



ANNUAL REPORT

2024–2025



The
Prisoner
Ombudsman
for Northern Ireland



Contents

Foreword	3
Who We Are	4
What We Do	6
Our Standards	7
Performance Overview	9
Progress Against Business Plan 2024-25	16
Corporate Governance	18
Conclusion	20
Appendix 1- Business Plan Objectives 2024-25	21
Appendix 2 - Overview of the Prison Estate	23

Foreword

It is my privilege to present the Annual Report for the Office of the Prisoner Ombudsman for Northern Ireland for the year 2024–25.

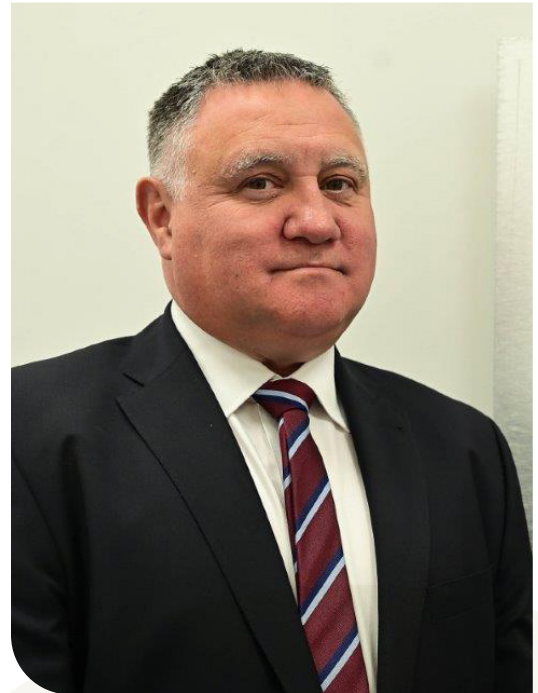
This year, the Office continued to deliver independent, impartial and timely investigations into complaints and deaths in custody. In doing so, we aimed to support transparency, accountability and learning across the prison system. Our work contributes not only to individual resolution but also to systemic improvement in how custody is experienced in Northern Ireland.

Despite challenges, including leadership transitions and continued pressure on resources, we met all the objectives in our Business Plan. I extend my thanks to the dedicated staff of this Office, whose professionalism and commitment underpin the delivery of this report and the service we provide.

Our vision remains steadfast: to ensure every prisoner, visitor and member of staff is treated with fairness and respect and our investigations contribute meaningfully to a safer and just prison system.

DARRIN JONES

**Prisoner Ombudsman for Northern Ireland
July 2025**





Who We Are

The Prisoner Ombudsman (the Ombudsman) is an 'Independent Statutory Office Holder,' appointed by the Minister of Justice under Section 2(2) of the Prison Act (Northern Ireland) 1953, as extended by Section 2 of the Treatment of Offenders Act (Northern Ireland) 1968.

The Director of Operations supports the Ombudsman's work and has responsibility for corporate governance, process assurance, staff support and delivery of the Ombudsman's strategic objectives. The Director of Operations is also the budget manager and has responsibility for the day-to-day running of the office.

The staff within the Office of the Prisoner Ombudsman (the Office) are Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) employees and therefore comply with the standards and principles laid down in the Civil Service Management Code, the NICS Standards and Conduct guidance and the NICS Code of Ethics. These set out in detail the rules governing confidentiality, data protection, acceptance of outside appointments and involvement in political activities.

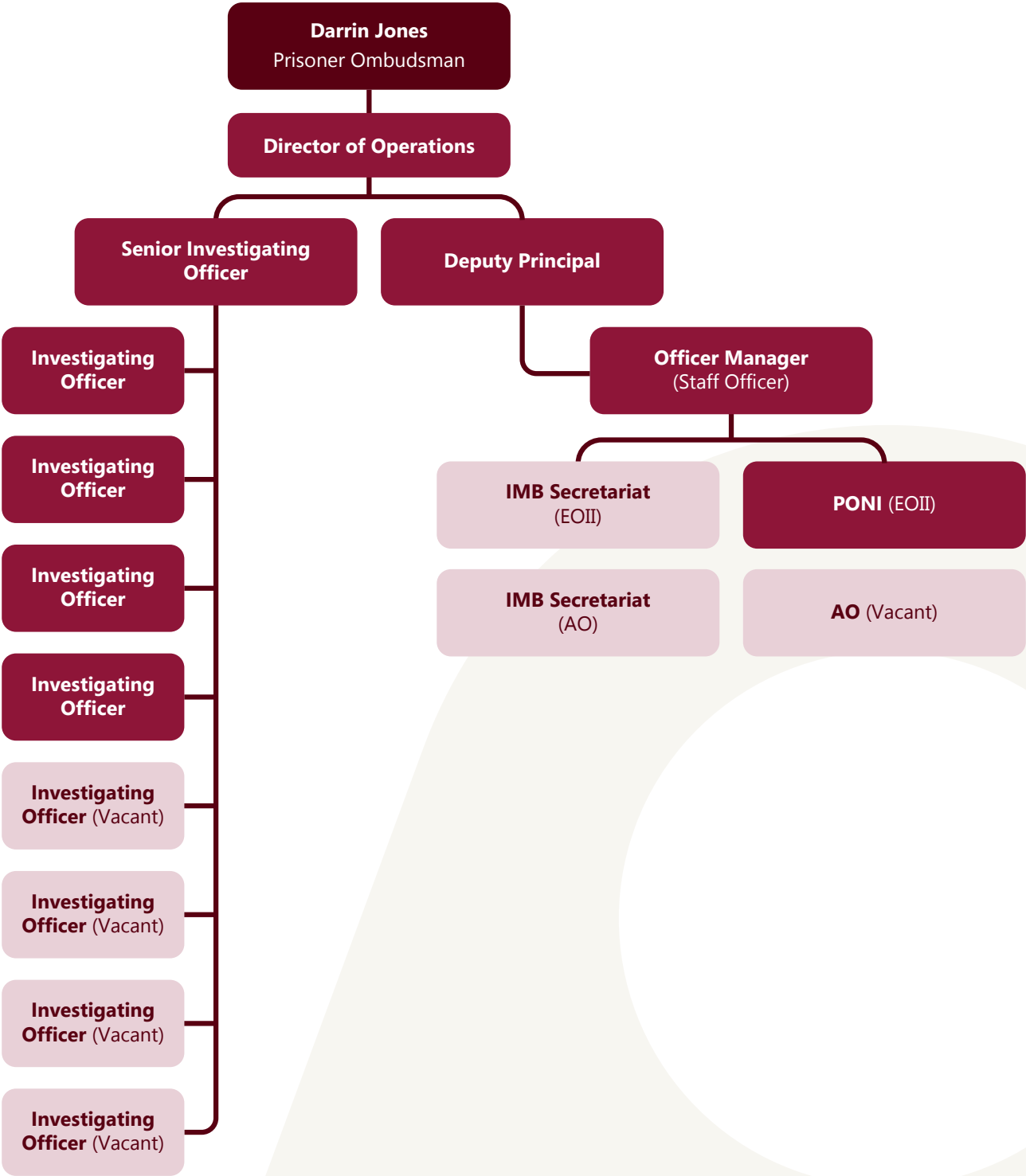
The team within the Office conduct themselves according to the agreed standards and methods of conducting investigations and administrative tasks to ensure all work is carried out efficiently and effectively.

Staffing at 31 March 2024

- ▶ Director of Operations (Grade 7),
- ▶ Senior Investigations Officer (Deputy Principal),
- ▶ Corporate Governance and Compliance Officer (Deputy Principal),
- ▶ 5.6 Investigation Officers (Staff Officer),
- ▶ 1 Executive Officer II, and,
- ▶ 1 Administrative Officer.



The organisation chart below shows the staff complement at April 2025.



What We Do

The Office was established in 2005 following the Steele Review of Prisons, which was commissioned due to concerns about the safety of staff and prisoners in Maghaberry Prison. Amongst other things, the Review suggested that the establishment of such an office would *"make a valuable contribution to defusing the tensions which are bound to arise in prisons in Northern Ireland."*

The Office contributes to ensuring safety and standards within prisons through two specific functions:

- ▶ investigating and reporting on Deaths in Custody (DiC) including Post Release Deaths (PRD) (normally occurring up to 14 days post release) and Serious Adverse Incidents (SAI).
- ▶ investigating and reporting on complaints from current or former prisoners and their visitors.

The Ombudsman has a Standing Commission from the Director General of the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) to investigate Deaths in Custody.

Draft DiC investigation reports are shared with NIPS, the Health Trust and the deceased's family for factual accuracy. The final report is shared with the Coroners' Service NI (CSNI) and is published on our website. Our preference is to publish DiC reports in full to best serve the public interest. However, we balance publication against legal obligations in respect of data protection and privacy.

The Ombudsman's powers regarding investigation of complaints are currently set out in Rule 79 of the Prison and Young Offender Centre (NI) Rules 2009.

Draft complaint investigation reports are shared with NIPS and complainants to ensure factual accuracy. We also ask NIPS to share draft reports with any identifiable staff who are mentioned in the report. Complaint reports are not generally published but can be at the Ombudsman's discretion.

The Terms of Reference can be found on the Ombudsman's website:

- ▶ [Complaints Terms of Reference](#) or [Death in Custody Terms of Reference](#).

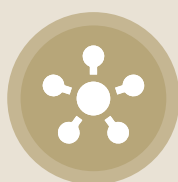
The Office of the Prisoner Ombudsman does not currently hold statutory power.

Our Standards

Throughout the period of this Annual Report, the work of the Office of the Prisoner Ombudsman was underpinned by a mission statement and six supporting principles which related to how we approached work and relationships, both inside the Office and with our partners and stakeholders.

MISSION STATEMENT

To help ensure prisons are safe, purposeful places through the provision of independent, impartial and professional investigation into Complaints and Deaths in Custody.



Principle 1 INDEPENDENCE

To maintain and strengthen confidence in the independent and impartial approach of the Office of the Prisoner Ombudsman.



Principle 4 CLEAR COMMUNICATION

To maximise awareness of the role of the Office of the Prisoner Ombudsman among key stakeholders and keep those to whom we provide a service fully informed about the content and progress of investigations in which they have an interest.



Principle 2 PROFESSIONALISM

To continuously review and develop investigation processes for Complaints and Deaths in Custody, ensuring high standards of investigative practice, robustness, a proportionate approach and balanced reporting.



Principle 5 EFFICIENCY

To ensure the Office of the Prisoner Ombudsman uses its resources efficiently and complies with relevant legislative and governance requirements.



Principle 3 SERVICE-ORIENTATION

To provide an effective and courteous service to all stakeholders and positively influence the implementation of recommendations to assist the Northern Ireland Prison Service and South- Eastern Health and Social Care Trust to deliver a purposeful, rehabilitative and healthy regime.



Principle 6 FORWARD LOOKING

To develop the role of the Office of the Prisoner Ombudsman to meet emerging needs.

Support for Staff

All staff within the office completed the Advanced Professional Certificate in Investigative Practice awarded by the International Compliance Association, the leading professional body for the global regulatory compliance community, in association with Alliance Manchester Business School, one of the most prestigious post-graduate institutions in the world.

Detailed handbooks are available to guide staff through their investigations. These are updated as necessary and are supported by a variety of standardised templates and guidance to ensure impartiality and thoroughness.

All staff adhere to the internal Good Complaints Handling guidance which promotes the principles below.



Performance Overview

1. Deaths in Custody

The Office of the Prisoner Ombudsman investigations into Deaths in Custody fulfil the duty, required by Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights to inform the Coroner's Inquest. The Prisoner Ombudsman is notified when a death occurs after which an Investigator will attend the scene within four hours. The specific aims of Death in Custody investigations are to:

- ▶ establish the circumstances surrounding the death,
- ▶ examine the care provided to the deceased by NIPS and the Health Trust,
- ▶ recommend improvements to NIPS and/or Trust policies/procedures that may help prevent a similar death in the future,
- ▶ ensure the bereaved family have an opportunity to raise concerns, and,
- ▶ assist the Coroner's inquest.

April 2024 started with an existing case load of thirty-seven cases to be investigated with the oldest cases being from 2018.

Table 1 - Cases requiring investigation at the beginning of April 2024.

Calendar year	Incident	Maghaberry	Magilligan	Hydebank	Post Release
2024	DiC	1			
	PRD				1
2023	DiC	5	1		
	PRD				3
	SAI	2		1	
2022	DiC	4	1		
	PRD				3
	SAI	1			
2021	DiC	3	1		
	SAI			1	
2020	DiC	1			
2019	DiC	2	1		
2018	DiC	3	2		

During 2024-25, a further ten notifications were received; eight of which were Deaths in Custody and two were Post Release Deaths. No Serious Adverse Incidents were reported in that period.

Of the total 47 cases, seventeen were investigated to conclusion which resulted in four reports being published and thirteen post release deaths closed following initial investigation.

Going forward into 2025-26 (at the end of quarter 1) investigations into the remaining 30 cases will commence in date order from the oldest, which are from 2021.

Disclosure Bundles

Information obtained in the process of each Death in Custody investigation is shared with CSNI under disclosure. During 2024-25, six disclosure bundles were provided.

2. Complaint investigations and responses to complainants

NIPS operates an Internal Complaints Process (ICP) and the prisoner's right to lodge a complaint to NIPS underpins this process. An effective ICP is the first stage in a process designed to increase the confidence of prisoners in making a complaint about matters affecting them including their welfare and safety.

Complaints can only be escalated to this Office once Stage 1 and 2 of the NIPS ICP have been completed unless they are closed by NIPS under Prison Rule 79B¹. When complaints are made to this Office, Investigators review all the available material and make an unbiased and independent response to the complainant.

Complaints during 2024-2025.

During 2024-25, across the four prison establishments, the average population was 1,911 (compared to 1,878 the previous year). Complaints totaling 6,700 were made to NIPS during this time, a decrease from 7,214 (7.12%) from the previous year. Of these 6,700 complaints, this Office received 360 escalated complaints in addition to the 304 to be actioned from previous years. Throughout 2024-25, 388 complaints were investigated to conclusion.

¹ Prison Rule 79B allows for complaints not to be answered where they are deemed to be vexatious, repetitive, frivolous, raising no substantial issue or either on their own or taken together with other complaints, intended to hamper the proper operation of the complaint's procedure.



Prison Population

Overall there was an increase in the number of prisoners across the prison establishments which was reflected in a slight increase in the level of complaints received compared to the complaints received in the previous 12 months; 360 compared to 323 the previous year (+10%). This represents just over 5.4% of the 6,700 complaints initiated through the NIPS internal complaints process.

Maghaberry General Prison Population

The general prison population within Maghaberry Prison lodged 248 complaints, 69% of all complaints received.

Maghaberry Separated Prisoners

Prisoners on separated landings at Maghaberry Prison lodged 93 individual complaints in the reporting period, 26% of the total number of complaints received, compared to 88 in the previous year (5% increase).

Magilligan Prison

Eleven complaints were lodged from prisoners in Magilligan, a 75% decrease in comparison to the previous year.

Hydebank Wood Secure College and Women's Prison

The small number of complaints from young men and women in Hydebank Wood College and Women's Prison remains comparable to previous years. Analysis of these statistics should consider the different types of prison environment and the specific needs of the prisoners in their respective care. The Office continues to promote prisoner awareness and understanding of how to make a complaint to the Office.

Table 2 - Number of individual complaints received by the Ombudsman's Office during 2024-25

Prison	Average Prison Population	Number of Individual complaints	% of all complaints received (including ineligible complaints)
Maghaberry Prison General prison population	1234	248	69
Maghaberry Prison Roe 3 and 4 Separated Prisoners	16	93	26
Maghaberry Prison Bush House 1 and 2 Separated Prisoners	10	0	0
Magilligan Prison	493	11	3
Hydebank Wood Secure College (Young Men)	50	1	1
Hydebank Wood Secure College Ash House (Female)	108	7	1
Visitors – not in custody	0	0	0
Overall Total	1,911	360	100

Withdrawn Complaints

Eight complaints were withdrawn ahead of an investigation as they were resolved locally.

Range and nature of complaints

Table 3 - Range and nature of complaints from prisoners across the Northern Ireland Prison Estate.

Complaints Topic	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
Treatment by Officers	7	30	32
Accommodation	20	2	24
Property	44	1	31
Adjudications	5	8	4
Tuckshop	5	10	6
Complaint Procedure	48	5	48
Mail/legal	15	27	42
Discrimination	5	8	9
Visits	2	4	34
Searching/Full body search/scanners	20	33	168
Transfers/Allocation		0	0
Regime	10	7	3
Adverse reports	29	30	10
Food	1	2	3
Telephone	2	5	14
Lock down		NA	16
Education	2	19	13
Health and Safety Wellbeing	7	9	3
Home leave/prerelease	5	9	13
Miscellaneous (for example: withdraw; local resolution)	3		35

Themes of Complaints

The Office noted concern about the lack of improvement or increase in number of complaints in previously identified categories, such as:

- ▶ Accommodation including issues relating to the tuck-shop and the cleanliness and conditions of cells rose from 2 complaints in 2023-24 to 20 in 2024-25
- ▶ Lost and/or damaged property rose from 1 complaint in 2023-24 to 44 in 2024-25
- ▶ NIPS internal complaints procedure including issues such as delays in the process or the received responses increased from 5 complaints in 2023-24 to 48 in 2024-25
- ▶ Adverse reports remained a consistent source of complaint: 29 complaints in 2023-24 and 30 in 2024-25

Areas of Reduction in Complaints

The Office noted the reduction in complaints regarding:

- ▶ Treatment by Prison Officers covering issues such as not being listened to or the manner in which prisoners were spoken to reduced from 30 complaints in 2023-24 to 7 in 2024-25
- ▶ Full Body Scanning (FBS) complaints continue to decrease, 30 complaints in 2023-24 to 29 complaints in 2024-25. However, there were 168 FBS complaints in 2022-23 when scanners were first introduced into prisons in March/April 2023.

Outcomes of Complaints

Prisoner Ombudsman Investigators scrutinise complaints against the policies and procedures under which NIPS operate. Where a breach of policy or procedure is identified the complaint will be deemed to be 'upheld' or 'partially upheld'. A complaint will be 'not upheld' where no breach of policy or procedure has been identified. An outcome of Prison Rule 79N is awarded if the complaint has been deemed to be fictitious, frivolous, repetitive, raised no substantial issue or is intended to hamper the proper operation of the complaints procedure.

Table 4 - Outcomes of the 388 complaints concluded in 2024-25.

Outcome of eligible complaints	Number of each outcome	% of overall eligible complaints
Upheld	27	4
Partially Upheld	11	2
Not Upheld	350	51
79N	0	0

Recommendations

Of the 388 complaint investigations concluded, eight had recommendations (4% of overall complaints received in this Office) for improvement, most of which were accepted by NIPS.

There were a number of recommendations made in relation to specific individual cases. However, there were also a number of recommendations made around reoccurring themes such as:

- 1. Property:-** I recommend the process is re-introduced to inform prisoners when items are withheld and the reason. All relevant staff should be made aware of the process and it should be included in any training provided to both permanent and temporary staff.

Copies of the form should be readily available within all relevant work areas as required.

- 2. Accommodation:-** The Prison Service should remind staff of the importance of updating records with vital and accurate information. Internal Prison Service investigations and Stage 1 & 2 responses should comply fully with the internal complaints procedure. They should be specific to the complaint in question and examine all available evidence.

Prison Service should support staff at appropriate grades to participate in complaints handling training and refresher courses.

- 3. Treatment:-** I recommend the Prison Service issue a reminder of the current policy on Body Worn Camera (BWC) and reiterate the importance and advantages of early activation of the BWC. I recommend the Prison Service review the policy in place on Body Worn Camera and where possible, put in place firmer guidance directing BWC to be used in specific circumstances.



Progress Against Business Plan 2024-25

As the 2024-25 year began without a substantive Ombudsman in post, the Business Plan was created by the Director of Operations to ensure the Office remained focused, cleared the backlog and would be in a stronger position for the new Strategic Plan which commenced in April 2025.

The objectives, attached at **Appendix 1**, within the four strategic priorities were all achieved by the end of the year.

A summary of the objectives are detailed below:

Objective 1: Investigative Reports; IT development and IMB Secretariat

Over the year, the Office made substantial progress in strengthening investigative processes and improving case management systems. All investigative staff adhered to agreed standard operating procedures, which supported consistent and timely decision-making. A key milestone was the publication of six investigative reports, meeting our target for the year. Focused efforts on legacy case management significantly reduced the backlog, with processes in place to ensure future reports are completed within 18 to 24 months of the date of the incident. As the backlog clears, the Office is committed to achieving a three-month turnaround for complaint responses. The introduction of improved management information tools allowed for prioritisation of cases and real-time monitoring across all investigative streams (DiC, SAI, PRD, and complaints). A formal agreement was reached with the Prison Service to support investigative cooperation, and our relationship with the IMB Executive Committee remained constructive and collaborative, ensuring continued high-quality service delivery.

Objective 2: Safeguard and reinforce independence

This year, the Office continued to prioritise its operational independence while maintaining effective collaboration with key stakeholders. Regular, structured communication with partner organisations ensured information flowed efficiently, supporting the timely completion of investigations. A training needs analysis was completed and integrated into individual personal development plans (PDPs), helping to upskill staff and reinforce independent judgment. Team cohesion was supported through routine team meetings and workshops, promoting peer support and internal learning. Additionally, value for money assessments were conducted across all major contracts, including clinical reviews, publication and digital services, to ensure they remain cost-effective and aligned with our independence and quality standards.

**Objective 3: Ombudsman Induction and Develop a learning environment that puts evidence to work**

The Ombudsman, appointed 1 November 2024, received a comprehensive induction and was well supported by the Office during the transition into post. We remained committed to professional excellence, ensuring all investigative staff continued to work towards or maintain Pearson Level 7 certification in Investigative Practices. Mechanisms to track the implementation of accepted recommendations remained in place, reinforcing our commitment to using evidence and outcomes to drive learning and improvements across the custodial system.

Objective 4: Budget

The Office maintained robust financial oversight throughout the year, successfully operating within the allocated budget with no overspend. Fiscal discipline and careful planning allowed us to meet our objectives while ensuring value for money across all operational areas. More detailed information regarding the budget is included at paragraph 4 Corporate Governance.

Objective 5: Governance

Strong governance practices were maintained across the reporting year. We continued to engage effectively with the Department of Justice Sponsor Team, ensuring alignment with departmental priorities and expectations. All governance documents, including the Risk Register, were reviewed and updated to ensure they remained current and reflective of the organisation's risk environment. We successfully completed an Internal Audit Review and responded to all Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests within required timeframes, in line with DoJ policy. More detailed information regarding the governance is included in the paragraph below.



Corporate Governance

Corporate governance is delivered through quarterly formal meetings between senior office staff, DoJ Justice Sponsorship Branch and Financial Services Division, at which key corporate documents, processes and progress is reviewed. The Ombudsman does not attend these meetings.

In December 2024, NICS Internal Audit Services conducted an audit review of Prisoner Ombudsman Administrative Support System. There were no recommendations arising from this audit.

The Director of Operations is responsible for ensuring the Prisoner Ombudsman's policies and actions comply with DoJ rules and processes and for managing the resources allocated to the Office efficiently, effectively and economically.

Finance and Accountability

The Office receives funding directly from DoJ program funds and as such, any expenditure incurred by the Office is recorded as part of DoJ Departmental expenditure. This means that the Office does not produce its own set of accounts nor lay its finances before the Northern Ireland Assembly separately from the DoJ.

The Office's accounting information is published in the DoJ's Finance Accounts and is analysed by the Comptroller General of the Northern Ireland Audit Office. The Annual Report is published after the end of each financial year.

Budget Allocation

A final budget allocation for year 2024-25 was confirmed by the DoJ in January 2025 and consisted of Non-Ringfenced Resource DEL of £904k and Capital DEL of £10k. For year 2023-24, Non-Ringfenced Resource DEL was £871k and Capital DEL was £21k. When the years are compared, for 2024-25, Non-Ringfenced Resource DEL increased by 3.8% and Capital DEL decreased by 52%.

A retrospective business case for Beaman's Ltd, who conducted a review of the Office in 2024, was approved by the Minister in May 2025. The Office complies with the Department of Finance's Managing Public Money NI guidance and with the principles governing relationships between Departments and their Arms' Length Bodies. To this end, a Framework Document sets out the relationship with the DoJ and places particular emphasis on the:

- ▶ Prisoner Ombudsman's overall aims, objectives and targets in support of the Department's wider strategic aims, outcomes and targets contained in its current Public Service Agreement,
- ▶ conditions under which any public funds are paid to the Office, and,
- ▶ how the Prisoner Ombudsman's Office accounts for its performance.



All procurement and contract management processes comply with all regulations to ensure full and fair competition between prospective suppliers. They are managed in line with the Department of Finance Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) guidelines and approval processes. The Director of Operations reviewed the management of supplier performance to ensure, for the duration of contracts, delivery quality and service standards and evaluations are conducted.

Information Security

The Director of Operations manages information security and ensures alignment with the DoJ Security Policy Framework. This included submitting information security returns centrally and participating in the DoJ Information Security Forum. All staff received appropriate training and complied with all NICS security policies and guidance.

Risk Management and Internal Control

The Risk Register is an important method of identifying key risks and the means to manage and mitigate them. The Senior Management Team reviewed the Risk Register regularly and internal controls provided proportionate and reasonable assurance of effectiveness in line with identified risks.

Shared Services

Corporate shared services include:

- ▶ NICS HR and HRConnect services have provided Payroll and Human Resources support since April 2010,
- ▶ Finance transactional support functions have been provided through the Account NI shared service system since July 2012, and,
- ▶ DoJ Financial Services Division provide retained finance functions.

The Director of Operations validated expenditure requests, ensured compliance with delegated limits and segregation of duties and adherence to the Financial Procedures Manual.

Throughout the year, the Office checked its controls and processes are operating effectively, with manual checking of data integrity and accuracy where necessary, specifically around travel and subsistence monitoring and other approvals which lie with the Director of Operations.



Conclusion

The 2024–25 reporting year has been a period of both consolidation and preparation. Notwithstanding the absence of a substantive Prisoner Ombudsman during most of the year, the Office continued to deliver on its operational commitments with professionalism, independence and integrity.

Our investigations into complaints and deaths in custody have provided valuable insights into the lived experiences of prisoners and highlighted opportunities for systemic improvement. Through our reports and recommendations, we have contributed to greater accountability and transparency within the Northern Ireland prison system.

The successful delivery of all objectives in the Business Plan reflects the dedication and capability of our staff. Their commitment to upholding the principles of fairness, respect, and impartiality remains central to the credibility and impact of our work.

Looking ahead, the forthcoming Strategic Plan (2025–28) will guide the next phase of our development. It will build on the strong foundations laid this year and respond to the evolving challenges and expectations placed upon the Office.

We remain committed to ensuring every investigation, whether into a complaint or a death, makes a meaningful contribution to justice, dignity and safety within Northern Ireland's custodial establishments.



Appendix 1- Business Plan Objectives 2024-25

Strategic Aim – Safer Communities					
We will work to ensure we have a safe community where we respect the law and each other.					
Obj 1		Priorities	Measure of success	RAG Status	Owner
Improve investigative processes and service delivery					
Investigative Reports	1.1	Update Death in Custody (DiC) processes in ensure consistency of approach.	All Investigative staff working to set process.	31 Aug 24	Senior Investigating Officer
	1.2	Investigate and produce reports for DiC, Serious Adverse Incident (SAI) and Post Release Death (PRD) cases	Publish a minimum of 6 DiC/PRD or SAI reports by 31 March 2025. Clear backlog and work towards achieving publication of reports within 18 months/2 years of date of incident.	31 Mar 25	Senior Investigating Officer
	1.3	Revert to normal complaints process and clear backlog of cases received before April 2024.	When backlog cleared, ensure all complaints are investigated and responded to within three months of receipt.	31 March 25	Senior Investigating Officer
IT development	1.4	Introduce a Case Management Database that supports delivery of effective investigations for complaints and separately Death in Custody.	Management information readily available to enable prioritisation of work to reduce the backlog of historic cases due to previous recovery plan arrangements. Effective case management and progression monitoring throughout the year on all work streams (DiC, SAI, PRD and complaints)	31 Dec 24	Governance & Compliance DP
	1.5	Agree secure use of IT to support on-site investigative work and witness statement collection with Prison Service.	Agreement finalised by Director of Operations (DoO) and Prison Service.	31 Aug 24	Director of Operations
IMB Secretariat	1.6	IMB receives effective Secretariat support from the Office.	Effective working relationship with and service delivery for IMB Executive Committee and members.	31 March 2025	Director of Operations and Secretariat staff.
Obj 2		Priorities	Measure of success	RAG Status	Owner
Safeguard and reinforce independence	2.1	Review outdated Information Sharing Agreements, Service Level Agreements, Memorandums of Understanding, Protocols etc	Information can flow freely between business partners to ensure timely completion of investigations.	31 Mar 25	Governance & Compliance DP
	2.2	Establish and maintain effective working relationships with Prison Service, Trust, Coroners Office, CJI, IMB and other partners on detention oversight.	Regular contact established and timetabled to ensure ongoing communication channels are utilised.	31 Mar 25	Director of Operations
	2.3	Provide well-being support for staff.	Training needs analysis completed and reflected in individuals PDPs. Effective staff engagement to promote within team support fostered by regular team meetings and workshops.	31 Aug 25	Director of Operations
	2.4	Monitor external contracts.	Monitor value for money of current contracts, i.e MW Advocates, Legal, Website Management, Publication Design and Clinical Review.	31 Mar 25	Governance & Compliance DP



Strategic Aim – Safer Communities					
We will work to ensure we have a safe community where we respect the law and each other.					
Obj 3		Priorities	Measure of success	RAG Status	Owner
Ombudsman Induction	3.1	Support the induction of a new Ombudsman.	Ombudsman receives effective induction and Office support.	October 2024	Director of Operations
Develop a learning environment that puts evidence to work	3.2	Ensure investigative staff are trained to professional standard.	All investigative staff are trained to Pearson Level 7 in Investigative Practices.	30 Sept 24	Governance & Compliance DP
	3.3	Compile registers of recommendations from DiC and complaints cases	Routinely check that accepted recommendations have been implemented	31 Jul 24	Director of Operations
Obj 4		Priorities	Measure of success	RAG Status	Owner
Budget	4.1	Demonstrate financial probity.	Remain within budget with no overspends.	31 March 25	Governance & Compliance DP
Obj 5		Priorities	Measure of success	RAG Status	Owner
Governance	5.1	Effective Sponsor relationships and compliance with DoJ governance requirements.	<p>Throughout the year, maintain effective working relationships with the DoJ Sponsor Team.</p> <p>Update all relevant and required governance documents to ensure they are fit for purpose including the maintenance and review of an effective Risk Register that reflects Business Plan risks.</p> <p>Undergo an Internal Audit Review.</p> <p>Respond to all Freedom of information, Subject Access Requests and correspondence in line with DoJ policy within the agreed timeframe.</p>	31 March 25	Governance & Compliance DP

Appendix 2 - Overview of the Prison Estate

Maghaberry Prison

A high security prison, housing adult male long-term sentenced and remand prisoners in both separated and integrated conditions.

► Separated prisoners

The Steele Review, published in September 2003 recommended that republican and loyalist prisoners with paramilitary affiliations should be accommodated separately from each other, and the rest of the prison population, on a voluntary basis. As a result of the recommendations, prisoners can apply to be housed in separated accommodation. Separated male republican prisoners are housed on two landings in Roe House within Maghaberry Prison. Separated loyalist prisoners are housed on two landings in Bush House, also within Maghaberry Prison. Separated female prisoners are housed in the Separated Unit of Hydebank House.

Magilligan Prison

A medium security prison, housing shorter-term adult male prisoners. It also has low security accommodation (Foyleview) for selected prisoners nearing the end of their sentence.

Hydebank Wood Secure College and Women's Prison

The college is a medium security Prison located on the outskirts of South Belfast. It accommodates young male prisoners (18-24 years) and all female prisoners in Northern Ireland.

Ash House and Beech House

Women prisoners have been held in Ash House since 2004 and Beech House since 2022, both standalone residential units within the Hydebank Wood campus.