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JUNE 2008

NOT FOR PUBLICATION BEFORE 00:01, 10 JUNE 2008

### **HMP BULLWOOD HALL: A SAFE PRISON BUT RESETTLEMENT WORK WEAK**

HMP Bullwood Hall provided a safe environment for its foreign national population, but there were weaknesses in its resettlement work and an inadequate night sanitation system, said Anne Owers, Chief Inspector of Prisons, publishing the report of an announced inspection into the Essex prison.

Bullwood Hall's transition to its new role had been difficult, largely because of the absence of national or regional guidance in dealing with foreign national prisoners, and the late decisions on deportation made by the UK Border Agency.

Inspectors found:

- There was little evidence of bullying or self-harm. Prisoners said they felt safer than at any other prison. However systems to support these areas were underdeveloped. This was of particular concern as it was proposed to double up prisoners in some accommodation;
- Relationships between staff and prisoners were particularly good and staff had adapted to their population particularly well, though there was too little use of interpretation, and more training was needed in diversity and cultural awareness;
- The night sanitation system, allowing prisoners to have access to toilets and staff to have access to prisoners, was ineffective and sometimes degrading and unsafe;
- Most prisoners were able to engage in useful education or activity, and were out of their cells for considerable periods.

Anne Owers said:

Overall, local managers and staff are to be congratulated on managing such a significant change of population, while retaining a positive and safe culture. However, the absence of a central strategy and guidance at national level had made their task much harder and had seriously inhibited effective resettlement work, for those prisoners released into the UK as well as those

being released abroad. As we have frequently said, national standards for the management and support of this group of prisoners are much-needed and long overdue.

Phil Wheatley, Director General of the National Offender Management Service, said:

“I second the Chief Inspector’s congratulations to managers and staff at Bullwood Hall. I am delighted that this report highlights the good work done at the prison in providing useful education and activity, and developing constructive relationships between prisoners and staff. I am confident this success will be built upon in the context of a safe and effective regime.”

### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. A full copy of the HMCIP report into HMP Bullwood is available from <http://inspectrates.justice.gov.uk/hmiprisons/>
2. HMP Bullwood is a foreign national prison, (second after Canterbury), based in Essex. Prior to this it was a female only prison holding young and adult women.
3. The announced inspection took place on 3-7 December 2007.
4. Anne Owers is available for media interviews. Please call 0207 210 1473 to arrange an interview.