

# Third Aggregate Report on Offender Management in Prisons

*Findings from a Series of Joint Inspections by  
HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Prisons*

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## Foreword

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This is our third report about the quality of offender management of prisoners based on the findings from our joint Prison Offender Management Inspection programme in 21 establishments during 2012 and 2013.

Offender management is the term used to denote the assessment, planning and implementation of work with offenders in the community or in custody to address the likelihood of them reoffending and the risk of harm they pose to the public. Community based offender managers and staff in prison Offender Management Units have responsibility for undertaking or coordinating work with prisoners to address the attitudes, behaviour and lifestyle that contributed to their offending.

In our report in 2012 we found a wide variation in the role, importance and effectiveness of Offender Management Units in different establishments; we also found that although many prisons paid good attention to the 'resettlement' needs of prisoners (i.e. their personal and social circumstances) they did not pay sufficient attention to the 'offender management' functions, namely the rehabilitation of the prisoner and protection of the public. Our report, therefore, contained a number of recommendations designed to support the work then happening in prison establishments to make the Offender Management Unit the centre of activities to manage the sentence.

We were, therefore, disappointed to find on compiling this report that in practice little progress has been made to implement the recommendations from our last aggregate report and that outcomes for prisoners, both in terms of resettlement and rehabilitation, are no better than one year ago. This lack of progress is of particular concern as it casts doubt about the Prison Service's capacity to implement the changes required under the *Transforming Rehabilitation Strategy* designed to reduce reoffending rates, especially for short-term prisoners.

This report shows that organisational changes to offender management arrangements have failed to address the culture of poor communication or mistrust between prison departments that undermines the potential of offender management. Successful offender management requires good communication and cooperation and a holistic approach to work with prisoners. The inability of custodial establishments to adopt this approach is nowhere more apparent than in their failure to use one central electronic case record.

While there have been some modest improvements in practice these are inconsistent. Prisoner officer offender supervisors continue to lack guidance and supervision about what their role should entail, which has an impact on their capacity to improve. Community based offender managers still have insufficient involvement overall to be able to drive sentence planning and implementation.

In addition, there are too few structured programmes available within prisons designed to challenge offending behaviour and promote rehabilitation. Some prisons offered a reasonable range of accredited and non-accredited programmes for their population; others offered no programmes at or were in the process of running down their provision. The lack of programmes was not sufficiently compensated for by prisoners being transferred to prisons where such programmes could be accessed. Provision for offender management was particularly poor at two of the prisons accommodating foreign national prisoners.

We have come to the reluctant conclusion that the Offender Management Model, however laudable its aspirations, is not working in prisons. The majority of prison staff do not understand it and the community based offender managers, who largely do, have neither the involvement in the process nor the internal knowledge of the institutions, to make it work. It is more complex than many prisoners need and more costly to run than most prisons can afford. Given the Prison Service's present capacity and the pressures now facing it with the implementation of *Transforming Rehabilitation* and an extension of 'Through the Gate' services, we doubt whether it can deliver future National Offender Management Service expectations. We therefore believe that the current position is no longer sustainable and should be subject to fundamental review and that this work should be taken forward as part of the strategy of implementing *Transforming Rehabilitation*.

In the meantime, our report contains some recommendations which, if implemented, would serve to ameliorate the situation until more far-reaching changes can be made.

**LIZ CALDERBANK**

HM Chief Inspector of Probation

December 2013

**NICK HARDWICK**

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons

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## Executive Summary

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### **The Offender Management Model**

The period addressed in this report, April 2012 to March 2013, saw significant changes in the organisation and practice of offender management in custodial establishments. Most of the establishments we inspected had either just reorganised their Offender Management Unit or were about to do so, with the aim of making these units the hub of activities for managing the sentence. However, potential benefits had not often been translated into practice.

The National Offender Management Service Offender Management Model had introduced an 'end-to-end' approach to managing offenders from assessment through planned interventions to review. The intention was that a community based offender manager (probation officer or probation service officer) would have responsibility for both the assessment and planning for all sentenced adult offenders in custody and for their eventual release under supervision in the community. The offender managers would work in teams with offender supervisors in prisons, who would undertake most of the face-to-face work and case administrators; they would use other 'keyworkers' as necessary to deliver interventions. Much emphasis was put on the use of accredited programmes to address offending behaviour. Over the past ten years this core approach to offender management has remained constant, although plans about how to implement it across the National Offender Management Service have changed.

Offenders 'in scope' of the Offender Management Model were originally restricted to those supervised in the community subject to community orders and licence on release from prison. Prisoners serving 12 months or more and classified as posing a high or very high risk of harm to the public; Prolific and Other Priority Offenders and those serving indeterminate periods of imprisonment for public protection were included later in Phases II and III.

Offender Management Units within the prisons have had a mixed level of success and profile during this latest period of inspection. Planned or recent changes were intended to make the Unit the hub of activities for the management of prisoners within custodial establishments and to bring together responsibilities for prisoners that had previously usually been separate.

During the 2012 and 2013 inspections, establishments were reorganising to achieve the extension of case management work (offender supervisor and case administrator roles) to all offenders sentenced to 12 months or more in custody, and to all young adult offenders (aged 18-21) with more than four weeks left to serve, who were not already in scope for offender management. Tiering, in use in the community for several years was also due to be introduced, based on the identified risk of harm to others and the likelihood of reoffending (four tiers are used by the National Probation Service based on the likelihood of reoffending and risk of harm of individual offenders with Tier 1 cases being the least serious to Tier 4 cases which are the cases where offenders pose the highest risk of harm to the public).

### **The strategic leadership of offender management**

In our previous reports, published in 2010 and 2012, we found a wide variation in the role, importance and profile of the Offender Management Unit in prisons. In some prisons, the strong strategic lead given to offender management meant that the Offender Management Unit was seen as an integral part of the establishment's role in public protection and in reducing reoffending. At the other extreme, a general lack of understanding about the

potential role of the offender supervisor meant that they tended to be restricted to resettlement activity.

In our recent inspections we found that the strategic lead for offender management was more likely to be integrated into the wider functions of the establishment than had been the case previously. There was no one model or job title but, typically, the head of Reducing Reoffending would be a member of the Senior Management Team and have responsibility for offender management, resettlement and public protection. This made it more likely that Offender Management Unit staff would participate in public protection activity, a key criticism last time. We thought that the new model had the potential to promote the Offender Management Unit as the hub of activities for managing a prisoner's sentence.

We noted, last time, that the emphasis given to resettlement functions in Offender Management Units was not matched with addressing reoffending and the risk of harm to the public pre-release. This time we found that in some establishments, despite a joined-up approach at the strategic level, resettlement functions had been moved to other departments instead of being integrated with sentence planning responsibilities. As communication between prison departments was not a strength, this caused a new set of problems. Resettlement should be seen as part of offender management and not a separate function.

Little progress had been made by establishments in developing an up to date prisoner needs analysis on which to make decisions about which interventions to invest in. OASys data was still hardly used at all. Some prisons offered a reasonable range of accredited and non-accredited programmes for their population; others offered no programmes at all or were in the process of running down their provision. Provision for offender management was particularly poor at two of the prisons accommodating foreign national prisoners.

Despite positive changes at the strategic level and an expansion of the role of Offender Management Units, offender supervisors continued to feel that their role was not well understood within establishments, particularly by wing officers. The continuing lack of leadership in ensuring the consistent use of the electronic case record P-NOMIS, to record all information about a prisoner, meant that poor working relationships were fostered by a laissez-faire attitude to recording and information sharing.

All of the establishments inspected had recently reorganised in order to combine aspects of prisoner management that had previously been managed separately, or were about to do so. Work was also underway to implement the 'Fair and Sustainable' pay review. This had been a disruptive period with much staff anxiety; a number of them had been moved recently to new posts or were, as of yet, unsure what the future held for their current post.

Offender supervisors reported that they were better trained than previously and felt more positive about working relationships within their Units. However, we found a two tier approach to their management. Probation Trust staff working in the Units were supported and held to account through professional supervision. Prison officers, who were less well trained but who often managed equally complex cases and sometimes prisoners classified as posing a high risk of harm to the public were not. Some of their assessments and plans were quality assured by prison managers, although generally this was confined to whether the assessments and plans were completed and not to the quality of the documents themselves; often this was all offender supervisors had by way of management oversight. We considered that this was unacceptable.

While offender supervisor responsibility for OASys was clear, how they should set about their contribution to offender management was not. They lacked guidance overall. Prison officer

offender supervisors in particular did not plan contact with prisoners and, on the whole, did not see the need for regular face to face contact. Their day to day activity tended to be demand led. In most establishments, they continued to be taken out of the Unit to undertake other duties. Although this did enable informal contact with prisoners in residential units it was unlikely that this would be evidenced and disrupted planned work.

## **Offender management in practice – assessment and sentence planning**

Many of our findings about the quality of offender management mirrored those in the last report. Assessments and plans were completed in the main and sentence planning boards took place. While the offender manager was likely to attend these boards, representatives from other departments were not. There was still little sense that the offender manager was driving the work during the custodial phase of the sentence. We also found little evidence of OASys being used to contribute to decision making about prisoner allocation or re-categorisation. We saw some encouraging improvement in the quality and accuracy of risk of harm analysis. In most cases, appropriate objectives were identified to address the risks of those classified as posing a high Risk of Serious Harm to the public. The practice in child protection cases was more likely to be insufficient. Risk management plans were too often irrelevant to the custodial phase of a sentence.

Improvements had been made to the quality of sentence plans but there was still some way to go. Outcome-focused objectives were more likely to be found than had been the case previously and relevant objectives to address offending behaviour were included in most plans. However, objectives were less likely to address resettlement needs where required and it was not often clear who would deliver which elements of the plan. We did not see the duplicate planning processes mentioned last time but neither did we see all elements of offender management included in this central sentence plan. In particular, poor communication between Offender Management Units and Education Departments meant that neither was likely to know what was in the other's plan.

## **Offender management in practice – delivering the sentence**

Offender supervisors tended not to record what they did. Virtually no Offender Management Units used P-NOMIS and some set up their own case recording system that no-one else could see. This undermined the centrality of the Offender Management Unit and was a serious waste of public resources given the large scale investment in P-NOMIS.

Offender supervisors and managers were actively engaged in the review of sentence plans. Prisoners were likely to have been properly involved in the review of their sentence plan and in agreeing their next steps. We saw some improvement in the level of activity to improve community reintegration in relevant cases. While the achievement of sentence plan objectives had improved slightly, it was very disappointing that a low proportion of prisoners had made good progress on the most significant factors linked to their offending.

Lack of access to accredited programmes was also a concern. A number of prisoners had completed their programmes and plans were in hand for others; however, a substantial number of prisoners were located in prisons that did not run the programme they needed to address their offending behaviour and there were no plans to transfer them to an establishment with appropriate provision.

Several elements of the management of risk of harm were slightly less satisfactory than last time. We were concerned to find that work to address the safety of children and young people

subject to child safeguarding measures and of known adults who were potential victims was too often inadequate. Management oversight of these cases was unsatisfactory; where managers were properly involved we found that they were effective.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement cases, however, were well managed within closed prisons; when it was time for active management in the community in preparation for release establishments sent information; in several cases, staff attended Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement meetings in the community which we thought was good practice. Relevant cases were overseen by an Inter-Departmental Risk Management meeting which took place regularly and where the Offender Management Unit was now most likely to attend. However, not all prisons had an Inter-Department Risk Management meeting and sometimes their role was confused.

## Recommendations

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### Main recommendation:

- Given that the present offender management arrangements in prison will become increasingly challenging with the implementation of the expectations of *Transforming Rehabilitation*, a major policy review should be conducted by the Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service, examining the execution and functioning of the Offender Management Model in prisons, to ensure a better match between the requirements of the model and the resources and skills available in prisons to deliver it.

In the meantime, pending implementation of our main recommendation, a number of operational issues require immediate attention.

### We recommend that the National Offender Management Service:

- produces a practice guide for offender supervisors in custodial establishments to support the consistent development of their role
- ensures foreign national prisoners are subject to offender management to address their risk of harm and likelihood of reoffending.

### We further recommend that the National Offender Management Service works with custodial establishments and providers of offender management services to ensure that:

- Offender Management Units and other departments, including Education, make P-NOMIS their central, daily record of contact with and about prisoners
- there is an up to date analysis of prisoner need to address the risk of reoffending (based on OASys data)
- prisoners have access to an adequate range of programmes to address their offending behaviour and other associated needs
- the resettlement needs of prisoners are managed as part of a coordinated approach to offender management from reception to release
- all offender supervisors, prison and probation staff, receive the same level and quality of supervision and oversight of their work
- staff from all relevant prison departments prioritise attendance at sentence planning boards, or make written contributions especially concerning risk of harm issues
- risk management plans address the prisoner's current situation as well as the future.

# 1. Offender Management and the Prison Offender Management Inspection

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## Inspecting offender management in custodial establishments

- 1.1. HMI Probation reports on the effectiveness of work with adults and children and young people who have offended to reduce reoffending and protect the public, whoever undertakes this work. In its inspections, it examines a representative sample of offender cases and assess whether each aspect of work has been done sufficiently well. HMI Prisons inspects places of detention and reports, in particular, on the treatment of prisoners and the conditions in which they are held.
- 1.2. HMI Probation has contributed to HMI Prisons's inspection programme by assessing work with individual prisoners since 2009. The Prison Offender Management Inspection (POMI) programme is based on both the HMI Prisons *Expectations* and the *Criteria* for the general HMI Probation adult inspection programme Offender Management Inspection 2 (OMI2) that concluded in 2012.
- 1.3. In preparation for the inspection, each inspectorate receives evidence in advance of the fieldwork and HMI Prisons conducts a survey of prisoners' experience, to ascertain their views about treatment and conditions in the establishment. HMI Probation undertakes an assessment of a small sample of prisoner cases and, where available, interviews the offender supervisor. All prisoners serving 12 months or more are allocated an identified community based (currently Probation Trust) offender manager, together with a prison based offender supervisor. For those prisoners falling 'in scope' of the Offender Management Model, the offender manager is actively involved during the custodial phase, whereas in 'out of scope' cases, the offender supervisor has a more prominent role. Our aim is to assess 'in scope' prisoners, comprising those classified as posing a high or very high Risk of Serious Harm (RoSH) to the public, Prolific and Other Priority Offenders (PPOs) and those serving an indeterminate sentence of imprisonment for public protection. In some establishments we also assess cases that are 'out of scope'. In addition, we hold meetings with Offender Management Unit managers and staff.
- 1.4. HMI Probation's findings are fed back to the prisons inspectorate during the inspection, then written up and incorporated into the final report, mainly in the *Resettlement* section. HMI Probation also sends a note of its findings to the Head of the Offender Management Unit in the inspected establishment. In addition, where ten or more prisoners in a sample are from one Probation Trust, HMI Probation sends a more detailed letter to that Trust about the management of these prisoners. In 5 out of the 21 inspections covered by this report, there were sufficient prisoners from an individual Trust to warrant such a letter being produced.
- 1.5. This is the third aggregate POMI report. The inspection methodology changed between the inspections reported on in the first (published in 2011) and those in the second (published 2012), so there is limited scope for comparison between the first

two inspections. As the methodology has since remained constant, some comparisons with the quality of offender management from 2012 can now be made.

- 1.6. This report covers 21 inspections from April 2012 to March 2013. It is based on data from reading the case file, interviews with offender supervisors, information from HMI Prisons reports including survey data and findings letters sent to Probation Trusts.
- 1.7. This report relates to our inspections of HMP establishments: Buckley Hall, Bullingdon, Bullwood Hall, Canterbury, Channings Wood, Drake Hall, Forest Bank, Frankland, Full Sutton, Gloucester, Highpoint, Huntercombe, Leeds, Leyhill, Lewes, Lincoln, Lindholme, Northumberland, Onley, The Verne and Winchester. During the course of these inspections, we assessed 412 cases and interviewed 154 offender supervisors. Twenty-two prisoner surveys were conducted (one at each establishment and two at Winchester which was running two different regimes at the time of the survey). Responses were collected from 3,629 prisoners.

## 2. Offender Management in Custodial Establishments

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### Summary

This section examines the findings related to the strategic leadership of offender management in custody.

### Key findings:

- The strategic lead for offender management was more often integrated into the wider functions of the establishment than previously, thereby increasing the potential for the Offender Management Unit to be the hub of all activity relating to a prisoner's sentence, as required by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). However, in some establishments the separation of resettlement and offender management responsibilities perpetuated a silo mentality among staff, was confusing for prisoners and potentially led to poorer outcomes in terms of planned activity and preparations for release.
- Almost half of the prisons did not have an up to date analysis of prisoner needs on which to make decisions about investment in interventions. OASys data was rarely used.
- There continued to be a lack of leadership about the use of P-NOMIS. Important information about prisoners was held in various places and not communicated effectively.
- Prison officer offender supervisors were committed to their work and reported that they were better trained than previously. However, they had still not received sufficient guidance about their role and the interface between that and the role of the wing officer. Planned contact with prisoners was not seen as a priority.
- There was a two tier approach to the management and supervision of offender supervisors that failed to assist most of the prison officers in improving their performance.
- Public protection arrangements were generally good and were more often integrated into the work of the Offender Management Unit than previously. Support for the management of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) cases was effective.
- The provision of accredited programmes continued to be insufficient to meet need and appeared to be reducing. As a consequence, prisoners requiring them were unable to progress. Non-accredited alternatives were increasingly being used without evidence of their effectiveness.

## The strategic leadership of offender management

- 2.1 In April 2012, NOMS issued *Prison Service Instruction 14/2012: Manage the Sentence: Pre and Post Release from Custody* which required significant changes to the way Offender Management Units operated, so that: "*the OMU in prisons must be the central hub, and focal point of all activity relating to the sentence whilst the offender is in custody, for the model [Offender Management Model] to be effective and deliverable*".
- 2.2 Most of the establishments inspected were addressing or planning to implement the required changes. The strategic lead for offender management in most of the inspected prisons was more often integrated into the wider functions of the establishment than was previously the case. There was no one model or job title but, typically, the head of Reducing Reoffending would be a member of the Senior Management Team and have responsibility for offender management and resettlement services, including public protection and lifer functions, together with indeterminate sentences for public protection. There was potential in this model for the Offender Management Unit to be the hub for activities for managing the prisoner's sentence and to fulfil its intended role by participating fully in public protection activity, including attendance at the Inter-Departmental Risk Management meetings. However, there were still a few establishments where this was not the case.
- 2.3 All establishments had a Reducing Reoffending Strategy and Plan based on resettlement pathways. These routinely included children and young people and families; drugs and alcohol; accommodation; education, training and employment (ETE); mental and physical health; attitudes, thinking and behaviour, and finance, benefit and debt. The plan sometimes also addressed public protection and community partnership work and in one, HMP Leyhill, there was also a pathway for older prisoners. Most of the plans were up to date.
- 2.4 In our last report we noted that, with one exception, prisons had not used OASys data as the basis for their needs analysis. During these latest inspections we found that Reducing Reoffending plans were based on an up to date prisoner needs analysis in only 12 out of the 21 establishments inspected. Only three establishments had used OASys information as a source of evidence about offending-related need; this represented a missed opportunity to use a rich source of data.
- 2.5 Most establishments had developed a separate Offender Management Unit plan, as few of the strategic plans addressed the development of offending behaviour work. This was not the case at HMP Leyhill, for instance, where the Resettlement Strategy emphasised the importance of the Offender Management Unit in addressing the risk of harm posed to the public by prisoners, as well as their resettlement needs. As the operation of the Unit was embedded in the core business of the prison, there was no need for a separate strategy.
- 2.6 We commented in our previous report, that in some establishments, offender management was limited to pre-release resettlement activity rather than encompassing the whole sentence, including during the custodial phase, in order to reduce the likelihood of reoffending and the risk of harm to the public. This time we found, in several prisons, instead of merging offender management and resettlement, responsibilities had been swapped around which still required a level of liaison that was not always successful. We thought that, as in HMP Leyhill,

resettlement should be an essential component of offender management. In one prison, HMP Lewes, an Induction and Preparation for Release Unit worked with prisoners at the start and end of sentence without reference to the Offender Management Unit. There had been neither joint planning nor consideration of how information would flow from one department to the other.

- 2.7 Strategic plans still tended to address each resettlement pathway separately rather than the management of the sentence as a whole. Where Offender Management Units had their own plans, they were light on specifying planned outcomes and how effectiveness would be achieved. Addressing offending behaviour work was not often included in Unit plans and we found, surprisingly, that staff in Offender Management Units did not consider that this was their responsibility or a priority.
- 2.8 Heads of departments met regularly to review needs and/or activity and outcomes in Reducing Reoffending meetings. In a few establishments we saw a dynamic approach to measuring and responding to need, for example HMP Forest Bank had recently developed debt management services and a domestic violence programme; and HMP Full Sutton conducted a twice yearly needs analysis to inform the work of the sex offender team.
- 2.9 We continued to find that below this strategic level, staff in different departments did not always cooperate well with offender supervisors who often felt that their role was still not understood. This might explain why the level and quality of communication between the Offender Management Unit and other departments in most establishments remained a problem.
- 2.10 In our last report we recommended that more effective use should be made of P-NOMIS, the electronic case record. With the exception of HMP Forest Bank, there was still a lack of management guidance and direction about the use of this valuable tool; it had the capacity to underpin communication and accountability across the prison yet, despite the huge investment in its development it remained seriously under-used.

## **The structure and management of Offender Management Units**

- 2.11 All of the establishments inspected had recently reorganised in order to combine aspects of prisoner management that had previously been managed separately, or were about to do so. Work was also underway to implement the 'Fair and Sustainable' pay review. This had been a disruptive period with much staff anxiety; a number of whom had been moved recently to new posts or were, as yet, unsure what the future held for their current post.
- 2.12 The most significant change to Offender Management was the implementation of the transitional arrangements outlined in *Prison Service Instruction 14/2012: Manage the Sentence; Pre and Post Release from Custody*. Typically, the Offender Management Units were now beginning to combine responsibility for public protection, life sentenced prisoners, Release on Temporary Licence (RoTL), Home Detention Curfew, recall, re-categorisation as well as offender management. Staff who had previously worked as specialists in one of these aspects of prisoner life were now required to work as offender supervisors or case administrators with a generic workload.

- 2.13 By October 2012 establishments were expected to apply offender management to all adult prisoners serving 12 months and over and to young adults with four weeks and over to serve. Community based offender managers were to retain responsibility for planning and review in cases identified as 'in scope' of the Offender Management Model Phases II and III ( prisoners classified as posing a high or very high risk of harm to the public; those identified as PPOs; and those sentenced to indeterminate sentences for public protection). In all other relevant cases, an offender supervisor would undertake an assessment and complete plans using OASys, then manage the sentence. A number of prisons in this sample had already reorganised to do this.
- 2.14 There was no one model for the structure of an Offender Management Unit although most contained a number of common elements. Depending on the size of the Unit, most had more than one manager, always one Unit manager or head who was a prison officer manager or of Governor grade. Several units also included a Senior Probation Officer and, usually an administrator manager. These nominated staff shared responsibilities, with one being the designated head.
- 2.15 Offender supervisors were, numerically, mainly uniformed prison officers; the remainder were usually probation service officers on secondment from the local Trust and a few were probation officers. One prison, HMP Lincoln, had no prison officer offender supervisors and several others had no probation offender supervisor staff. Each Unit was divided into small teams often called pods or clusters with a mixture of offender supervisors and case administrators in each, or were planning to move to this model. In addition, some Units also contained psychologists and police liaison officers.

### **The role of the offender supervisor**

- 2.16 There was little guidance about how offender supervisors were meant to manage a sentence through a single sentence plan. NOMs National Standards that informed offender management practice were no longer prescriptive and Offender Management Units were organised and managed by prison staff who did not have the experience of offender management in the community to draw on. Expectations were mainly limited to completing OASys assessments, plans and reviews and making appropriate referrals. In hardly any of the prisons did we find more rather comprehensive guidance. An exception was HMP Lindholme which had developed a list of priorities to which staff could refer. Face-to-face work with prisoners was, however, given low priority, as was the case in the other establishments we inspected. We found almost everywhere that offender supervisors, in particular the prison officers, lacked clarity about their role.
- 2.17 Contact with prisoners tended to be demand led; prison officer offender supervisors did not see the need for regular contact so did not undertake work with prisoners to address their offending or to support learning from offending behaviour programmes. We found only a few offender supervisors taking a proactive approach to managing cases and liaising with offender managers in the community. In extreme cases some prisoners had not met their offender supervisor for over 12 months. In most prisons uniformed offender supervisors were still routinely taken out of the Unit to undertake other duties in the establishment. While this often meant that prison officer offender supervisors could have informal, unplanned contact with prisoners in residential units, it should not be seen as a substitute for

planned work. Despite being drawn away from their duties in this way, of the 154 offender supervisors interviewed by us, 65% said that they had sufficient resources to do their job. This compared with 47% last time. Caseloads varied; it was common for offender supervisors to have around 60 cases and for them to consider this manageable. However, caseloads were much higher in some establishments, typically those with vacancies or significant levels of staff sickness and in one extreme case over 100.

- 2.18 It was common for prisoners to be left to take the initiative in progressing their own sentence plans, making self referrals to resources available to them in the establishment. While this could be seen as positive (taking responsibility), many prisoners needed the support and motivation that offender management was meant to provide. We found regular planned meetings with prisoners in only two establishments, HMP Onley and HMP Buckley Hall at six and eight weekly intervals respectively. These were with 'in scope' prisoners only. At HMP Leyhill, an open prison, staff were able to describe their main purpose as to safely settle offenders back into the community, undertake risk assessments, test whether offenders can be trusted to be released temporarily in to the community and communicate with offender managers. Our overall case sample contained a small number of examples of offender supervisors delivering purposeful and programmed one to one work; however we would have liked to have seen more evidence of this happening. We were told that prison officer offender supervisors did not have sufficient time for one to one work to address specific issues over a period of time.
- 2.19 Probation staff, in particular probation officers, were more highly trained than prison officers and usually tended to manage 'in scope' and more complex cases. In most establishments, prison officer offender supervisors, while primarily responsible for prisoners classified as posing a low or medium risk of harm, were also responsible for work with demanding cases, including some classified as posing a high RoSH to the public. Where this happened, as for example at HMP Canterbury, offender supervisors were assessing high risk in scope cases instead of offender managers. In our opinion, this situation should be avoided. It is not appropriate for prison officer offender supervisors to be solely responsible for the assessment of high risk cases and where this situation is unavoidable, arrangements should be put in place for the additional supervision and training of prison officer offender supervisors.
- 2.20 Offender Management Units commonly adopted a two tier approach to the management of staff. Probation officers and probation service officers received regular supervision, either from within the prison or by a community based member of Probation Trust staff. While we heard that supervision was not always of a satisfactory quality, it did take place. Prison officers tended not to have regular supervision. The probation service has a history of practitioners (probation officers and probation service officers) being supervised in a manner that encourages them to reflect on their work in order to plan and improve it. Probation service managers thus play a critical part in supporting staff, particularly in difficult and demanding cases. Accountability is also a strong element of supervision and notes of meetings are made and retained up until appraisal time. No such culture exists in the prison service.
- 2.21 NOMS requires that 10% of OASys assessments and plans should be quality assured using a structured tool; beyond that there is no oversight of the quality of prison officer offender supervisors' work, even in the most demanding cases. This approach

does not ensure, in our view, sufficient focus on the management of RoSH. A frequent comment in our reports was that although offender supervisors support one another at a personal level, they do not usually have the experience and training to offer the professional guidance and oversight required to effectively manage complex cases.

- 2.22 We interviewed 154 offender supervisors (prison and probation staff) during the course of these inspections. We asked them about their management, supervision, training and development opportunities. Despite our continued critical views about staff supervision, the majority were positive about the support afforded to them by their line manager. 88% thought that their manager had the skill to assess the quality of their work; 83% said they had the skill to assist them to develop their work and 88% said their manager was able to support them in their work. A lower percentage, 73%, said that not only did their manager have the skill but that they also put it into practice through active involvement in helping them to improve their work. Most said that they thought their manager was sufficiently active in the oversight of their work.
- 2.23 We found that offender supervisors were more likely to have had sufficient training to do their job than previously. Asked about the training available to fulfil their role, 82% thought that opportunities were sufficient or excellent. Of those interviewed, 73% thought training for future development was also sufficient or excellent. Some who were dissatisfied felt that the opportunities offered were insufficient, while others said that they did not have the time to take advantage of them. We found that a few establishments tended to overemphasise the technicalities of completing OASys as opposed to developing skills in assessment and analysis. Finally, 70% valued the opportunities in team meetings to discuss their work with colleagues.
- 2.24 Relationships between offender supervisors and wing or personal officers continued to be difficult in some establishments. The lack of clarity about their roles and the practice of passing work from one to the other was confusing for prisoners. In one establishment, HMP Full Sutton, offender supervisors were based on the wings (unlike most who were based in offices away from the residential units) and these offender supervisors did not have protected time for formal structured meetings with prisoners, with the exception of sentence planning meetings. While this arrangement gave plenty of scope for contact with prisoners, it remained informal and was not recorded anywhere. The tension between offender supervisors and wing staff was illustrated by the disturbing statement that in four different establishments Offender Management Unit staff did not use P-NOMIS, the electronic case recording system, as they did not trust wing staff not to disclose information inappropriately to prisoners.

## **Public protection arrangements**

- 2.25 Public protection arrangements were generally good and integrated into the work of Offender Management Units. All but one prison held a regular Inter-Departmental Risk Management meeting where individual cases were discussed. As an example, responsibility for public protection at HMP Full Sutton was coordinated by the Senior Probation Officer in the Offender Management Unit who chaired the prison's monthly Inter-Departmental Risk Management Team meeting. Membership included Public

- Protection Unit staff, Offender Management Unit staff, Sentence Planning Governor, Psychology, Healthcare, Police Liaison, and the Resettlement Officer.
- 2.26 The reason given for ceasing to hold the regular meeting in one prison was that it was seen as duplicating the sentence planning board. However, inspectors recommended that the meetings recommence as they were the only vehicle for ensuring a contribution from other departments. Typically, at a sentence planning board there would only be the offender supervisor, offender manager and prisoner.
- 2.27 In a few prisons, however, representatives from the Offender Management Unit were not invited to public protection meetings; this tended to be where the Public Protection Unit was still under separate management from the Offender Management Unit and where as a result there were problems in ensuring that important information was communicated properly.
- 2.28 Arrangements were in place to identify MAPPA eligible cases on arrival at an establishment and for cases to be referred up to six months pre-release. At closed prisons these arrangements were seen to operate well in most cases. Prison staff supplied written reports to meetings and in some establishments, for example HMP Frankland, and HMP Full Sutton, (high security prisons) attended community based meetings in person or by video link.

## **Recording offender management**

- 2.29 It was disappointing to find the same poor practice in relation to recording that we found in 2011/2012. We found few examples of good practice where offender supervisors were using P-NOMIS. The electronic case record has the potential to be accessed by all prison staff, all of whom have a duty to maintain confidentiality and to facilitate the management of prisoners. Not using this common electronic case record fostered a silo mentality. Often, offender supervisors did not use P-NOMIS at all. In some prisons they had set up their own Offender Management Unit records, sometimes a paper log, which no one else could access. P-NOMIS tended to be used predominantly by wing staff who recorded prisoner activity and employment, changes in attitudes and behaviour and adjudications. Very occasionally we found examples of where the outcome of a sentence planning board was recorded. Without this, wing staff, who had a lot to contribute to offender management, could not know what the prisoner was meant to achieve or what aspects of their behaviour were a cause for concern.
- 2.30 We consistently found examples of where information gathered and assessments and referrals made during the induction process, for example to the Education Department, were not passed to the Offender Management Unit. In most establishments, the only way for an offender supervisor to know where a prisoner was up to in relation to any interventions, for example an accredited programme, drug rehabilitation or education was for them to go and ask. Likewise, other departments could not know where their contribution fitted in to the bigger picture. Given this situation, there was no possibility of the offender manager in the community being up to date with what was happening with individual prisoners. NOMS *Prison Service Instruction 14/2012* required that each prisoner should have a single case record and a single sentence plan. The Prison Service had a long way to go before this would be achieved.

## Provision of accredited and non-accredited programmes

- 2.31 As in both of our earlier reports, we found that the level of accredited programmes provided did not meet the identified needs of prisoners overall. We found examples of where programmes were cancelled then disbanded altogether without a new local needs analysis being conducted. It was unclear whether such decisions were motivated by cost savings or whether they had been taken in line with national (evidence based) commissioning intentions for the delivery of offending behaviour programmes. Whatever the motivation for reducing the availability for such programmes, the result was that some prisoners had to be transferred to a dwindling resource in other establishments, while others remained static. This caused particular difficulties for indeterminate sentenced prisoners, whose need for such programmes was often highest in order to progress towards re-categorisation or release.
- 2.32 It was not possible for us to determine whether there were fewer programmes available overall than in 2011/2012, but several establishments ran no programmes at all. The criteria for the general Thinking Skills Programme (TSP) changed during the period 2012/2013 to exclude acquisitive crime, thus leaving many prisoners with no access to accredited or non-accredited offending behaviour programmes and no non-accredited alternative.
- 2.33 Some prisons, for example HMP Full Sutton and HMP Highpoint, were able to offer a range of interventions, including a number of accredited programmes, such as the TSP, Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage it, and the Sex Offender Treatment Programme (Core programme), with the Sex Offender Treatment Programme Extended programme and Healthy Sexual Function programme. Non-accredited interventions included Victim Awareness (Sycamore Tree), the A-Z course about decision-making and assertiveness, and the Healthy Lifestyle Management course. Wherever programmes were available, demand was high. We found that where prisoners did not meet the criteria for an accredited programme in these establishments they were often offered a non-accredited alternative. There was no evidence to indicate how effective these were in addressing the identified problem issues.
- 2.34 We found a diminishing level of attention to work on victims' issues. Workbooks are available in some prisons that prisoners could work through in their cells then discuss with offender supervisors but we saw little evidence of their use.

### 3. Offender Management in Practice – Assessment and sentence planning

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#### Summary

This section contains our findings about the quality of assessment and sentence planning work in the cases we inspected.

#### Key findings

- Progress had been made in some aspects of offender management since our last report, but a reduction in the frequency of good practice in others. For instance, allocation to an offender supervisor was often less timely than before. Most sentence plans were completed on time but several establishments carried a backlog of uncompleted OASys. The quality of sentence plans was mixed, with some aspects improving slightly, for example the inclusion of outcome-focused objectives.
- Offender managers were allocated to 'in scope' cases but we found little evidence that they had sufficient contact with either the prisoner or offender supervisor to drive the sentence. Sentence planning boards were usually the only vehicle for this process; boards were not well attended by other departments which we thought was a missed opportunity.
- Most risk of harm screenings were completed satisfactorily. The accuracy of analysis of risk of harm to specific groups had increased and was now based on a better quality of analysis of current and previous offending behaviour.
- The quality of risk management plans needed to improve. They were often irrelevant to the custodial phase of a sentence, focusing on what might happen post-release.
- Offender supervisors did not fully understand the need to have planned face-to-face contact with prisoners in order to assess, motivate and support them to make progress. These staff also did not have the time or the training to undertake this work well.
- Offender supervisors did not use P-NOMIS to record their work in most cases.
- Information sharing between departments was often poor. Consistently we found little or no communication between Offender Management Units and education services either about needs or outcomes.
- Offender supervisors were aware of issues that could form a barrier to prisoner engagement with offender management, but could not generally demonstrate that they had taken these issues into account in their work with the individual.

## The sample

- 3.1 The data in this aggregate report relates to 412 prisoners located in the 21 establishments inspected, with approximately 20 cases assessed in each. The previous report, covering inspections in 2011/2012, was based on a sample of 220 cases. Only one of the prisons housed female prisoners, so 95% of the sample was male; 74% were white. Most were 'in scope' of the Offender Management Model and the majority, 82%, were serving a standard determinate sentence. Those in the sample had been imprisoned for a range of offences with violence (33%), sexual offences (21%), robbery (19%) and burglary (10%) accounting for most.

## Allocation and early contact

- 3.2 The *National Standards for the Management of Offenders in England and Wales* changed in April 2011; the pace of change in Probation Trusts varied, but all had implemented the new standards by April 2012 when the inspections reported here started. Most of the standards and associated quality indicators applied to work in the community, but a number clearly related to work during the custodial phase of sentences. The prescription, particularly in relation to timeliness in the 2007 National Standards, had largely disappeared.
- 3.3 There is an expectation that prisoners should be allocated to an offender manager (where necessary) and offender supervisor 'promptly' to support the completion and implementation of an effective sentence (and risk management) plan. This is so that the case can be supervised in line with the intentions of the sentence, and any risk of harm minimised.
- 3.4 In all cases where a prisoner will eventually be released on licence and in 'in scope' cases, an offender manager should be allocated at the start of sentence. In 91% of cases this had happened.
- 3.5 Most establishments inspected in this sample aimed to allocate prisoners to an offender supervisor so that they could be interviewed within five or ten days of first reception. However, only just over half of prisoners were seen within the ten day period by an offender supervisor, lower than the 70% achieved in our previous report. In some, for example HMP Drake Hall, where 79% of prisoners were seen promptly, this figure was much higher and in HMP Leeds all but one prisoner was seen within ten days. In others, despite their stated intentions, cases were not allocated promptly, so a delay in contact between prisoner and supervisor was inevitable.
- 3.6 Discussion with offender supervisors suggested that in some cases the contact may have taken place but had not been recorded. Where a prisoner had started their sentence at a different establishment, we were less likely to find evidence of when they were first interviewed in relation to offender management. In a handful of cases, prisoners had not been interviewed by an offender supervisor even after nine months of their sentence.
- 3.7 The HMI Prisons survey asked sentenced prisoners whether they had a named offender manager. Across all 21 establishments, 77% of sentenced prisoners reported that they did. In five establishments this was reported by 90% or more of respondents. The lowest proportions were found in two foreign national establishments (37% and 48%). Overall, 57% of all prisoners surveyed said that

they had a named offender supervisor. This ranged considerably from 13% (again at a foreign national prison) to 92% at two other prisons.

### **Assessment and planning**

- 3.8 NOMS's expectation was that the timing and level of assessment, planning and interventions should be sufficient to address the likelihood of reoffending and the level of assessed risk of harm to the public. According to the *Prison Service Instruction 14/2012*, each prisoner, with the exception of adults serving less than 12 months, should have either an offender supervisor or offender manager responsible for the management of their sentence through a single sentence plan. Prisoners 'in scope' of the Offender Management Model were the responsibility of the community offender manager. For all others, responsibility lay with the offender supervisor in custody.
- 3.9 It was not possible to state precisely how many prisoners were not 'in scope' in our sample; however, offender supervisors completed only 10% of the initial OASys assessments and plans assessed in our sample.
- 3.10 At the start of sentence 318 prisoners were classified as presenting a high (77% of the sample) or very high (4%) RoSH to the public; 55 were identified as being PPO and 49 were serving an indeterminate sentence for the protection of the public. All of these prisoners were 'in scope' of offender management, but some of the prisoners in the second and third categories were also classified as posing a high or very high risk of harm so there is an overlap.
- 3.11 Whilst the timing of completion of a plan was no longer prescribed, it should be completed 'promptly' in high and very high RoSH cases and in sufficient time to inform 'allocation and other processes' (*National Standards Practice Framework*) in custody in all cases. In 82% of all cases we thought that the completion of the initial plan was timely which was similar to last time.

### **Assessment and planning to minimise risk of harm to others**

- 3.12 A risk of harm screening must be carried out in all cases; however, they were missing in 25 cases (28%). Where completed, screenings were considered satisfactory in 83% of the cases at the start of sentence, which was about the same level as in the previous report. We identified inaccuracies in 34 cases (39%) which could have affected the risk of harm level, for example previous relevant convictions were missed and another 24 (27%) were carried out very late. We found that the RoSH classification was incorrect, usually as a consequence of the inaccuracies, in 36 of the cases in the sample (9%). This classification is an important determinant of the level of work to be carried out with a prisoner to address reoffending and the risk of harm posed to the public. In our experience, once a judgement has been made about classifying a prisoner's level of RoSH by a probation officer in the community, a prison officer working as offender supervisor was very unlikely to challenge or change this.
- 3.13 Given the seriousness of offending in the two samples, it was important that plans should contain relevant objectives to address the risk of harm to the public. They did so in 81% of cases, a similar proportion to last time.

- 3.14 In our previous aggregate inspection report we noted that there were objectives to address child protection concerns in only about half of the relevant cases. Disappointingly, the position had not improved this time with relevant objectives set in just under half (46%) of such cases.
- 3.15 A full RoSH analysis was required in 95% of cases. In 7% of cases the analysis had not been done. A further 8% were completed late. The quality of analysis of current and previous offending behaviour was satisfactory in 87% of cases. The accuracy of the analysis of the risk of harm to specific groups of people ranged between 87% and 93% in relation to risks to children and young people, the general public, known adults, staff and other prisoners. These figures showed no improvement from our last aggregate report.
- 3.16 A risk management plan should have been completed in all but low RoSH cases (only nine cases in this sample). This should refer to, and mirror, the initial sentence plan identifying, for example, who is to have contact with the prisoner, when and for what purpose. The individuals or agencies involved in delivering the plan should be clearly identified and provided with relevant information. A satisfactory risk management plan was found in 54% of cases, a slightly lower proportion than last time. The plan was missing in 34 cases (12%), mainly in those cases where a sentence plan had not been completed. A further 27 (9%) were completed significantly late. Most used the correct format for the plan, but in 23% the roles and responsibilities of the people involved were not clearly spelt out; in 27% we could not see what action would be taken if circumstances changed or we thought that planned responses were inadequate to protect potential victims.
- 3.17 A common area for improvement was that risk management plans, originally compiled for a pre-sentence report or for a previous community sentence, did not address the current risk of harm presented by a prisoner during the custodial phase of their sentence, even where they were serving long sentences. So, for example, restrictions placed on a prisoner's phone calls or visits were rarely mentioned in risk management plans which tended to focus instead on what might happen post-release. In addition, we saw no evidence that these plans had been shared with all staff who needed to see them in 37% of the cases. A specific concern about assessment early in the sentence was that in five cases information from the Cell Sharing Risk Assessment, or from clear discriminatory attitudes and behaviour, was not included nor taken into account in planning.

### **Assessment of the likelihood of reoffending**

- 3.18 A thorough assessment of the likelihood of reoffending was undertaken in 73% of cases. Where this was not the case it was most often because we found insufficient evidence on file for what had been entered into OASys (10% of sample cases). Conversely, in others, there were gaps in the sections of OASys where information on file about offending-related factors could have contributed to the assessment (9%). In only a few cases (nine) did we find insufficient weight attributed to positive factors.
- 3.19 We noted in Section 2 that information sharing between departments was often poor. In most establishments, information regarding literacy and numeracy was rarely shared; we saw cases where concerns about poor reading, writing and dyslexia were recorded in OASys but not, apparently, forwarded to ETE services.

Conversely, the outcomes of ETE assessments were not known to offender supervisors so did not feature in offender management assessments.

### **Assessment of diversity and vulnerability**

- 3.20 In our discussions with offender supervisors we found that they understood the need to take into account, in their assessment of prisoners, of factors that could become barriers to engagement with offender management. They were able to talk to us about the need to consider language, literacy, mobility, etc. However, there was no evidence that they addressed these issues in just under half of the case files, a similar proportion to last time.
- 3.21 In relation to prisoners at risk of self harm, we found that Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) assessments were completed where needs were identified and communicated to residential and Offender Management Unit staff.
- 3.22 The high proportion of prisoners with skills gaps and, in particular, problems with literacy is well documented. In addition, many foreign national prisoners were not fluent in English. All would benefit from the education available in prison. Among the prisoners in the sample we found that over 80% had learning and skills needs, as was the case in 2011/2012; of these, 44% had not had a sufficient assessment, again a similar proportion to the last sample. Offender managers or supervisors ought to have administered a simple basic skills screening, either pre-sentence or on arrival in custody. If required, a full assessment and a learning plan can then be put in place. Where a learning plan would have been useful it had been arranged in 58% of cases. In only half of these cases, however, did this plan feature in the sentence plan as an objective. Neither was ETE activity recorded in P-NOMIS nor were there copies of learning plans in Offender Management Unit files.

### **The role of the offender manager**

- 3.23 An offender manager had been allocated in 88% of cases who prepared the initial sentence plan on the prisoner. As last time, we found little evidence that they had taken an active part in managing the case. However, in discussing cases with offender supervisors it was often clear that communication had taken place between the offender manager and prisoner or offender supervisor but had not been recorded. Occasionally copies of emails had been put in the paper file.
- 3.24 For prisoners 'in scope' the sentence planning board provided an opportunity for the prisoner to engage with those responsible for completing their sentence plan and ensuring it was delivered. Sentence planning boards took place in most of these cases, attended by the offender manager, either in person or via video link (exceptionally by telephone link).
- 3.25 In almost all cases we found that sentence planning boards were attended by the offender manager, offender supervisor, and prisoner and occasionally by a member of their family, but with no other representative of departments working with the prisoner. We saw evidence of offender supervisors trying to persuade others to contribute but most often receiving nothing or a written note only. We thought that this was a missed opportunity to engage with the prisoner and make a difference in how prisoners related to those working with them.

- 3.26 The number of other staff attending the boards remained unacceptably low, for example Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice and Throughcare (CARAT) workers attended in only 9% of cases and Learning and Skills providers only 6%. In around 30% of cases the sentence planning board process was unsatisfactory. In some cases it simply did not take place, or an important player was missing (offender manager or supervisor) or those who did attend were unable to comment on the prisoner's likelihood of reoffending or the risk of harm they posed to the public.

## **Sentence plans**

- 3.27 In 85% of cases an initial sentence plan had been completed around the start of sentence, a small reduction from last time; most of these were completed within an appropriate timescale. We found, however, that 21% of these plans either did not draw on all of the information available or, there were gaps that required further assessment. Often this reflected poor communication within an establishment, for example between the Education or Psychology departments and the Offender Management Unit. In other cases, it was a reflection that the offender manager had prepared the plan without reference to the prisoner or offender supervisor.
- 3.28 The quality of sentence plans was mixed and some aspects had not improved since 2011/2012. However, offender managers and supervisors compiling plans had increased the frequency in which they included outcome-focused objectives. The prisoner should be clear what they are meant to do and achieve in practical terms. Objectives should not be expressed as aspirations, for example changing attitudes. If stopping violent offending is the desired outcome and the methods employed are to include participation in an accredited programme (in order to change attitudes amongst other goals) the plan should say so in plain language. Objectives were judged as being satisfactory in 64% of plans, but there was still room for improvement.
- 3.29 Objectives should include a logical sequencing of manageable steps that are realistic for both the prisoner and service providers. In this sample only 46% did. Often plans did not indicate what needed to be achieved first. Examples include learning to read to a certain level before another objective, for example addressing violent offending through an offending behaviour programme, could be attempted. There were objectives to address the likelihood of reoffending in 87% of cases; logically they ought to be found in all cases. We did find some examples of quality planning, for example at HMP Drake Hall, where prisoners' needs were reviewed at a monthly Sequencing Meeting and mapped against available resources and the stage in their sentence. Literacy and numeracy, for example, were addressed in every case so that the women could go on to access other interventions. This coordinated approach was unusual.
- 3.30 A large proportion of cases should have been referred to work to promote community reintegration or resettlement, i.e. to address those factors that contributed to the most recent offending, for example substance misuse or employability. This would make it more likely that the prisoner could be released safely at the end of the custodial element of their sentence. We found such attention in only 57% of those cases.

- 3.31 Only about one-third of plans in this sample, or the last one, indicated what level of contact staff responsible for delivering the plan would have with the prisoner. It was clear who was to do what in order to deliver the plan in only half of cases, the same as in 2011/2012. In discussing prisoner contact with offender supervisors, we found that they did not prioritise having face-to-face discussions with them to encourage, motivate or monitor progress.
- 3.32 There were 55 PPO in the sample. In the last sample there had been 33. These offenders commit high levels of crime, often acquisitive crime and often linked to substance misuse. They are managed in the community under multi-agency arrangements that are meant to continue to a certain level in custody unless the offender is taken off the scheme. In 35% of cases the sentence plan reflected PPO status by having an enhanced level of interventions. It was 24% last time.
- 3.33 In 56% of cases with an apparent need, the assessment of learning and skills deficits was sufficient. Learning plans were developed for 42% of prisoners who would have benefited from the intervention; this was an improvement from last time when only 26% of prisoners with this need had a learning plan. Where there was a learning plan it was addressed in 53% of sentence plans.

### **Involvement in sentence planning**

- 3.34 The initial assessment and plan should be informed by at least one face-to-face interview. Where the community based offender manager did not meet the prisoner pre-sentence, this may be done by video link or telephone if necessary. The prisoner should be given the opportunity of contributing to their assessment and plan. Prisoners need to understand the purpose of what is being required of them if they are to benefit from interventions and make the link with their previous offending. In the surveys conducted by HMI Prisons researchers, 56% of those who had a sentence plan said that they were involved or very involved in the development of their plan. This ranged from 19% to 68% in different establishments.
- 3.35 While it may seem obvious that there ought to be communication between the offender manager and the offender supervisor, under the previous National Standard this was often impossible; in order to meet the timeliness targets, plans had to be completed using whatever information was available and were rarely updated until a review was required under the same Standard. The OASys Self-Assessment Questionnaire is a simple tool that enables the offender manager or supervisor to discuss with the prisoner how they see themselves and the factors linked to their offending.
- 3.36 In just over half of the cases we thought that sufficient attention had been paid to the needs of the prisoner and how to engage him or her in work to address their offending behaviour and attitudes. There was only evidence in 62% of them that the prisoner had been involved meaningfully in planning for their sentence; as a consequence, it was unclear whether 38% of the prisoners understood what they had to do to achieve the objectives set for them. This links firmly with the lack of contact with their offender manager during the planning process, or the lack of face-to-face contact with their offender supervisor during the sentence.
- 3.37 Too often we found that prisoners were being referred to an intervention, for example, a non-accredited programme because it was available rather than because it met their needs. We noted in Section 2 that demand for accredited and other

programmes was high and that provision tended not to be made on the basis of assessed need.

## 4. Offender Management in Practice – Delivering the sentence

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### Summary

This section contains our findings in relation to the work undertaken with the prisoners whose cases we inspected.

### Key findings

- Work to address the risk of harm posed by prisoners continued to require significant improvement. In particular, the frequency at which measures were taken to protect children and young people adequately had reduced since our last report.
- Appropriate action to protect known potential victims of serious harm was still not taken often enough and had not improved from last time.
- The level and quality of management oversight in high risk of harm cases and child protection cases continued to be unsatisfactory and had not improved.
- As in our last report, individual establishments did not appear to have sufficient resources to provide prisoners with access to the interventions necessary to help them change their offending behaviour. As a consequence sentence plan objectives could not often be achieved. Although plans had been made to address this issue by transferring a number of prisoners to other establishments, a substantial minority were left with no provision.
- Few sentence plan reviews were completed where required; where completed, the quality had improved and was mainly satisfactory.
- Offender supervisors did not understand the need for planned face-to-face contact with prisoners in order to engage, motivate and support them in changing their behaviour. This needed to be addressed, as they were taking over responsibility for the management of an increased proportion of prisoners. They needed guidance as to how to carry out their role.
- Insufficient progress had been made on factors linked to offending in most cases.
- The quality of offender management in some establishments accommodating foreign national prisoners was poor. It was incorrectly assumed that these prisoners would be deported so that no work on addressing their likelihood of reoffending or risk of harm to the public was considered necessary.
- Arrangements to support vulnerable prisoners were appropriate in most cases.

### Recording offender management

- 4.1 The Offender Management Unit case record was well organised in 82% of cases. They contained all relevant documents in 67% as opposed to 52% previously. They

did not, however, contain a clear record of the work carried out in almost half of the cases, a similar picture to last time. As we have already noted, this was due to poor information sharing and particularly the lack of use of P-NOMIS.

## **Management of the risk of harm to others**

- 4.2 In 40% of cases the level of resources employed to address the risk of harm was inadequate. In 51%, interventions were not timed and sequenced to take account of risk of harm, for example prisoners had been unable to undertake relevant offending behaviour programmes or had been unable to get a transfer to another establishment to do this.
- 4.3 The quality of reviews of the assessment of risk of harm was satisfactory in 40% of cases; a slightly lower level than last time. We found that in the remainder of cases, reviews were not sufficiently thorough; often the last assessment was 'pulled through' or copied without updating.
- 4.4 An essential element of risk management is the identification by staff of changes in a prisoner's circumstances, attitude or behaviour that could indicate that their risk of harm to others is increasing. Potential and actual changes were properly anticipated in 73% of all relevant cases where we found evidence of negative changes. This was a slightly higher level than last time.
- 4.5 In the cases where such change did occur it was identified swiftly in 72% of them; this was a lower level than the 83% identification in 2011/2012. It is of concern that in 30% of these cases there was not an appropriate response to that change, for example information was not passed to the community offender manager to protect potential victims.
- 4.6 Most of the cases in the sample were either ineligible for MAPPA or it was too early in the sentence for processes to have started. Satisfactory arrangements existed in most establishments for identifying cases that were eligible for MAPPA, supported by Inter Departmental Risk Management meetings where cases were reviewed. From six months pre-release, Offender Management Unit staff contributed to external MAPPA meetings by report or in person, particularly from high security and open establishments.
- 4.7 Measures to protect children and young people were sufficient in 77% of cases with a child protection element. This represented a worrying drop from 89% previously. Of these, 57 cases were subject to the multi-agency child safeguarding arrangements; procedures were being used effectively in 63% of these cases, which was unacceptable. In others, checks were not always carried out or information sent to protect potential victims of crime. Last time we found that arrangements were being used effectively in 78% of these cases.
- 4.8 Three-quarters of the cases in the sample contained reference to a known potential victim of harm, but appropriate priority was accorded to their safety in only 69% of such cases. This was unsatisfactory. Victim awareness work had been undertaken with only 33% of prisoners and a number of awareness programmes had ceased to run.
- 4.9 In inspecting high or very high risk of harm cases we look for evidence that a manager has read the contents of files and has either countersigned them to

indicate that they think the work is of a sufficient standard, has sent them back to be changed or for further action to be taken. Evidence may be on the file in OASys or in supervision notes. High and very high RoSH cases should be countersigned by a suitably trained manager. HMI Probation considers that most child protection cases, regardless of the assessed level of risk of harm, should also receive manager oversight. We considered the level of management oversight to be insufficient in 68% of high and very high RoSH cases. This was mainly where a manager had countersigned inadequate work. This was the same proportion as last time. Similarly, the level of management oversight was inadequate in 64% of the cases where there were child protection issues. This number included cases that were not apparently brought to the attention of a manager as well as those that had been countersigned. Where managers provided adequate oversight, they were effective.

- 4.10 Some of the prisoners who participated in Learning and Skills development activities had profited from this, in that 23% had already gained a qualification while in custody and a further 37% had made other progress, including work towards a qualification.

### **Delivery of sentence plans**

- 4.11 In only 52% of the cases were interventions delivered in line with the objectives set in the prisoner's sentence plan, similar to last time. In just over half of the cases, sufficient priority was given to activities linked to the sentence plan. Interventions were timed and sequenced according to the likelihood of reoffending in 54% of cases. This was a small reduction from last time, but as with that previous inspection we found that prisoners were often allocated to resources that were available rather than to meet an objective or need. In addition, more than half of the prisoners in the 2012/2013 sample had not participated in activities appropriate at that point in their sentence in preparation for release.
- 4.12 The level of resources allocated to address the likelihood of reoffending was appropriate in 63% of cases. Resettlement needs, for example accommodation and employability, were addressed appropriately in just under two-thirds of cases, a broadly similar result to our last inspection. Resources to support relevant diversity needs for prisoners assessed as needing assistance were appropriate in 63% of cases which was a marked improvement from 46% last time. Examples included participation in an English class for Speakers of Other Languages class or referral to treatment for a physical or mental health problem.
- 4.13 Just over half of the prisoners identified as PPOs had a level of interventions appropriate to their status. This was an improvement on the 36% of PPOs where levels of intervention were appropriate in 2011/2012.
- 4.14 One hundred and seventy three prisoners required a transfer to another establishment to access resources linked to sentence planning. Of these, 65 had already been moved, typically to access an offending behaviour programme. Two prisoners had transferred so that they could participate in the local PPO scheme in preparation for release. Another had moved in order to access resources in their home area on RoTL. Of the remainder, there were 59 prisoners who required resources that were not available at their current prison and for whom a move had not been planned. A further 49 had a move agreed and were waiting for a transfer.

The proportions for these judgements about the need to move within the prison estate were similar last time.

- 4.15 Prisons were in the process of reorganising in order to give the Offender Management Unit more significance within establishments. Implementing Offender Management should mean that the offender manager or offender supervisor drives the management of the case. However, we found that they were able to coordinate the input of other workers in only 60% of cases. In 53% of cases, they had successfully ensured that all elements of the sentence plan were delivered. These amounted to slight improvements over last time and were supported by improvements in communication between all workers and the prisoners.

### **Sentence plan reviews and progress**

- 4.16 A review of the sentence plan should be undertaken, at a minimum, annually, at the time of a sentence planning board. Reviews should also be triggered, in our view, by a range of other changes, for example transfer to a different establishment, although this rarely happens. The sentence plan was due to be reviewed in just under half of the cases in the sample, but only 37% of these had been completed, the same proportion as last time. In some cases, the plan had not been reviewed thoroughly, but had been 'pulled through' or copied with little or nothing updated. In a similar proportion to the quality of the review of the assessment of risk of harm, the review of the assessment of the likelihood of reoffending was satisfactory in 41% of cases.
- 4.17 The prisoner was fully involved in the review, where undertaken, in 89% of cases. In 94%, both the offender manager and offender supervisor were sufficiently involved in the review, compared with 81% and 85%, respectively, last time. In only 39% of cases were other staff involved in sentence plan reviews.
- 4.18 Survey evidence from prisoners themselves was much less positive than the evidence we saw suggested. In one (foreign national) establishment only 5% of prisoners with a sentence plan said that their offender manager worked with them to achieve their targets, and the highest figure reported was 46%. Survey respondents were more likely to report working with offender supervisors than offender managers to achieve their sentence plan targets in most establishments. Reported involvement with offender supervisors, to help achieve their targets, ranged from 12% (in a foreign national prison) to 65%. Where prisoners had community ties, sufficient action was taken by offender managers or offender supervisors to help them to retain or develop them in just over two-thirds of cases, a similar proportion to our last report.
- 4.19 In both samples (this and the last report), approximately two-thirds of prisoners had an accredited programme included in their sentence plan. For more than half, this was a general offending behaviour programme followed by the sex offender programme, violent offending, substance misuse and domestic violence programmes. At the time of the inspection, 79 prisoners (29% of cases) had completed their accredited programme. In three-quarters of cases it was known how the programme would be delivered, whether at another prison, later at the same establishment or after release on licence. We were concerned that in 27% of cases no plans had been made to deliver the programme. While the sentence plan was meant to have an impact on the location of the prisoner, 41% of those waiting for a

programme were at an establishment where their programme was not available and where there were no plans to transfer them to an appropriate prison to complete this work. Lack of access to programmes meant, in some cases, a delay in re-categorisation.

- 4.20 The proportion of prisoners who had undertaken work that challenged them to take responsibility for their decision-making and actions in relation to offending had dropped from 52% to 47%. This reduction was linked with offender supervisors having little face-to-face contact with prisoners and the limited amount of offending behaviour work undertaken.
- 4.21 It is generally acknowledged that prisoners are more likely to benefit from interventions, such as accredited programmes, if properly prepared for such work. This was done in 52% of cases. Following an intervention it is good practice to discuss and review it with the prisoner to reinforce new learning and/or skills. Offender supervisors did not, on the whole, plan work with prisoners, so did not always see the need for such follow-up work which was only undertaken in 49% of cases.
- 4.22 In Section 3 we noted that there had been a sufficient assessment of potential barriers to engaging with interventions available in the establishment for just over half of prisoners. We found that sufficient account had been taken of these factors in 64% of cases , an increase from 53% last time.
- 4.23 The quality of work with the offender was linked in most cases to whether the worker was likely to have direct contact with the prisoner. We found evidence that the offender manager had demonstrated commitment to the prisoner, had motivated and supported them or reinforced positive behaviour sufficiently in less than half of the cases examined. This was similar to last time. To facilitate contact at HMP Lewes, Surrey & Sussex Probation Trust had provided a free phone number so that prisoners could contact their offender manager without cost.
- 4.24 We found positive evidence of the involvement of offender supervisors in around 74% of the cases. At HMP Bullingdon, in order to maximise the information sharing and improve sentence planning, offender supervisors held sentence planning reviews on the same day as post-programme reviews. This meant that where a prisoner had completed an accredited programme, the offender supervisor, offender manager, other prison staff, prisoners and their family or supporters were all invited to attend a single meeting and discuss and analyse progress by the prisoner.
- 4.25 Finally, 60% of the prisoners in the sample were assessed as being in need of either support or protection during their sentence. Arrangements to support vulnerable prisoners, including use of Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork were found to be appropriate in 84% of these cases.
- 4.26 There was a reasonable degree of stability amongst offender managers which meant that only 9% of prisoners had experienced more than one change and 53% had experienced no change. Where there had been a change (188 cases), we found this had had a negative impact on the maintenance of the delivery of the sentence plan in 38% of them.
- 4.27 By the time of the inspection we found that sentence plan objectives had been fully or partly achieved in 61% of cases, a similar proportion to last time. However, the impact of this activity on the factors linked to prisoners' offending was insufficient in

over half of the cases, as it also had been in 2011/2012. Good progress had been made on the most significant factors in only 7% of cases and progress had been made on some significant factors, but not all, in 38% of cases. These results are of great concern. Where relevant, i.e. when release into the community was likely to take place within a few years, plans were in place to ensure that progress could be sustained in only 51% of cases, a slightly lower proportion than last time.

## **Women prisoners**

- 4.28 Only one of the prisons inspected accommodated female prisoners so it is not possible to draw general conclusions about the offender management of women in custody. All of the women had an offender supervisor allocated who, in most cases saw them within five days of reception. Emphasis was placed on using RoTL and offender supervisors told the prisoners in person the reasons for any refusal. All of the offender supervisors interviewed knew the prisoners and could speak confidently about them. In the prisoner survey at this establishment, 92% said they had a named offender supervisor and 83% of sentenced women that they had an offender manager. 89% of sentenced women surveyed said they had a sentence plan and of these, 48% said that their offender supervisor was working with them to achieve sentence plan goals and 25% their offender manager.
- 4.29 Access to Reducing Reoffending pathways was managed through an offender management meeting. However, a parallel 'sequencing' meeting prioritised prisoners for participation in interventions to address managing the risk of harm and resettlement. We were concerned that, as a consequence of this separation of functions, the offender management meeting had lost its purpose and was certainly less well attended. Nevertheless, the range of interventions available was good and most of the women were able to access what they required. Emphasis was placed on ETE with good outcomes for literacy and vocational qualifications.

## **The management of foreign national prisoners**

- 4.30 There were five establishments in this sample that accommodated significant proportions of foreign national prisoners within their populations. Two, HMP Canterbury and HMP Bullwood Hall, were dedicated foreign national establishments. These two prisons performed least well against the criteria for the Prison Offender Management Inspection amongst the 21 prisons inspected; in particular, against the criteria about the quality of work to assess and manage the risk of harm to others. Levels of some services, including offender management and resettlement, were said to be predicated on the assumption that prisoners would be deported. In fact, significant numbers of prisoners were being released into UK communities with little or no preparation; in the two months prior to the inspection, HMP Canterbury released 30 prisoners into the community and in the six months leading up to the HMP Bullwood Hall inspection 78 had been released. This 'explanation' for a poor level of service also suggests a lack of responsibility for what happens elsewhere beyond the UK.
- 4.31 Little, if any, differentiation was made between prisoners who would be deported and those that either might not or would not. At neither HMP Canterbury nor HMP Bullwood Hall were there accredited programmes; sentence planning boards did not

take place, there were no probation staff at HMP Canterbury and only one part time probation officer at HMP Bullwood Hall. External offender managers rarely had contact with prisoners, even in 'in scope' cases. Many prisoners who ought to have had a sentence plan arrived at the two establishments without one. Unable to obtain cooperation from the relevant Probation Trusts (the Trust where the sentencing court was located), prison officer offender supervisors were left to complete assessments and plans.

- 4.32 Conversely, HMP Huntercombe had more recently been re-designated to take foreign national prisoners and, by the time of the inspection, accommodated few UK Nationals. They were engaged in assessing and addressing the resettlement needs of their new population and in developing a Reducing Reoffending Strategy. The Offender Management Unit had a good skills mix of prison officers, probation officers and psychologists. Although offender management staff did not feel well equipped to deal with the new population, work was underway to identify with prisoners what needs they had as a group. We found some support for female foreign national prisoners at HMP Drake Hall, where they made up 20% of the population, but little at HMP The Verne where, at the time of the inspection, they constituted 39% of the population.
- 4.33 From the prisoner survey, the responses from foreign national prisoners was less positive about offender management than from the 21 establishments overall. At HMP Canterbury and HMP Bullwood Hall, 37% and 48% of sentenced prisoners, respectively, said they had a named offender manager; 40% and 63% that they had a sentence plan; and of those with offender managers, we were told that they were working with them to achieve sentence plan objectives in only 7% and 5% of cases respectively.

## Glossary

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<i>Accredited programme</i>	Structured courses for offenders which are designed to identify and reduce the factors related to their offending behaviour. Following evaluation, the design of the programmes has been accredited by a panel of experts
CARAT	Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice, Throughcare team: substance misuse work within prisons
CALM	An accredited anger management programme
<i>Dynamic factors</i>	As distinct from <i>static factors</i> . <i>Dynamic factors</i> are the factors in someone's circumstances and behaviour that can change over time
ETE	Employment, Training and Education: Work to improve an individual's learning, and thereby to increase their employment prospects
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
HMI Prisons	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons
HMI Probation	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
<i>Interventions; constructive and restrictive interventions</i>	<p>Work with an offender which is designed to change their offending behaviour and to support public protection.</p> <p>A <i>constructive intervention</i> is where the primary purpose is to reduce <i>likelihood of reoffending</i>. In the language of <i>offender management</i> this is work to achieve the 'help' and 'change' purposes, as distinct from the 'control' purpose. A <i>restrictive intervention</i> is where the primary purpose is to keep to a minimum the offender's <i>Risk of Harm to others</i>. In the language of <i>offender management</i> this is work to achieve the 'control' purpose as distinct from the 'help' and 'change' purposes.</p> <p>Example: with a sex offender, a <i>constructive intervention</i> might be to put them through an accredited sex offender programme; a <i>restrictive intervention</i> (to minimise their <i>Risk of Harm</i>) might be to monitor regularly and meticulously their accommodation, employment and the places they frequent, whilst imposing and enforcing clear restrictions as appropriate to each case.</p> <p>NB Both types of intervention are important</p>
<i>Initial Sentence Plan</i>	All cases should have a sentence plan. Usually this will be contained within the Offender Assessment System format
IT	Information Technology
<i>Likelihood of reoffending</i>	An aspect of the assessment of future behaviour by an individual offender. A prediction of <i>likelihood</i> as distinct from the potential <i>Risk of Harm to others</i>
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements: Probation, police, prison and other agencies working together locally to manage offenders who are of a higher risk of harm to others
NOMS	National Offender Management Service: the single agency responsible for both Prisons and <i>Probation Trusts</i>
OASys	Offender Assessment System: The nationally designed and prescribed framework for both Probation and Prisons to assess offenders, implemented in stages from April 2003. It makes use of both <i>static</i> and <i>dynamic factors</i>

<i>Offender management/Offender Management Model</i>	A core principle of <i>offender management</i> is that a single offender manager takes responsibility for managing an offender through the period of time they are serving their sentence, whether in custody or the community. Offenders are managed differently depending on their risk of harm and what <i>constructive</i> and <i>restrictive interventions</i> are required. Individual intervention programmes are designed and supported by the wider 'offender management team or network', which can be made up of the <i>offender manager</i> , offender supervisor, key workers and case administrators. The Offender Management Model in custody has been implemented in phases; prisoners are described as 'in scope' or 'out of scope' of the model
<i>Offender supervisor</i>	Staff working within the prison who are assigned to prisoners who fall within the scope of the Offender Management Model
<i>PPO</i>	Prolific and other Priority Offender
<i>P-NOMIS</i>	Prison based electronic case recording system designed to support the management of offenders
<i>Prison officer</i>	A member of staff employed by HM Prison Service to work directly with prisoners and to contribute to the running of the establishment. As part of their job, they may undertake the role of <i>offender supervisor</i>
<i>Probation officer</i>	This is the term for a 'qualified' offender manager. They manage offenders posing the highest risk of harm to the public and other more complex cases.
<i>Probation services officer</i>	This is the term for an offender manager who is not qualified as a probation officer. From 2010 they have been able to access locally determined training to 'qualify' as a probation services officer or to build on this to qualify as a probation officer. They may manage all but the most complex cases or those posing the highest risk of harm to the public depending on their level of training and experience
<i>Risk of harm/Risk of Serious Harm</i>	Risk of harm to others is the term generally used by HMI Probation to describe work to protect the public. In the language of offender management, this is the work done to achieve the 'control' purpose, with the offender manager/supervisor using primarily restrictive interventions that keep to a minimum the offender's opportunity to behave in a way that is a risk of harm to others. Risk of Serious Harm refers to the NOMS classification system
<i>RoTL</i>	Release on Temporary Licence
<i>Sentence plan</i>	A plan for managing the sentence. The Initial Sentence Plan should identify the <i>interventions</i> appropriate for the offender. The Review Sentence Plan reviews and records progress made
<i>Static factors</i>	As distinct from <i>dynamic</i> factors. <i>Static</i> factors are elements of someone's history that by definition can subsequently never change (i.e. the age at which they committed their first offence)
<i>TSP</i>	Thinking Skills Programme
<i>YOI</i>	Young Offender Institution

## Role of HMI Probation and Code of Practice

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Information on the Role of HMI Probation and code of practice can be found on our website:

**[www.justice.gov.uk/about/hmi-probation](http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/hmi-probation)**

The Inspectorate is a public body. Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within its remit should write to:

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