

## **HASLAR IMMIGRATION REMOVAL CENTRE - IMPROVEMENTS MADE, BUT ACCOMMODATION UNSUITABLE**

Haslar Immigration Removal Centre has improved since its last inspection, but cannot provide an adequate standard of accommodation without major rebuilding and refurbishment, said Anne Owers, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, publishing the report of an announced inspection today.

The report commended Haslar for improvements in fire prevention arrangements and the quality of education and PE available. Staff-detainee relationships were reasonably good. Inspectors also welcomed two innovative pilot projects: the appointment of a Welfare Officer to prepare detainees for release or deportation, and a voluntary work scheme which provided incentives for detainees to undertake tasks within the centre.

However, the report also noted that a significant number of detainees had felt unsafe at some point: this required management investigation and adherence to first night and anti-bullying procedures. It also called on IND to address serious concerns about the safety of new vehicles used by escort contractors, and to end the practice whereby some staff routinely carried staves, unlike their counterparts in private sector centres.

The inspection also identified a clear need for IND to invest in improved accommodation to replace the current, inadequate, provision. The report noted that the current accommodation inhibits the privacy and sleep of detainees, and impedes staff supervision and efforts to combat bullying.

Anne Owers said:

“Overall, Haslar is delivering a largely safe and respectful service to detainees. Various improvements are clearly visible and this is to be commended, but continued use of Haslar as an immigration centre should be contingent on IND investing in a major rebuilding and refurbishment programme, without which Haslar is not a decent environment in which to hold detainees.”

### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. The announced inspection of Haslar Immigration Removal Centre took place between 9 -14 May 2005. It was last inspected in March 2004.
2. Haslar is one of three immigration removal centres run by the Prison Service on behalf of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND). It holds those detained under immigration laws.
3. HM Prisons Inspectorate reports and releases are available at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/justice/prisons/inspprisons>.
4. For an electronic copy of the report, please call 020 7 035 3535.