

## **BRIEFING**

### **Detention under immigration powers in UK prisons: severe restrictions on access to justice**

**September 24<sup>th</sup> 2013**

#### **Background**

In February 2013, Bail for Immigration Detainees (BID) along with the Prison Reform Trust, Detention Advice Service (DAS), and the Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees (AVID), wrote to the Immigration Minister and the Prisons Minister to draw attention to our concerns about the expanding use of the prison estate to hold immigration detainees. We wrote:

“Prison is, quite simply, an inappropriate environment in which to hold those who have served the sentences handed to them by the criminal courts. This is clearly recognised by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) in its standards on the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty, which sets out that holding immigration detainees in prison is “fundamentally flawed”. In its most recent report on the UK, published in 2009, the CPT highlighted its concern that it had encountered “a number of foreign nationals who were being held in prison a considerable time after their sentences had expired”, and made the explicit recommendation that “such persons, if they are unable to be deported at the end of their sentence, should be transferred to a facility designed to provide conditions of detention and a regime in line with the status of immigration detainees.”

The CPT standards acknowledge that “in certain exceptional cases, it might be appropriate to hold an immigration detainee in a prison, because of a known potential for violence.” However, the new agreement between UKBA and NOMS suggests that current policy is operating on a basis that is entirely contrary to this. We know that since the end of 2012, there has been a freeze on transfers of post-sentence detainees from prison to immigration removal centres (IRCs). This contradicts the UK Border Agency’s own [previous] policy of individualised risk assessment on a case-by-case basis, set out in Chapter 55 of the Enforcement Instructions and Guidance.

We would also draw your attention to the very significant issue of equivalence of treatment with detainees held in IRCs, particularly in relation to access to immigration legal advice. Whilst not without its problems, those held in IRCs have access to immigration advice through the Detention Duty Advice scheme. Across the prison estate, however, no such coordinated provision exists. Whilst some prisons engage the services of an independent immigration advice provider, such as the Detention Advice Service, as Prison Inspectorate reports repeatedly note, many do not. There is, in our experience, often a dearth of information about immigration solicitors in prison, and alongside the language difficulties that many detainees face, as well as the significant barrier to communication with the outside world posed by limited access to phones, this can result in detainees finding it almost impossible to access legal services in the community. Bail for Immigration Detainees' most recent survey on access to legal representation across the detention estate found that, of those detainees who had previously been in prison, 79% had received no independent immigration legal advice whilst there (May 2012). The full usage of the 1,000-detainee capacity would mean that around one quarter of those held under immigration powers are now detained in prison."

The immigration minister replied on 20<sup>th</sup> May. He wrote<sup>1</sup>:

In relation to access to legal services, within the prison estate, the TSFNO population is able to access the same legal services as the serving population. All prisons have legal visits for face to face discussions as well as the usual telephone access. The only restriction compared to an IRC is that the legal representatives cannot call their client on the telephone as and when required, as prisons do not allow staff or those detained to carry mobile phones. There are telephones available within accommodation areas, which would be accessible during normal office hours.

If, when a prisoner becomes time served, they do not agree to remain in their current establishment, they are relocated to an establishment that can offer remand facilities. These facilities also offer access to legal services.

We are concerned that the minister's response appears to suggest that immigration legal advice is available on the same basis to detainees in prisons as those held in the IRC estate. This has never been the case, for many reasons, and we set out below some evidence which will show why this is not the case at present. The minister's reply does not reflect the experience of BID and other organisations acting as legal representatives to immigration detainees held in the prison estate, or providing support and advice, that detainees held in prisons are actively disadvantaged in relation to access to legal advice and access to the courts. Based on his reply we recommend that the minister is given a fuller briefing on what services are currently provided for immigration detainees held in the prison estate.

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<sup>1</sup> TSFNO stands for 'time served foreign national offender'.

## EVIDENCE

### 1. Regimes for immigration detainees held in prisons can never offer equivalent access to justice to that available in a standard IRC regime

Home Office *Enforcement Instructions & Guidance*, Chapter 55 at 55.10.1 'Criteria for detention in prison', is silent on the type of regime under which immigration detainees are to be held under in the prison estate, referring only to "prison accommodation" or "prison beds."

Prison Service Instruction 52/2011 *Immigration, Repatriation and Removal Services* however offers the following:

#### Allocation of those detained solely under immigration powers

2.65 Where foreign national prisoners have reached the end of their custodial sentence but continue to be held under immigration powers there is no automatic requirement to return them to a local prison, although they should be treated as unconvicted prisoners (see PSO 4600 Unconvicted, Unsentenced and Civil Prisoners)

2.66 Persons detained only under immigration powers must be treated as an unconvicted prisoner with the same status and privileges (see PSO 4600). Where a prisoner is held beyond the end of his custodial sentence in a prison which does not normally hold unconvicted prisoners, consideration may be given to enable the prisoner to remain where (s)he is. The prisoner must be made aware that (s)he will be held with convicted prisoners and his/her agreement must be recorded on the form at Annex C. Where an immigration detainee opts to be held with convicted prisoners, all reasonable efforts must be made to accommodate the privileges to which unconvicted prisoners are entitled. However, it remains a matter for the Governor to determine whether or not it is appropriate for the prisoner to remain in convicted conditions.

2.68 Immigration detainees should only remain or be moved into prison establishments when they present specific risk factors that indicate they pose a serious risk of harm to the public or to the good order of an Immigration Removal Centre, including the safety of staff and other detainees, which cannot be managed within the regime applied in Immigration Removal Centres. This regime derives from Detention Centre Rules **and provides greater freedom of movement and less supervision than prisons, as well as access to the internet and mobile telephones**

The intention, on the part of HM Prison Service at least, appears to be that immigration detainees (like pre-trial remand prisoners of whatever nationality) should be given greater opportunity for contact, communication, and visits with family and friends and legal advisors, among other benefits. PSI 52/2011 makes specific reference to the access to the internet and mobile telephones available under an IRC regime.

BID's research over the last year with our own clients, with other organisations that work in prisons to support and advise foreign nationals, and with prison-held detainees themselves, reveals a more complex picture that goes beyond a straightforward remand regime-serving prisoner regime division.

Detainees in a number of prisons report no practical difference in their daily routine once they finish the custodial part of their sentence and become an immigration detainee in the same establishment. In the aspects of prison regimes that really matter to detainees trying to resolve their immigration case (whether they wish to return to their country of origin or remain in the UK), including access to legal advice and the courts, it is clear that being held in a prison puts detainees held in prisons at a clear disadvantage when compared with detainees held in IRCs.

Evidence from BID's legal casework would support the assumption that holding detainees in prison conditions, often without on-site Home Office immigration staff and immigration legal advice, is more likely to slow down the progress and resolution of immigration cases than speed it up. These practical barriers slow communication with the Home Office just as much as with legal representatives and family members.

## **2. Access to telephones highly restricted by regime and time on wing, time on lock-up, and inability to receive calls from legal advisors**

In his response to BID, AVID, PRT and DAS in May 2013, the minister stated that for immigration detainees held in prison conditions

"The only restriction compared to an IRC is that the legal representatives cannot call their client on the telephone as and when required..."

We feel this comment significantly understates the impact of the inability of detainees to be able to carry mobile phones or access telephones on the wing at any time of the day. The minister acknowledges that legal representatives cannot call their clients when they need to if they are detained in prisons, but does not appear to recognise that this is a matter for concern.

In one prison in the Midlands detainees described to BID earlier this year how their lock up regime did not change when they finished the custodial part of their sentence and became detainees held under immigration powers. This information was confirmed by staff working for an organisation working in this and other prisons.

In this prison remand and sentenced prisoners have the same lock up regimes. Remand prisoners (and detainees) can work by choice, but are away from the wing and therefore unable to access telephones, including at lunchtime, until lock up at the end of the day. By the time detainees who work return to the wing and the telephones, solicitors' offices are often closed.

The remand regime offers a range of activities, and under this regime detainees can have visits every day. However, if a detainee opts not to work and engages in activities instead, they will be also be away from the wing and similarly have no access to a telephone. Detainees who take part in activities return to the wing and access to telephones after 5pm.

Remand regime for detainee on activities rather than work in HMP [Midlands]		
8.30 – 11.45	activities	Away from wing and telephones
11.45 – 12.15	lunch and exercise	
12.15 – 1.45	lock up	No access to telephones
1.45 – 5.45	activities	Away from wing and telephones
5.45 – 6.30	dinner and association	Access to telephones but no longer core business hours for solicitors
6.30	lock up	No access to telephones

Detainees who chose to work have no routine access to telephones on the wings during working hours, even at lunchtime. This makes telephone contact with a solicitor on time-sensitive legal matters, including applications for bail, or with an immigration caseowner, almost impossible.

Detainees at this prison who instead engage in activities have a 30 minute window during which they can use telephones on their wing, and must also take lunch. They may not be able to get to speak to their solicitor during this period if he or she is unavailable.

It cannot be the case that a remand regime such as this is considered to offer detainees meaningful access to telephones, and is in no way comparable to the access to telephones (including mobile phones) available to detainees held in IRCs.

In one prison BID attends, an NGO providing support services has informed us that detainees who wish to make an urgent legal call can go to the legal department and sit with an officer to make a call to their solicitor free of charge. It is entirely at the officer's discretion, and it is up to the detainee to stress the urgency of the call. This facility is not available during lock up, and does not lend itself to dealing with time-sensitive or urgent legal matters.

A BID client currently detained in a north London prison has written to BID to explain that he finds it hard to get someone to help him with his immigration case because he is only allowed to leave his cell for one hour a day, which he perceives to be "never enough for me to do anything". Another BID client currently held in a south London prison is in the same situation, and described to BID in August 2013 how he is only out of his cell for 'association' for one hour each day at 6pm.

Legal casework is frustrated by the fact that telephone calls cannot be made by an advisor to a detainee held in prison, unlike a detainee held in an IRC. A legal representative must instead wait for the detainee to call them.

The length of calls out from prisons may also be limited. BID legal managers report that conversations of more than 10 minutes are not always possible. This is often insufficient, for example when taking a witness statement from a detained client, or exploring options for bail accommodation and sureties. ,

In a postal survey of BID's prison-held detained clients in June 2013<sup>2</sup>, many detainees have indicated that it is very difficult in prison to get information and to contact solicitors or NGOs

- “Here at HMP [R] legal advice is no deal. There aren't (sic) anyone at the establishment that are experienced in the field. There's no one to go to for help. FNP rights are not the responsibility of the officers, quoted by a senior member of staff.”
- “It is difficult to get immigration help if not impossible from prison. There is simply no one to help you. Officers do not give you opportunities to make phone calls to charities and organisations that can help.”
- “While being in detention in a prison environment it is impossible for people like myself to gain access to phone calls at any given time of the day for the purpose of social or solicitor calls. Detainees in IRCs have access to mobile phones, the internet and other services, while I'm being made to follow a 'B Category' prison regime where I was transferred 4 months after my sentence expired. Access to legal services is nil, there's been no surgery since my arrival in February and there is no way one can contact a solicitor without having it in your PIN...”

Legal calls are not free for detainees in prisons, who can access telephone and fax services only if they have credit against their telephone PIN number. Constraints on time on the wing and access to telephones during working hours are compounded by financial constraints. Detainees in prisons can often choose to work and in doing so earn money in order to pay for telephone calls to lawyers and family, but in doing so are away from the wings during the daytime. Although they have more funds as a result which they can put onto their PIN, taking work renders it impossible in some prisons to make calls to lawyers during working hours as the detainee is away from the wing completely, including at lunchtimes, while solicitors' offices are open (e.g. HMP Brixton).

By contrast, in IRCs detainees get an allowance of around 75p per day credited to their account. If they are cooperating with their removal they may be able to work and earn more money. However, they are able to hold mobile phones and make or receive legal calls at any time. In IRCs fax use – within reasonable limits – is free of charge.

Detainees in one prison told us that they get an allowance of two free letters each week on a remand regime. For a detainee forced to attempt to conduct their own legal case and unable to use the internet, this may not be sufficient.

There is an apparent lack of consistency between prisons in relation to allowances paid to immigration detainees. A small sample of prisons was called by the Detention Advice Service (DAS) who shared their findings with BID. DAS found the following:

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<sup>2</sup> In June 2013 BID contacted 38 current clients who are detained in prisons, and invited them to complete a postal survey called “Tell us about your experience of getting immigration legal advice in prison”. Responses came from the following prisons: HMP Wormwood Scrubs, HMP Maidstone, HMP Doncaster, HMP Norwich, HMP Bedford, HMP Pentonville, HMP Lincoln, HMP Lewis, HMP Peterborough, HMP Cardiff, HMP Littlehey, HMP Wandsworth, HMP Ranby, and HMP Hewell.

HMP Bronzefield	Detainees do not receive an allowance
HMP Bullingdon	Detainees receive between £2 and £2.50 per week
HMP Isle of Wight	Detainees get the same daily allowance as any other unemployed prisoner, which is currently 80p a day. If detainees choose to work, they would be paid accordingly.
HMP High Down	All prisoners get 50p per day. If they work they then get a salary on top of that, or if they are of pensionable age they get their pension added.

### **3. Slow postal system in prisons affects communication with legal advisers and the courts**

Slow delivery of mail after it has arrived at prison is a common experience for detainees held in prisons. Mail may take several days to arrive with them on the wing after it has been delivered to the prison. This includes correspondence from legal representatives, from the Home Office, and from the courts or the immigration and asylum tribunal. Some of this correspondence relates to time-sensitive matters such as deportation appeals and Section 4 (1)(c ) bail accommodation applications.

Additional resources are then wasted by HMCTS in dealing with request for extensions for appeals, and the Home Office Section 4 bail team in dealing with requests for extensions of grants of bail support.

Unrepresented detainees held in prisons – a cohort which now includes people with a viable and arguable case to appeal their deportation but no means to pay for legal advice - may be unaware that they can make an out of time appeal if Home Office correspondence reaches them too late. The use of prisons for immigration detention therefore creates practical barriers to accessing justice that have severe and life-changing consequences.

### **4. No immigration legal surgeries for detainees held in prisons**

In IRCS detainees have access to publicly funded immigration legal advice via the Detention Duty Advice Scheme operated by the Legal Aid Agency. Although there are unacceptable delays in accessing these surgeries in many removal centres, in some of the larger centres, surgeries operate four days each week, and detainees are often no more than a week or two away from an appointment with a solicitor if they do not already have one.

We are alive to the practical difficulties in arranging these surgeries, but that does not alter the fact that there is no equivalent provision for immigration advice surgeries in prisons holding detainees, even in those prisons where there are clusters of detainees.

BID raised concerns about the lack of access to immigration legal advice for detainees in prisons at a NASF stakeholder meeting on legal aid in August 2012. BID, along with ILPA and Detention

Advice Service, subsequently met with the then Legal Services Commission. The LSC indicated that they would not be able to give consideration to legal surgeries in prisons for immigration detainees, as they currently provide in IRCs. The LSC undertook to examine the financial disincentives to legal aid providers to travel to prisons, but to date no change to payments has been made so far as we know. The LSC did however undertake to put a note in the NOMS staff newsletter indicating to prison staff that details of immigration legal advisers with a legal aid contract could be obtained via the LSC website, and this was duly sent out in early 2013.

BID has tabled poor access to immigration legal advice in prisons as an agenda item for the NASF stakeholder meeting on legal aid for 2013 due to be held sometime in the autumn.

**5. Governors in a number of prisons have not renewed contracts with the Detention Advice Service (DAS) as part of devolved cost savings.**

**6. In some prisons governors are reducing hours during which immigration lawyers can visit, or reducing contact hours with detainees for NGOs funded to provide services to foreign national prisoners and detainees.**

**7. Some prisons holding immigration detainees appear to fall outside the reach of the geographical area covered by legal aid contracts.**

BID's research shows that 5 of the 80 prisons holding immigration detainees in August 2013 are 50 miles or more away from the nearest LAA access point for immigration and asylum contracts under the 2013 tender round. We can provide further information on our analysis, and the Legal Aid Authority should also be able to assist.

**8. Some prisons holding immigration detainees are holding very small numbers of detainees, and are uneconomic for Home Office staff and legal aid providers to visit regularly**

Legal aid providers of immigration advice who travel to a prison to see a potential new client are unable to claim travel expenses unless they are able to sign a Legal Help form. Travel to prisons to take instructions from potential clients is often only financially viable if a legal aid provider is able to see several detainees at one visit. In prisons holding 53 detainees (HMP Wandsworth) or 43 detainees (HMP Elmley) this may be possible. However, 49 of the 80 prisons (61%) holding detainees in August 2013 had 10 or fewer detainees, while 31 of the 80 prisons (39%) had 5 or fewer detainees.

Where legal aid firms have to make long slow journeys to remote prisons, time spent out of the office is another financial disincentive to make that trip if the potential client does not pass the means or merits test.

BID's enquiries with some of the prisons holding small numbers of immigration detainees show that many of these prisons have no on-site immigration officers. Prisons with larger holdings of immigration detainees that BID spoke to do appear to have on-site immigration staff.



	May 2013	August 2013	
HMP Guys Marsh	7 detainees	6 detainees	No immigration officer permanently on site. Immigration officers come in every 2 weeks.
HMP Haverigg	1 detainee	4 detainees	No immigration officer on site. There is an Offender Management Unit staff member who is responsible for liaising with UKBA and organising visits.

The Legal Aid Agency and organisations that wish to provide immigration advice within the legal aid system will be able to provide more detail on financial disincentives and other practical problems.

We would expect that Home Office work on immigration cases where a detainee is held in prison conditions will almost certainly progress towards resolution much more slowly without on-site Home Office staff, especially once combined with poor access to immigration solicitors, low rates of representation, and poor communication with detainees in prisons.

#### **9. Lack of internet access hinders legal research for unrepresented detainees**

Unlike detainees in IRCs, people detained in prisons are unable to access the internet to do their own legal research and obtain forms. In the context of prison-held detainees, lack of a legal representative does not necessarily mean a case has no merit, it may simply mean that the detainee has been unable to access a publicly funded immigration lawyer for reasons of geography or regime.

Detainees held in prisons may want to appeal their deportation despite the removal of deportation work from the scope of legal aid in April 2013. BID has long had a proportion of detained clients who have lived lawfully in the UK (some for up to 50 years), who are facing deportation, and have viable and arguable cases to appeal their deportation. It is essential that such detainees have access to the internet in order to be able to attempt their own legal work.

#### **10. Lack of internet access makes cooperation with the redocumentation process very difficult**

Prison-held detainees face great practical obstacles to meaningful cooperation with the documentation process, including those individuals who have clearly and consistently expressed their view to the Home Office that they wish to return to their country of origin. For over 900 detainees currently held in prisons, compliance with the documentation process may be a practical impossibility without internet access.

The consequences for an individual of being unable to obtain travel documents are wide-ranging and serious, whether or not an individual is detained, and include:

- Inability to return to their country of origin
- Perception of an increased risk of absconding, especially for individuals who are appeal rights exhausted, leading to longer detention periods due to difficulty in getting released on bail

- Ineligibility for voluntary return packages or withdrawal of offers
- Ineligibility for early removal schemes for foreign national prisoners
- Criminal charges where non-cooperation with the travel document procedure is alleged by the Home Office Destitution for people in receipt of asylum support

Given the serious implications both for detainees and Home Office removal targets of the lack of internet access for detainees in prison who wish to cooperate with documentation, BID has already briefed the office of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders & Immigration on this matter as part of the ongoing inspection of travel document processes and removals.

### **11. Prison regimes actively disadvantage bail applicants**

The following case study highlights a number of the problems that prison-held detainees face when trying to get fair access to the courts, and equivalent access to detainees held in IRCs.

Detainee Mr P, Iraqi national, held in a prison in the Greater Manchester area. His bail hearing was listed for 9<sup>th</sup> September 2013. On the day he was not produced at court, the reason he was given was that this was because of damage to the room in court where prisoners are held. His wife who was present in the hearing room reports that the First-tier judge went ahead with the bail hearing without Mr P. Mr P had no legal representative to act for him or withdraw the application. His application was refused. Mr P received the bail summary in prison the day after the hearing, and a week later had still not received the written reasons for refusal of bail.

We unpack some of these problems in more detail below.

### **12. Time limits for videolink connections for immigration bail hearings where applicant is held in a prison**

Some bail applications are heard from prisons via videolink, but the video links may be cut off after 60 minutes, meaning that the hearing continues without the applicant present. BID first brought this problem to the attention of the President of the First-tier Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chamber) at a stakeholder meeting in July 2012.

BID client whose bail application was being heard via videolink from a prison on the south coast. After 20 minutes of the videolink, (10 minute consultation with legal representative then another 5-10 minutes for everyone to get into position) the judge told the applicant that as the videolink facility would be available for 60 minutes in total, there would come a point if the hearing continued past 60 minutes where the applicant would no longer be able to connect with the hearing centre, although the hearing would continue, and he would be informed of the result later on.

This is highly unsatisfactory for both applicant and legal representative. We can speculate that it may be generally felt in the prison service that 60 minutes is sufficient for a bail hearing, especially as videolink facilities in prisons are used overwhelmingly in the criminal justice system for entering

pleas, which are short events. However, BID's recent research<sup>3</sup> shows that bail hearings can last up to two hours for both represented and unrepresented applicants, and for represented applicants the mean hearing time is 52 minutes (not including the 10 minute consultation prior to the hearing). It is not possible to know in advance which hearings are likely to go over 60 minutes, but it is more likely where applicants have a long immigration history or have family issues, and these features are common to a significant proportion of BID's prison held clients.

Represented hearings	Mean length = 52 minutes Not including 10 minute con	Range 5 – 120 minutes
Unrepresented hearings	Mean length = 29 minutes Not including 10 minute con.	Range 5 – 75 minutes

*In this study (IJ2) 3 bail applicants in prison, all were produced for the hearing not VL.*

The President of the First-tier Tribunal (IAC) noted in July 2012 that he agreed strongly with BID's concerns about this, and this is reflected in HMCTS minutes. He stated that prisons only want a 60 minute slot for video links, and a 120 minute slot is highly unlikely in his view. HMCTS was present at the meeting and was asked to speak to this point. BID is currently following up with HMCTS and HM Prison Service.

### **13. Bail summaries do not always reach prison-held detainees until after the bail hearing**

Paperwork for bail hearings, including the bail summary, is not reaching detainees in time for the hearing because the postal system in prisons takes too long. This is not an issue in IRCs where custody officers are used to responding quickly to legal correspondence.

### **14. Bail applicants are not always produced at hearing centres from prisons, resulting in withdrawal of bail applications and wasted Home Office and HMCTS resources**

Bail applicants are not always produced from prisons at Tribunal hearing centres from prisons where there is no video-link facility, meaning that bail hearings may need to be withdrawn and relisted. Detainees who are not produced may have waited weeks or months for a Section 4 (1)(c) bail address, and may not be able to get an extension of a grant of Section 4 support in order to get the bail application re-listed in time. Unnecessarily withdrawn cases are a waste of HMCTS resources. Where a detainee is not produced at a bail hearing and they are reliant on Section 4 (1)(c) bail accommodation, that accommodation may have been empty for a number of weeks pending licence-related checks during which time the Home Office is paying rent in addition to detention costs.

Only 21 of the 80 prisons where detainees were being held in August 2013 are equipped with videolink facilities (source: Ministry of Justice website). An FOI request has been submitted by BID to the Ministry of Justice to confirm which of those 21 prisons with videolink facilities, which currently link to either magistrates' courts or the crown courts or both, also link to HMCTS

<sup>3</sup> Bail for Immigration Detainees, (2012), 'The Liberty Deficit: long-term detention and bail decision making. A study of immigration bail hearings in the First-tier Tribunal'. Available at <http://www.biduk.org/162/bid-research-reports/bid-research-reports.html>

Immigration & Asylum hearing centres to enable immigration bail hearings to take place via videolink.

As things stand in around three in four of the prisons where detainees were held in August 2013 it would appear that detainees must be produced in person at a Tribunal hearing centre in order for their bail application to be heard.

Of the 59 prisons without videolink facilities that held detainees as of August 2013, some are over 100 miles from the nearest hearing centre or magistrates court where the Tribunal allocates detainee and bail cases as either a first, second or third choice. Using relatively old data from the Tribunal it appears that, for example, any application lodged by a detainee in HMP Dorchester must be allocated to Newport HMCTS hearing centre 110 miles away. Applications lodged by detainees held at HMP Haverigg in Cumbria (no local immigration & asylum legal aid contract, no on-site immigration staff) must be allocated to Manchester (110 miles), Bradford (93 miles), or North Shields (146 miles) in that order of preference. We are currently seeking up to date information on case allocation for prison detainee applications from HMCTS.

Given the steady increase in the number of immigration detainees held in the prison estate over the last few years:

We would welcome clarification from the Home Office about any alterations that have taken place to the four year escorting contract held since May 2011 by Reliance Secure Task Management to allow for further assessment of need or provision for additional journeys to court from prisons without videolink facilities?

We would like to ask the Home Office what if any additional financial provision has been allocated for escorting costs related to journeys to bail hearings from prisons for the financial years 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14?