

Recommendation

- 4.18 Legitimate websites should be accessible, including those facilitating legal assistance, Skype and social networking. There should be effective procedures for permanently unblocking such sites.** (Repeated recommendation 4.26)

Removal and release

Expected outcomes:

Detainees leaving detention are prepared for their release, transfer, or removal.

Detainees are treated sensitively and humanely and are able to retain or recover their property.

- 4.19** During the previous six months, 1,059 detainees had been removed from the country, 669 had been released into the community and 616 transferred to other places of detention.
- 4.20** Home Office staff did not routinely see detainees on the day of removal to address last-minute questions and concerns or be presented with new documentation. Two detainees we spoke to, who had had their removal directions served elsewhere, said they had not seen immigration staff since arriving in the centre a few days previously. Welfare staff did not routinely see detainees before removal.
- 4.21** The charter removal to Nigeria and Ghana that we observed during the inspection was generally well managed. Detainees were brought to the discharge area in small groups a short time before they were due to board the coach, which avoided excessive waiting times in the two holding rooms. These rooms remained poorly ventilated, although they now contained magazines and helpful country information packs. Detainees were accompanied on removal transfer coaches by Tascor medics who were invited to attend complex case conferences before the release or removal of the detainee. G4SM staff and Tascor medics jointly assessed detainees on transfer coaches who had had emerging health problems at the centre.
- 4.22** Overseas escorts were polite to detainees, although some were discussing personal matters while searching detainees. None of the detainees was placed in waist restraint belts during this removal and there was no other use of force or compulsion (but see paragraph 1.53 showing evidence suggesting excessive use of waist restraint belts during scheduled removals). The system of reserves was still in place and remained unacceptable, although the centre told detainees if they were a reserve. There was no publicised and consistent system of funding to ensure that detainees could reach their final destination safely.
- 4.23** Health care needs on transfer or release were usually well planned for, with discharge summaries and take home medicines available as necessary. Discharge and release arrangements were considered as part of detainees' mental health management plans. RAPt (Rehabilitation of Addicted Prisoners Trust) used existing networks in the UK and were developing their support for detainees being removed to other countries. Most prescribing decisions were appropriately informed by the medicines available in destination countries.
- 4.24** There was a lack of clarity among Home Office staff about their responsibility to inform police and offender managers when a detainee who was a risk to children was released from detention. Similarly, we could not be confident that all ex-prisoners released before the end of their sentence had the terms of their licence explained to them and that offender managers were informed.