

# Independent Monitoring Board

## Annual Report 2015



Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre  
Independent Monitoring Board  
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## Contents

1. Introduction
2. Executive Summary
3. Location and Background
4. Accommodation and hygiene (Rules 15 and 16)
5. Clothing and food (Rules 12, 13 and 14)
6. Regime (Rules 17 - 19)
7. Religion and Religious Affairs (Rules 20 - 25)
8. Communications (Rules 26 - 32)
9. Healthcare (Rules 33 - 37)
10. Requests and Complaints (Rule 38)
11. Safety and Security (Rules 39 – 43)
12. Independent Monitoring Board (Part 6 DC Rules)
13. Legal Representatives
14. Comments and recommendations
15. Formal Confirmation (Rule 64)

## 1. Introduction

This annual report covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2015 – 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2015 and is furnished for the Minister for Immigration by the Independent Monitoring Board of Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre, South Lanarkshire, Scotland. It is prepared in accordance with Rule 64(1) of the Detention Centre Rules 2001 and relates specifically to the state of the centre and its administration, and includes comments, suggestions and recommendations which board members consider relevant and appropriate in the circumstances under review.

In effect it follows the appraisal and findings made by board members on the day to day performance of duties and responsibilities made by fully committed personnel, acting operationally in a successful custodial establishment according to Immigration Law.

## 2. Executive Summary

2.1 The Minister is assured that the replacement in the last quarter of the year, of the GEO. UK. Contract Director at Dungavel by a Senior Management Team has not altered the efficiency and effectiveness of the complex under the administration of the Home Office and the UK Parliament.

2.2 It is pleasing to report that despite the extremely adverse weather experienced in January and February the centre remained in full operational mode at all times. In this regard, the staff are once again, due the highest possible commendation for their determination and commitment to maintain a warm, comfortable centre with hot meals always available to detainees.

2.3 The outstanding support given by local farmers in using their own heavy vehicles for snow clearance is also worthy of record, and it exemplifies a perfect example of community involvement in the best interests of all concerned.

### 3. Location and background

3.1 Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre is situated 8 miles from the small town of Strathaven, in the Southern Uplands of Scotland, occupying a 44 acre site with an extremely impressive historical background as a principal Scottish stronghold, commanding travel routes to all parts of the compass since Neolithic times.

3.2 This unequalled advantage remains with its proximity to the M74 (Scotland – England) Motorway (9 miles) and ready access to Glasgow, Edinburgh and Prestwick airports, each within 40 minutes travel time. It is the only IRC in Scotland.

3.3 The main sandstone building of Dungavel House was built by the Duke of Hamilton, as a hunting lodge, giving it over for use as a Naval Hospital in both World Wars and a Care Home for seriously injured veterans thereafter. It then became, in turn, a training school for disadvantaged children, a Coal Board Training College and finally a class “C” prison closing in 2000 when the premises were taken over by the Home Office. Following extensive conversion and refurbishment the centre was commissioned as an IRC and opened on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2001.

3.4 The ease of access to the area attracts many hill walkers, cyclists and tourists, resulting in the Centre being elected as one of the major Scottish Staging Posts in “Round Britain Cycle 2014”.

3.5 Closing on a final matter of intrigue, the Dukes private airfield at Dungavel, was where Rudolf Hess intended landing, but the aircraft ran out of fuel, some 2miles short of the airstrip. At that time, Lord James was flying from Biggin Hill, in defence of London, when he lost his life.

The official papers relating to the visit by Rudolf Hess have now been published and the reader may wish to learn more of the situation at their own pursuit.

#### 4. Accommodation and Hygiene (Rules 15 and 16)

4.1 Members are pleased to assure the Minister that the Contractor GEO, acting on behalf of the Home Office, continues to discharge all the responsibilities required by Parliament in the housing and accommodation and needs of illegal immigrants held at Dungavel IRC competently and efficiently.

Accommodation and appropriate facilities are of an excellent standard and fully meet every need of both male and female residents, as follows:

<b>Housing area</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Bed spaces</b>
Main House	Male	89
	Female	14
Loudoun House	Male	102
Hamilton House	Male	44
<b>Total Availability</b>		<b>249</b>

Loudoun House and Hamilton House are separate from the Main House, each offering en-suite facilities, with television, telephone and radio. Quiet areas can be used, if this is preferred.

In addition, every resident in the Centre has the opportunity to make tea or coffee at any time of the night or day. This enhances the comfort of the accommodation.

## 5. Clothing and food (Rules 12 - 14)

5.1 The Board is pleased to confirm that GEO UK Senior Management and staff ensure that detainees at Dungavel House IRC are afforded access to the highest standards of clothing and food as required by UK Parliament.

5.2 During the period under review, the quality of food was found by Board Members to be of excellent quality and its preparation and presentation were carried forward by a fully committed catering staff with care and understanding to the dining room server counter. Furthermore, all the possible requirements of personal diet or religious practice are given particular consideration and every encouragement in group religious observance by all detainees.

5.3 In addition it is noteworthy that an instructional cooking class is available every day in which up to 12 people are able to participate gaining valuable hints and attitudes about cooking from other ethnic groups

5.4 Senior Management are careful to ensure that clothing suitable for religious observance is made available to detainees wishing to follow appropriate religious practices in keeping with their beliefs. This is emphasised from the first induction to the Centre and constantly repeated by Welfare Officers and the Religious Manager.

5.5 Board Members have noted however, that the largest number of detainees is wearing high value clothing and footwear, far beyond what could be reasonably expected in their particular circumstances. Nevertheless, detainees are able to purchase clothing and food in the well stocked charity shop at the Centre at greatly discounted prices.

The Board commends the efforts made by management in the provisions of clothing and food.

## 6. Regime (Rules 17-19)

6.1 The prevention of boredom in a custodial establishment or institution is always demanding of ideas and structural pursuits for both groups and individuals. Due to weather changes there must always be contingency plans to fit the re-adjustment necessary.

6.2 The main population has changed to between 30 and 39, but means that sport of some kind remains the most sought after activity and must be programmed to give the largest number the opportunity of participation, with cricket football being extremely popular, these sports are played on the Centres astro-turf pitch and attract a very good cross-section of the population of the Centre ensuring detainees of all backgrounds mix together. These are closely followed by volleyball and badminton; these activities are played in the main gymnasium and outdoors on the all-weather pitch when the weather is suitable.

6.3 The gymnasium offers an excellent work out centre with the most modern machines available for individual, physical effort to maintain fitness with personal supervision by trained gymnasium staff.

6.4 There is also great demand for use of the internet. There are 20 machines supplied for access to the internet and a further 6 machines for IT lessons for detainees. Internet access is available to detainees in the library, Information Centre, the Visits Hall and the coffee bar at the shop. A strict booking system is in operation, covering two hour sessions between 9am and 9pm daily. Detainee use of the internet is monitored by staff in those areas and tutors are available to train detainees in the use of computers.

6.5 Instruction in tailoring, dressmaking and other garments is made under supervision of trained staff on six modern sewing machines, sometimes with considerable success by detainees who have returned to their own country and set up business for themselves and their family. The most popular items made are t-shirts, completed with the detainees own design, by individuals who have never seen a sewing machine before coming to Dungavel.

6.6 There are also classes on English and other languages, a full library with DVDs available in a wide range of tongues for anyone wishing to gain further

knowledge or instruction and newspapers in every language are supplied daily. Any particular book, either secular or religious will be supplied on request. Discos, karaoke and other events are well attended and music is played by their own disk-jockeys, sometimes twice a week, according to demand.

6.7 A fully socialising atmosphere is offered by the café/shop situated on the ground floor of the main building. The unit is well decorated and provides a background where detainees can meet and enjoy tea, coffee, cold drinks or snacks served from the shop counter. Books, magazines and other reading material is on hand for further relaxation. The shop offers all types of goods at an excellent discount, including SIM cards for every mobile using foreign communication media and now has computers to allow detainees access to the internet, under supervision of shop staff.

6.8 An opportunity to engage in paid employment within the centre is open to every detainee and ranges from gardening and tidying open spaces, to keeping dining and association rooms clean and welcoming.

6.9 In addition, any resident who wishes to begin a course of instruction in the raising of plants, flowers and shrubs, is given every assistance and guidance by trained staff on a personal basis.

6.10 The learning centre has prepared a presentation outlining the advantages detainees gain by participating in the Funded Return Scheme (FRS) as a means of voluntary return to their home country – the project is proving very helpful.

## 7. Religion and Religious Affairs (Rules 20-25)

7.1 It is with pleasure that the Board assures the Minister that detainees at Dungavel House IRC are fully supported by GEO UK in every aspect of their personal religious practices, observance and belief. A senior manager is in the post to oversee this important duty.

7.2 This begins at the induction process at Dungavel. A private interview is able to be arranged with an Imam, Priest or Minister during induction to the centre, when detainees are encouraged to make their religious requirements known to the Religious Affairs Manager and welfare Officers, so that an early introduction can be arranged with an Imam, Priest or Minister representing their own particular religious adherence. This is given further profile by the publication of a daily calendar of religious programs of events occurring in the Centre.

7.3 All the procedures are given further strength by Board Members discussing these provisions with everyone concerned at every opportunity and at least weekly.

## 8. Communications (Rules 26-32)

8.1 The Board is pleased to assure the Minister that the Senior Management Team make use of every actively constructive means of communication between relatives, colleagues and friends, both within the Centre and elsewhere ensuring the best interests of those likely to be involved.

8.2 When welfare officers meet detainees during their inductions to the Centre free mobile telephones are given to them, phone cards are also available for purchase. Their attention is drawn to the position of BT telephones from where they can make private telephone calls at any time if that is their wish. Detainees are also advised that any kind of communication they wish to make with any other detainees, banks, prisons, police or other IRC's will be readily dealt with by the Centre welfare officer at their request.

8.3 Physical communication is given every priority by anyone wishing to travel to the Centre. A free bus operates from the bus/railway station in Hamilton every day including Saturdays and Sundays.

8.4 The Board commends GEO Senior Management Team in the constant effort made to keep good communication between detainees and others. This compliments the priority of the maintenance of safety and security in the Centre.

## 9. Health Care (Rules 33-37)

9.1 The healthcare Department within Dungavel IRC is located in the main building on the ground floor. Like many other centres within the estate, Dungavel is not purpose built; therefore it has a very small healthcare facility with no in-patient beds.

9.2 There are now two healthcare departments, the existing healthcare facility and a new healthcare unit. The existing department contains a dental suite, group therapy room, RMN room, Counsellors room, allowing female detainees to be seen separately from males, and a small kitchen. The new unit consists of an office, Pharmacy, Records, Consulting and Treatment rooms and a further small kitchen. There is also a healthcare reception room within the main Detainee Reception.

9.3 All detainees are entitled to a second medical opinion, if an examining couch is required for the consultation, then this needs to take place within the healthcare department. Due to a small size of the area, and the need for rooms to be used to their full potential, timings for the use of the consulting rooms are managed to best effect.

9.4 The Operating Standards set out the minimum level of qualifications to be held by staff providing services and training as required. The current staffing of the Healthcare Department is as follows:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Qualification</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
Healthcare Manager	RMN & RGN	One
Senior Nurse (Part-Time)	RGN	One
Staff Nurse (Full-Time)	RGN	Three &
One Vacant		
Staff Nurse (Part-Time)	RGN	One
Staff Nurse (Full Time)	RMN	Two

Therapist/Counsellor (Part-Time)	SRAT	One
Administrator (Full-Time)		One

9.5 In addition to the above, there are three GPs providing cover between 8am and 5pm with out of hours cover being provided by Med-Co SHS telephone advice only.

9.6 There are a range of specialists regularly visiting Dungavel IRC, including Psychiatrist providing two sessions per month as part of a Service Level Agreement with NHS Lanarkshire, enabling greater continuity of care as the admitting Hospital for the centre is within the NHS Lanarkshire region. There is also a monthly visit from an independent Pharmacist who is available for one-to-one appointments to discuss any issues surrounding medication and provide advice. The detainee population has not as yet seen a need to utilise this service, but it continues to be available.

9.7 A visiting Dentist provides weekly surgeries for Check-Ups and Treatments in line with NHS guidelines. An Optician attends the centre once per month providing optical services, and a Podiatrist also maintains a monthly clinic. Midwifery visits are provided by NHS Lanarkshire as required and a Health Visitor is also available in the same manner, although, since cessation of the detention of families with children at Dungavel IRC, this service has not been necessary. Chronic Disease Clinics are also held on a monthly basis.

9.8 In regards to child protection, Social Worker Services are again provided by NHS Lanarkshire (Child and Family Team) with the most visits arising from age disputes, made by detainees claiming being minors.

9.9 The latest Schedule D Audit by GEO took place in November 2014 finding that the Healthcare Department were 100% compliant with the Audit expectations.

9.10 There is also provision for Mental Health Therapies with regular Nurse Led sessions being held for both new referrals and ongoing cases in conjunction with the Counsellor/SRAT clinics. A range of group therapies are also conducted on a weekly or monthly basis by the nursing staff as follows:

1. Relaxation
2. Anxiety management

3. Positive Mental Health
4. Horticultural Therapy
5. In Reach – Visiting staff and detainees within the units.

9.11 In addition, on a 2 weekly basis, there are Multidisciplinary meetings held between The Home Office, GEO Managers and Healthcare where the current ACDT caseload is discussed with a view to ensuring best practice in managing challenged individuals, while sharing information that safeguards welfare.

9.12 A further Detainee Consultative Meeting is also held weekly with the same participant groups, with detainees, providing a forum for swift resolution of issues surrounding regime, healthcare, food etc.

9.13 The Mental Welfare Commission conducted their three yearly focussed visit on the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2014 to Dungavel IRC Healthcare Department.

They chose to dedicate their visit for the following reasons:

- Care and treatment
- Staff Training and supervision
- Liaison with NHS Lanarkshire

The report is based on the following:

- Patients interviewed/records examined (no reports completed)
- Records examined only (reports completed)

They also looked at the facilities and interviewed members of staff to gain an overall impression of the care and treatment provided. On completion of their visit no recommendations were made.

9.14 The board commends the range of Healthcare services delivered by the Department.

## 10. Requests and Complaints (Rule 38)

10.1 Complaints and requests made by detainees at Dungavel House IRC are handled carefully and positively by both GEO UK and Centre Immigration staff. This results in a speedy resolution of matters raised or coming to their attention operationally.

10.2 Complaint boxes are placed at easily accessible points throughout the centre and are clearly marked for the specific use of detainees who wish to have a matter of concern made subject to explanation or investigation, according to relevant circumstances.

10.3 Every day, Centre Immigration staff, undertakes the duty of collecting any complaints or requests placed in the boxes, these immediately become the subject of official record and action.

10.4 It is pleasing to note that written complaints worthy of further investigation have remained between 10 and 15 in number over recent years and all have been successfully concluded to the complainer's satisfaction.

10.5 Requests made by detainees are mainly for assistance in gaining transfer to an IRC situated close to relatives or friends. These are always treated with sympathy and understanding and are generally successful.

10.6 The Board is happy to assure the Minister of the praiseworthy effort made by all concerned in achieving a highly satisfactory conclusion to the complaints and requests raised during the year under review.

## 11. Safety and Security (Rules 39-43)

11.1 The question of safety and security in every custodial establishment is always subject to many and varied contributing factors. The constant watchfulness of operational staff is completely essential to its maintenance, with no more restriction or control than is required for safe custody and well ordered community life within the complex as a whole.

11.2 In Dungavel House IRC, the positive action of staff is bolstered by the daily examination of information which highlights the early formation of difficult groups or factions requiring a measure of control when the use of skill and tact are employed to lessen the risk of such situations.

11.3 In addition, there is a monthly meeting with the contractor, Home Office Management, Police Scotland and the escorting contractor attending when all matters likely to affect the situation are fully reviewed and classified for action according to perceived risk factors.

11.4 The IMB attend all meetings and receive full reports. The Board members are pleased to assure the Minister that safety and Security are given the highest possible priority at Dungavel.

## 12. Independent Monitoring Board (Part VI D.C Rules)

12.1 Dungavel House is the only independent removal centre in Scotland and since its commissioning in September 2001, members of the Monitoring Board have maintained a completely independent freedom from interference by political, religious or media groups at any time. That stance will be rigorously maintained without concession of any kind in the future.

12.2 Members of the Board are appointed by the Secretary of State, with 3 members elected as Chair, Vice-Chair and Board Development Officer. The duties are undertaken by Board Members voluntarily and without payment, but members believe that their involvement in the role of the centre assists in creating a just, safe and secure environment, as required specifically by Parliament and the general public interest.

12.3 The Independent Monitoring Board at Dungavel House IRC conducts its business under approved Constitution and Standing Orders and operates in strict accordance with the format set out in Part VI Detention Centre Rules 2001, and Immigration Law.

12.4 In order to achieve a sound objective and business structure at the time of opening, a written Constitution and Standing Orders was approved and these continue to operate in accordance with the format set out in Part V1 Detention Centre Rules and Immigration Law.

### 13. Legal Representatives

13.1 During the year there has been a reduction in the amount of work paid for by the Scottish Legal Aid Board, to lawyers advising in Criminal Courts and this has resulted in an increase in numbers of lawyers and advisors seeking to gain work in Dungavel.

13.2 The Board Members at Dungavel have drawn attention in the past to the deep dissatisfaction felt by many detainees regarding the quality of representation afforded by some legal advisors towards the merits of their case and its pursuit in action. It is the intention of Members to have full discussion with the Legal Aid Board at an early date in order to ensure a high standing of professionalism is maintained, particularly as public funds are involved in the outcome.

## 14. Comments and Recommendations

14.1 Members of the Dungavel Monitoring Board have always supported the Home Office, in any expense used to facilitate a speedy return of immigrants to their country of origin. In this regard they warmly welcome the appointment to Dungavel of an NRC voluntary departure officer commencing on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016. The Officer will operate on Monday's, Wednesday's and Friday's, with the duties of counselling and advising immigrants on the many different values to be gained over the differing circumstances by return to their homeland.

14.2 It is noteworthy however, that during the year under review (2015) the attitude of immigrants at Dungavel has become increasingly radical, with some openly defiant and dismissive of Immigration Law.

Staff are careful not to be provoked by such behaviour, especially as it is founded on the belief that their human rights to long term stay in Britain should remain unchallenged as many commentators and newscasters advocate daily.

Unfortunately comments of this kind do not assist the need for compliance and good sense in order to ensure safety and security to all residents in a custodial complex. This results in increased watchfulness at all times both night and day.

14.3 It is pleasing to record excellent cooperation with Embassies over the year with Pakistan and Bangladesh proving particularly helpful with their officers conducting interviews and supplying background information where that was missing.

Further development of a similar nature has been established with the Chinese Embassy who is prepared to open avenues of return to Beijing and Hong Kong. This has every appearance of strengthening in the future.

**15. Formal Confirmation (Rule 64)**

- 15.1 This report has followed a format of appraising the duties and responsibilities of a visiting committee, as set out in the Detention Centre Rules 2001; it also highlights those aspects of the day-to-day requirements within a relaxed custodial establishment as required by Immigration Law.
- 15.2 In consequence, the Board is pleased to confirm to the Minister, that in the period under review, 1<sup>st</sup> January – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013, the premises at Dungavel House immigration Removal Centre have been maintained in a satisfactory manner, and that persons who are detained there are treated with care, consideration and humanity.

**Richard W Bett FCMI**

**Chair**

**Mrs Margaret Morton**

**Vice Chair**

**Mr James Malloy**

**Board Development Officer**

**For and on behalf of Dungavel House Independent Monitoring Board.**