

16 October 2023

Reference: FOI 502 Freedom of Information Request

Thank you for your emails of 4 September 2023 and 25 September 2023. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You asked us:

For the years 2015 – 2022, the number of complaints received from Immigration Removal estates with the following details:

- The complaint outcome (ineligible, upheld and not upheld)
- The complaint category and subcategory (this includes a variety of categories which covers the substantive element of the complaint)

Our response:

The below table gives a summary of the complaint outcome (ineligible, upheld or not upheld) for each year 2015 – 2022.

Complaint outcome for complaints received by the PPO from the Immigration Removal estate 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2022:

Complaint outcome	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Ineligible	20	21	26	12	12	3	6	4	104
Not Upheld	18	16	13	13	11	4	1	3	79
Upheld	9	2	9	6	4	2	0	0	32
Total	47	39	48	31	27	9	7	7	215

The table below (see next page) gives a summary of the complaint categories and subcategories (detailing the substantive element of the complaint) for all complaints received by the PPO from the Immigration removal estate in the period 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2022, no matter the eligibility or outcome of the complaint.

Complaint category	Complaint subcategory	Total
Accommodation	General	4
	In-cell	3
Accommodation Total		7
Administration	Complaints Procedure	2
	General	21
	Record Keeping	1
	Reports	1
Administration Total		25
Escorts	(No subcategory)	4
Escorts Total		4
Food	Availability/quantity	1
	Quality	2
	Special diet	2
Food Total		5
Letters	Recorded	1
	Restrictions/ delays	1
	Rule 39/ confidential access	2
Letters Total		4
Medical	Appointments	7
	Medication/Treatment	8
	(No subcategory)	1
Medical Total		16
Money	Missing	1
Money Total		1
Multiple Ineligible complaints	(no subcategory)	8
Multiple Ineligible complaints Total		8
Prisoners	Assault	8
	Bullying/harassment	3
	General	1
Prisoners Total		12
Property	Damaged	4
	Lost	1
	Missing	51
	Not allowed/confiscated	3
Property Total		59
Regime	Day to day	5
	Segregation	1
	(No subcategory)	1
Regime Total		7
Staff behaviour	Assault	1
	Assault (not UoF)	13
	Bullying/harassment	3
	General	25
	Use of Force	13
Staff behaviour Total		55
Transfers	Closer to home	4
	Delays	1
	Internal/wing	1
	Regime/facilities	2
Transfers Total		8
Visits	Restrictions/delays	2
Visits Total		2
Work & Pay	Loss of job	2
Work & Pay Total		2
Total		215

The full data, splitting the complaint category and subcategory by complaint outcome and year received, is available in an appendix to this letter.

About the data

In the period 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2022, the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) received 215 complaints from the Immigration Removal Estate. The complaints came from the following Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs): Brook House IRC, Campsfield House IRC (now closed), Dover IRC (now closed), Dungavel House Removal Centre, Heathrow IRC (comprising Colnbrook IRC and Harmondsworth IRC), Morton Hall IRC (now closed), Tinsley House IRC, Yarl's Wood IRC, and The Verne IRC (now closed). Dungavel House Removal Centre is in South Lanarkshire, Scotland, but falls under the remit of the PPO as an IRC.

As a reminder of the complaint outcomes, a complaint is eligible if it is from a person who has been through the relevant internal complaints process (the two-stage prison process, or the immigration or probation process) and the complainant brings it to us within three months of receiving the final stage reply from the service in remit. The complaint also must be about something which is within our remit. Otherwise, the complaint will be categorised as **ineligible**.

A complaint is **upheld** if, after investigation, we find in favour of the complainant – i.e., we find the service in remit has acted contrary to their local and/or national policy, or otherwise inappropriately or unreasonably.

A complaint is **not upheld** if we find that the service in remit has acted in keeping with policy. Or, if there is no specific relevant policy or that they have not acted unreasonably or inappropriately.

The complaint category describes the substantive element of the complaint, at the discretion of the case investigator.

You have the right to appeal against our response if you think it is incorrect. Details can be found in the 'How to Appeal' section attached at the end of this letter.

The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) carries out **independent investigations** into complaints and deaths in custody. The detailed role and responsibilities of the PPO are set out in our office's Terms of Reference. The PPO has three main duties:

- to **investigate complaints** made by prisoners, young people in detention (prisons and secure training centres), offenders under probation supervision and individuals detained under immigration powers (detained individuals)
- to **investigate deaths** of prisoners, young people in detention, approved premises' residents and detained individuals due to any cause, including any apparent suicides and natural causes
- to **investigate deaths of recently released prisoners** that occur within 14 days of release from prison (except homicide)

The purpose of these investigations is **to understand what happened, to correct injustices and to identify learning** for the organisations whose actions we oversee so that the PPO makes a significant contribution to safer, fairer custody and offender supervision.

We may use or share your data only to the necessary extent when conducting our independent investigations in the exercise of our official authority. We will share your data with third parties (e.g. the prison) in order to make sure the information is accurate; to prevent or detect failings; and to identify lessons learnt. We may sometimes need to share your data with third parties if required by law. We only keep your personal data for as long as it is needed, as set out in our data retention policy. If you need any further information about how your data is used, please contact us.

How to Appeal

Internal Review

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to an internal review. The handling of your request will be looked at by someone who was not responsible for the original case, and they will make a decision as to whether we answered your request correctly.

If you would like to request a review, please write or send an email to the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman's office **within two months of the date of this letter**, at the following address:

Prisons and Probation Ombudsman
Third Floor
10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf
London
E14 4PU
E-mail: Mail@ppo.gov.uk

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

If you remain dissatisfied after an internal review decision, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner's Office. The Commissioner is an independent regulator who has the power to direct us to respond to your request differently, if he considers that we have handled it incorrectly.

You can contact the ICO at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Internet address: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Appendix

Full complaints data for complaints received by the PPO from the Immigration Removal estate 2015-2022. Detailing the range of complaint outcomes, categories and subcategories

Complaint outcome	Complaint category and subcategory	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Ineligible	Accommodation -General							1		1
	Accommodation -In-cell					1			1	2
	Administration -Complaints Procedure	1								1
	Administration -General	2	3	3	2	1	1			12
	Administration -Record Keeping							1		1
	Administration -Reports		1							1
	Escorts	1								1
	Food -Availability/quantity				1					1
	Food -Quality			1	1					2
	Food -Special diet			2						2
	Letters -Recorded			1						1
	Letters -Rule 39/ confidential access				1					1
	Medical							1		1
	Medical -Appointments		3	2		1				6
	Medical -Medication/Treatment	2	2	2		1				7
	Multiple Ineligible complaints	1	3	2		1	1			8
	Prisoners -Assault		1			4				5
	Property -Damaged			1						1
	Property -Lost							1		1
	Property -Missing	5	3	6		2				16
	Property -Not allowed/confiscated				1					1
	Regime		1							1
	Regime -Day to day	1		1					2	4
	Regime -Segregation		1							1
	Staff behaviour -Assault							1		1
	Staff behaviour -Assault (not UoF)	3		1	2					6
	Staff behaviour -General	3		2	3				1	9
	Staff behaviour -Use of Force		1		1	1				3
	Transfers -Closer to home	1	1	1						3
	Transfers -Delays						1			1
	Transfers -Regime/facilities			1						1
	Visits -Restrictions/delays		1							1
	Work & Pay -Loss of job							1		1
Ineligible Total		20	21	26	12	12	3	6	4	104
Not Upheld	Accommodation -General			1	1	1				3
	Accommodation -In-cell						1			1
	Administration -Complaints Procedure		1							1
	Administration -General	2	1	2	2	1				8
	Escorts			1						1
	Letters -Restrictions/ delays				1					1
	Medical -Medication/Treatment	1								1
	Prisoners -Assault		1			1				2
	Prisoners -Bullying/harassment	1	1		1					3
	Prisoners -General				1					1
	Property -Damaged				1	1				2
	Property -Missing	6	3	4	1	4	1		1	20
	Property -Not allowed/confiscated							1		1
	Regime -Day to day		1							1
	Staff behaviour -Assault (not UoF)	2	2	1	1	1				7
	Staff behaviour -Bullying/harassment	1					1		1	3

	Staff behaviour -General	2	5	3	2					12
	Staff behaviour -Use of Force			1	1	2	1		1	6
	Transfers -Closer to home	1								1
	Transfers -Internal/wing				1					1
	Transfers -Regime/facilities	1								1
	Visits -Restrictions/delays	1								1
	Work & Pay -Loss of job		1							1
Not Upheld Total		18	16	13	13	11	4	1	3	79
Upheld	Administration -General				1					1
	Escorts	1				1				2
	Letters -Rule 39/ confidential access				1					1
	Medical -Appointments				1					1
	Money -Missing	1								1
	Prisoners -Assault			1						1
	Property -Damaged	1								1
	Property -Missing	3	2	6	2	2				15
	Property -Not allowed/confiscated	1								1
	Staff behaviour -General	1		1	1		1			4
	Staff behaviour -Use of Force	1		1		1	1			4
Upheld Total		9	2	9	6	4	2			32
Total		47	39	48	31	27	9	7	7	215