

Joanne Henney
Chief Operating Officer
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11 December 2014

Dear Mrs Henny,

I am writing to you as Chair of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Immigration Detention currently being held by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Refugees and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Migration. The inquiry is examining the use of detention in the UK immigration and asylum systems, with a particular focus on the conditions within detention centres, the impact on individual detainees and their families, the wider financial and social consequences, and the future role of detention within the immigration system.

As part of the inquiry, the panel have received written and oral evidence from a range of individuals and organisations, including from many individuals who have a direct experience of being detainees in the detention estate. The panel will produce a report in the New Year, and to help inform that report the panel I would be extremely grateful if you could answer a number of questions that have arisen in the course of the inquiry. Please find these questions as follows:

1. The UK is currently the only country in the European Union that doesn't have a maximum time limit on immigration detention. Does this pose any significant managerial challenges?
2. What training is given to staff regarding the immigration system, i.e. are staff able to understand the particular circumstances of detainees?
3. What training is given to staff relating to the National Referral Mechanism and recognising signs that an individual may have been trafficked? What training is

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Sarah Teather MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
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- given to staff relating to the management of mental health illness? Is this training given to all staff?
4. In what circumstances is segregation used to manage issues of behaviour? What safeguards and support are there for mentally disordered detainees who are held in segregation?
 5. What systems are in place to allow detainees to feed back to centre management about facilities and staff at Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre? Are detainees able to contact individuals and organisations outside of the IRC and independent from the management in private? Do GEO have any system in place to make operations at the IRC more transparent and have any attempts to increase transparency ever been blocked by the Home Office?
 6. Women in Dungavel are often in an extreme minority in relation to men. Could you tell us about your gender-specific policies and practices? Please include the ratio of female to male staff members at Dungavel.
 7. Do GEO have any concerns regarding the search regime at the IRC? Have GEO ever requested a lightening of the search regime or other changes to the management of detainees? If so, what was the Home Office response?
 8. The panel has received a number of submissions criticising the current health provision for detainees. What improvements would GEO like to see and what impact has the transfer of responsibility for commissioning services to NHS England had? Additionally, what is your perception of how rule 35 operates? Could it be improved in any way?
 9. The panel has heard concerns regarding the movement of detainees around the detention estate. How does this operate in practice, particularly who initiates the move and who carries it out?
 10. The panel will be publishing a report with a number of recommendations regarding the way in which the detention system operations in the UK. Are there any recommendations that GEO would like to see included in the report?

Thank you in advance for your engagement with the inquiry. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Jonathan Featonby in my office on 020 7219 8147 or via jonathan.featonby@parliament.uk.

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Yours sincerely,

Sarah Teather MP

Member of Parliament for Brent Centre and Chair of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Immigration Detention

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