



CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME: ANNUAL REPORT

BACKGROUND

1. The scheme has been in operation since 1983 as a result of the Lord Scarman report following the Brixton riots and became a statutory function in 2002. The Scheme comprises of volunteers making unannounced weekly visits to designated custody suites to check on the welfare of persons in custody and the operation of the statutory and other rules governing their welfare.

OPERATION OF THE SCHEME

2. The Scheme currently has 32 custody visitors and following a successful recruitment campaign in January 2015, 19 new visitors were appointed with 12 commencing in 2015 and the remainder in 2016. Induction training has been held for the new visitors.
3. The combined statistics for all three panels for 2014/15 and a comparison with the previous year are detailed below:-

	2013/14	%	2014/15	%
Number of visits made	195		152*	
Number of detainees <i>(all persons held in custody at the time of visit)</i>	1644		1320	
Detainees consenting to a visit	694	93.8	568	95.8
Detainees not available for a visit <i>(in interview, asleep, doctors' visit, Custody Officer/Visitor refusal as detainee violent/drunk)</i>	678		498	
Detainees declining a visit	46	6.2	24	4.2
Detainees not selected for a visit	226		230	
Detainees raising issues	336		307	
Number of issues raised	439		531	

* Visits reduced to weekly in 2014/15 from once every 5 days.

Time	No of visits	
	13/14	14/15
00.00 - 06.00	0	0
06.00 - 09.00	5	12
09.00 - 12.00	73	60
12.00 - 15.00	29	29
15.00 - 18.00	28	22
18.00 - 21.00	57	25
21.00 - 00.00	3	4

Day of week	No of visits	
	13/14	14/15
Monday	38	22
Tuesday	38	35
Wednesday	34	34
Thursday	29	21
Friday	22	16
Saturday	18	14
Sunday	16	10

4. Of the 568 detainees seen, 307 detainees (54%) raised 531 matters mainly relating to medical issues: requests for food/drink, telephone calls, blankets and reading material. The majority of issues raised by detainees were resolved at the time of the visit by the Custody Officer. Any issues, which cannot be resolved by the Custody Officer, are referred to the Chief Inspector responsible for custody for

consideration and appropriate action. The vast majority of reports received from Custody Visitors were complimentary about the custody staff and the conditions within the custody suites.

5. The Scheme continues to operate very well with very few issues of concern being reported by Custody Visitors.