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**LINDHOLME IMMIGRATION REMOVAL CENTRE – IMPROVING BUT NEEDS  
GREATER SEPARATION FROM PRISON**

There have been improvements at Lindholme Immigration Removal Centre, but its remaining weaknesses are unlikely to be overcome unless it is more formally separated from the adjoining prison, said Anne Owers, Chief Inspector of Prisons, publishing the report of a short unannounced inspection.

Inspectors reported that the IRC was a reasonably safe and relaxed place, with improved activities and greater efforts to prepare detainees for release or removal. However, the centre was still effectively being managed as a low risk part of the prison. As a result, there was no continuity of staffing in the IRC, and senior managers' attention was focused on the prison. This hindered efforts to address the particular needs of detainees and to forge a distinct identity for the IRC.

Inspectors also found that

- staff in the IRC were still routinely issued with staves, which was unnecessary
- health services failed to focus sufficiently on the needs of detainees
- structures to manage diversity were under-developed

However, they also noted a number of improvements

- reception and first night arrangements were effective
- faith provision was good
- the quality of education had improved
- there was more paid employment
- telephone access to the outside world was much better

Anne Owers said:

“Despite some concerns, Lindholme IRC was an essentially safe and respectful facility, and had made some significant improvements in the provision of activities and in preparing detainees for release. However, a number of weaknesses remain, often as a result of the centre not being sufficiently separated from the neighbouring prison. Greater efforts are needed to forge a separate identity for the IRC, with a dedicated staff and a proper focus on the particular needs of immigration detainees”

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. IRC Lindholme has capacity for 112 male detainees, the current operational capacity is 92 as a result of a fire at the centre on 12 May 2007
2. The short unannounced inspection took place between 16–18 July 2007
3. Inspectorate reports and releases are available at <http://inspectrates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmiprisons>