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020 7035 2123

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**THE MILITARY CORRECTIVE TRAINING CENTRE –
A VERY IMPRESSIVE ESTABLISHMENT**

The Military Corrective Training Centre is an impressive establishment and staff should be congratulated, said Nick Hardwick, Chief Inspector of Prisons, publishing the report of an announced inspection of the armed services' central custodial facility in Colchester.

When HMI Prisons first inspected in 2004, although the report painted a generally positive picture, there were some concerns. Each successive inspection has found that the Centre had improved and this inspection was no exception. A combination of very good relationships, plenty of activity and constructive preparation for the future, whether in the services or as a civilian, made the Centre a very safe and positive place. Some aspects now provided a model that other custodial institutions would do well to copy.

Most detainees were held for offences against service discipline that would not be a criminal offence in civilian life – for instance, many had gone absent without leave.

Inspectors were pleased to find that:

- reception, first night and induction processes were very good;
- there was little bullying or victimisation and staff were quick to respond to any tension;

- incidents of self-harm were rare and there was good support and monitoring of detainees who were vulnerable;
- security was proportionate and detainees understood and respected the rules which were applied consistently;
- staff-detainee relationships were excellent and based on high levels of mutual respect;
- detainees were kept busy with plenty of activity: education and military training for those returning to active duty or education and vocational training for those leaving the services;
- literacy and numeracy provision was outstanding and detainees developed good employability skills; and
- preparation for return to civilian life for those detainees who were to be discharged was very good, with help with debt, accommodation and finding a job on release.

Nick Hardwick said:

“Some aspects of the establishment are not replicable elsewhere: the shared experience of detainees and staff that underpins much of the good relationships and the motivation of many of the detainees are probably unique to a service environment. However, good relationships, the focus of the whole establishment on preparing detainees for release, plenty of good quality activity and care for the vulnerable should be features of any custodial establishment and the Military Corrective Training Centre demonstrates these in full. It is important to remember how far the Centre has come, and the staff are to be congratulated.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

1. A copy of the report can be found on the HM Inspectorate of Prisons website from 20 June 2012 at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/inspectorate-reports/hmi-prisons/other-jurisdictions/military-corrective-training-centre-colchester>
2. HM Inspectorate of Prisons is an independent inspectorate, inspecting places of detention to report on conditions and treatment, and promote positive outcomes for those detained and the public.
3. This announced inspection was carried out from 11-18 January 2012.
4. The Military Corrective Training Centre is the armed services' only corrective training establishment. Although under Army command, it is a tri-service establishment with both staff and detainees from the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force. All detainees are held in accordance with the rules determining committal to custody within the Armed Forces Act 2006. The majority are serving periods of detention following court martial or a summary hearing by their commanding officers. Most detainees have offended against Armed Forces law (employment law rather than criminal law), and few are committed for offences that would have resulted in custody had they been civilians. The centre only receives those who have been sentenced to periods of up to two years' detention.
5. Please contact Jane Parsons in HMI Prisons Press Office on 0207 035 2123 or 07880 787452 if you would like more information or to request an interview with Nick Hardwick.