be completed by a different member of staff to ensure segregation of duties is achieved.
- PRISM should be modified to prohibit users from discharging inmates until all validation checks have been carried out and authorised on the system. Any exceptions authorised by the user should be recorded and printed on the discharge documentation.



- Additional controls should be included on PRISM to prevent users from discharging inmates using unscheduled appointments.
- There should be a facility to provide a discharge report on PRISM that highlights the actions that need to be taken prior to discharge with particular reference to public protection.
- The discharge process should be reviewed in its entirety in conjunction with other agencies and Causeway officials to determine whether any proposed business changes can be incorporated into the integrated system. The review should not be limited to the issues raised in this enquiry and should also examine how individual agencies' competing business needs are met.
- The changes proposed by the enquiry should be managed as a change programme by a senior manager with experience in systems controls and governance.



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