

17 November 2023

**Reference: FOI 513 Freedom of Information request**

Thank you for your letter of 11 October 2023, which we received on 20 October. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

**You asked us:**

For information on how many assessors and how many investigators are employed by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO).

**Our response:**

We have searched our records and we hold the requested information on the above questions.

A copy of the information that you requested is shown below.

<b>Assessment Roles</b>	<b>Expected Number of Employees</b>	<b>Actual Number of Employees</b>
Assessor	7	5
Head of Assessment Team	1	1
Senior Assessment Team Officer	2	1

<b>Investigator Roles</b>	<b>Expected Number of Employees</b>	<b>Actual Number of Employees</b>
Investigator	55	48
Senior Investigator	16	12

**You asked us:**

For information as to how many or what percentage of assessors and investigators are former employees of other custodial services (for example, the Prison Service, the Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Ministry of Justice or the Probation Service).

**Our response:**

We have searched our records and hold some of the requested information on the above question.

A copy of the information that you requested is shown below.

<b>Assessment Roles</b>	<b>Former Employees</b>	<b>Not Former Employees</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
Assessor	1	2	2
Head of Assessment Team	0	0	1
Senior Assessment Team Officer	0	0	1

<b>Investigator Roles</b>	<b>Former Employees</b>	<b>Not Former Employees</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
Investigator	21	7	20
Senior Investigator	5	2	5

Please note that this information has been obtained from a manual search of job application forms completed by staff who went onto be employed by the PPO. However, in line with the PPO's retention policy, many application forms have been destroyed and we do not have information relating to these staff's previous employment.

Furthermore, please note that as well as the custodial services defined in your question, former employees of any private prison, the Home Office and the Parole Board have been included.

**You asked us:**

For information as to how many or what percentage of assessors and investigators are former prisoners.

**Our response:**

We have searched our records and we hold the requested information on the above questions.

A copy of the information that you requested is shown below.

<b>Assessment Roles</b>	<b>Former Prisoners</b>	<b>Not Former Prisoners</b>
Assessor	1	4
Head of Assessment Team	0	1
Senior Assessment Team Officer	0	1

<b>Investigator Roles</b>	<b>Former Prisoners</b>	<b>Not Former Prisoners</b>
Investigator	0	48
Senior Investigator	0	12

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/>