



Inspecting policing  
in the public interest

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### **POLICE CUSTODY IN CROYDON – GENERALLY POSITIVE**

Police custody provision in Croydon was generally sound, with good partnership working, said Nick Hardwick, Chief Inspector of Prisons, and Dru Sharpling, HM Inspector of Constabulary, publishing the report of a joint inspection into custody suites in Croydon.

The inspection was part of a national programme of joint inspections and was conducted at Croydon and South Norwood custody suites. Overall, the inspection found much good practice and some excellent practice. However there were also some areas for improvement.

Inspectors were pleased to find that:

- the borough commander was committed to developing custody provision;
- there was some good partnership working;
- there were advanced plans to replace both suites with a single new facility;
- interactions with detainees were generally appropriate and management of health and safety issues was satisfactory;
- an appropriate balance was maintained between progressing cases and the rights of individuals and the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) was rigorously adhered to;

- health care provision was good, supported by effective clinical governance and robust medicines management;
- the management of DNA and forensic samples was good; and
- substance misuse support was good.

However, there were some concerns:

- some line management arrangements were confusing and few staff were had custody as their main role or had sufficient training;
- there was a lack of appropriate monitoring of the use of force, both locally and London-wide, as we have found elsewhere;
- juveniles and vulnerable adults were well served by an appropriate adult scheme during the day, but the lack of a night-time service or local authorities PACE beds led to some juveniles being unnecessarily detained overnight; and
- complaints procedures were confused.

Nick Hardwick and Dru Sharpling said:

“Overall, custody provision in Croydon was generally sound. This report sets out a small number of recommendations that we hope will assist the Metropolitan Police Service and Metropolitan Police Authority to improve the facilities further. We expect our findings to be considered in the wider context of priorities and resourcing and for an action plan to be provided in due course”

ENDS

**Notes to Editors:**

1. A copy of the full report can be found on the HM Inspectorate of Prisons website from 5 July 2011 at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/inspectorate-reports/hmi-prisons/police-cell/index.htm>.
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. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest, and rigorously examines the effectiveness of police forces and authorities to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. HMIC inspects and regulates all 43 police forces in England and Wales together with other major policing bodies such as the Serious Organised Crime Agency, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the British Transport Police and HMRC.
4. This joint inspection was carried out from 28 February – 2 March 2011.
5. Please contact Jane Parsons (HMI Prisons press office) on 020 7035 2123 or Ruth Allman or Angharad Thomas (HMI Constabulary Press Office) on 020 3513 0600 if you would like more information or to request an interview.