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**MILITARY CORRECTIVE AND TRAINING CENTRE:  
PRESSURES ON STAFF HAVE AFFECTED PROGRESS**

The Military Corrective and Training Centre has been unable to make hoped-for progress since its last inspection, and has been affected by the redeployment of custodial staff overseas, said Dame Anne Owers, publishing the report of an unannounced inspection into the armed services' only central place of detention,

Inspectors found that the centre continued to perform reasonably well in three out of four key areas: safety, respect and activity. Some areas had progressed well:

- MCTC remained a safe and secure place, with little apparent bullying or self-harm
- Relationships between staff and detainees had improved noticeably, and inspectors saw evidence of supportive work
- The incentives and complaints systems had both improved considerably
- Work on diversity had also developed well
- There were significant improvements in healthcare, which would be reinforced if it became a branch surgery
- Those returning to service had some basic skills training, as well as a full regime of military training

There were, however, some concerns, and some problems identified at the last inspection which had not been dealt with:

- Systems for dealing with bullying were still in their infancy, and systems for reviewing the care of vulnerable detainees were weak
- Too many detainees arrived late, and some came without information essential to assessing vulnerability and risk
- There was too little purposeful activity for those who were segregated, and no evening and weekend activity for other detainees

- Vocational training was not available in all areas of work for those being discharged from service, and one workshop remained inadequate and unsafe

Resettlement – preparing detainees for life after MCTC – was the greatest area of concern. Weaknesses identified at the last inspection had become more apparent: there was no analysis of needs, poor data collection, and a lack of coherent planning to maximise the impact of some of the good work being done. Debt and alcohol support needed development, though employment and accommodation support were better. There were particular concerns about detainees who had committed violent or sexual offences, who had access neither to interventions at MCTC nor to statutory probation support on release.

Anne Owers said:

“This report will inevitably be disappointing for MCTC. It is, however, important to stress that we were impressed with the approach and drive of senior staff, under the current commandant, and the commitment and approach of almost all the custodial staff we met. It is evident that the centre has been suffering considerably from redeployment and the over-stretch of the Provost Marshal’s staff, the army’s dedicated custodial staff. The Provost Marshal’s remit, in theatres overseas as well as domestically, is extremely demanding and we do not believe that he has been provided with the resources to carry it out to his own, or his staff’s, satisfaction. If those resources can be made available, and given the extremely positive approach of those at MCTC, there is no reason why the centre cannot recover lost ground and improve still further.”

#### **Notes for Editors**

1. The full report can be found on the HM Inspectorate of Prisons website from 22 April 2009 at <http://inspectors.justice.gov.uk/hmiprisons>.
2. The announced inspection of the Military Corrective Training Centre was carried out 3-7 November 2008.
3. The operational capacity at the Military Corrective Training Centre at the time of the inspection was 267.
4. The last inspection of the Military Corrective Training Centre took place from 16-19 January 2007.
5. The Military Corrective Training Centre (MCTC) is in Colchester and is the armed services' one remaining corrective training establishment.
6. Anne Owers, Chief Inspector, is available for interview. If you would like to speak to her please contact Tom Hodson in the Press Office on 0203 334 3527.